

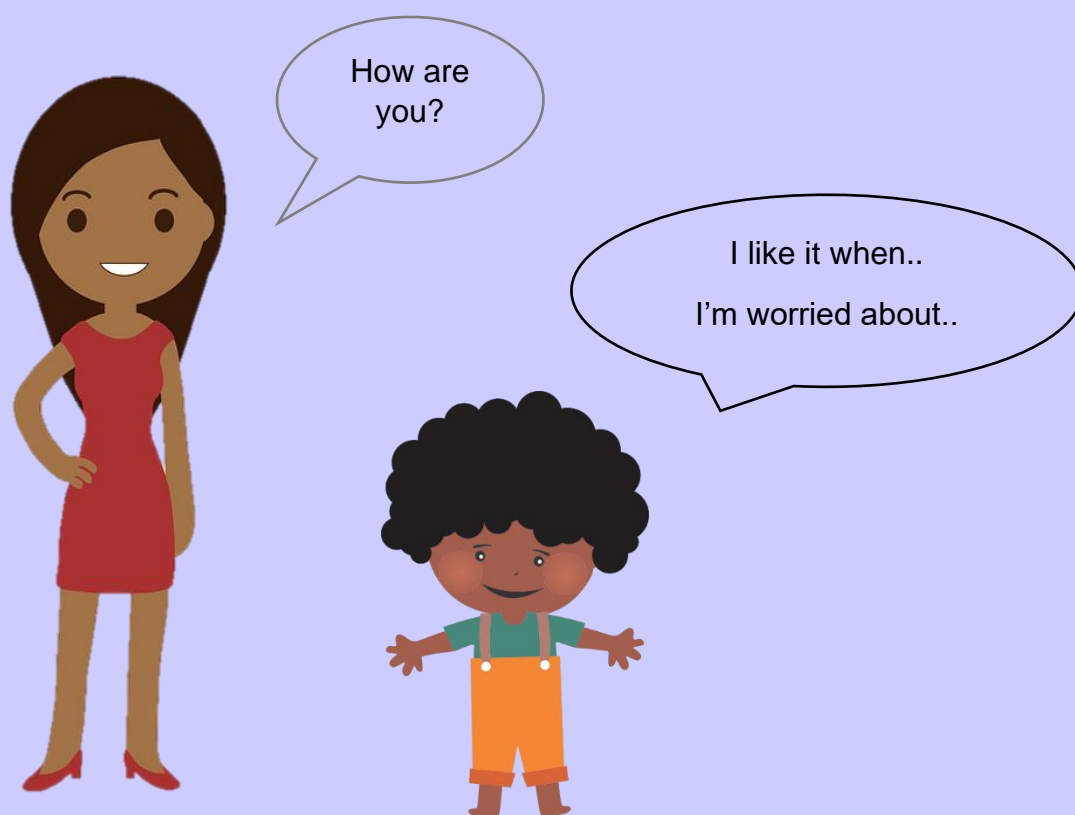
## What is a Social Worker?

(Developed with the participation of young people)

A Social Worker is somebody who works with children, young people and their families to make sure that they are safe and happier with their life.

They will want to chat to you about anything that you might be scared or worried about, as well as things that make you happy.

We know that sometimes it can be hard to say what you are worried about. It is important though that you are honest with your social worker when talking to them, so that they can try to help to make things better.



They work with the other adults that care for children like mums and dads, as well as professionals like doctors and teachers.

Every few weeks there is a meeting about the things that are good for you and your family, and the things that you all might need some extra help with to make things better.

Your social worker will talk to you about the meeting. Some children go to their meetings, but it depends on how old you are, and how you feel about going to them.

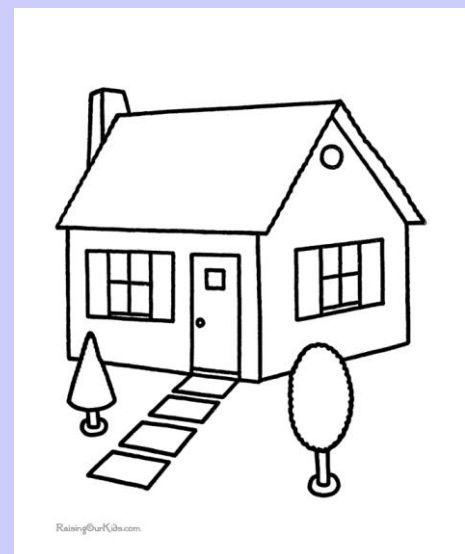


If things start to get worse, the Social Worker will help everyone think of another plan which hopefully will start to make things better. However, children need to feel safe and well supported. Sometimes despite all the adults working hard, the plans do not work, which means the children are not safe enough or looked after properly. When this happens, the social worker will need to talk to the network about making big changes.

Sometimes the Social Worker needs to ask a Judge to decide what is the best plan for a child. When this happens the Judge will hear what the parents and children have to say about the situation as well.



Sometimes the Judge will decide that children need to stay with other people in their family or a Foster Carer for a while whilst things get better at home. A foster Carer is someone who looks after children and helps them process things as they go through life, to be there for them. This might be worrying to start with as it is new, but everyone will help the child settle in.



The Judge will then make a final decision on what will happen after having listened to what everyone has to say about the situation. This may be to go back to the child's family as things have got a lot better, or it could be to stay with the foster family, and sometimes, it is to find a new forever family.

Whatever decision the judge makes the social worker will continue to come and see the child to talk about how things are for them.

