

Companion Activity Sheet

It Takes More Than Mum and Dad: Mapping the Child's Web of Connections

Purpose:

Help carers and professionals identify, honour and safely maintain the broader network of people who matter to a child, aligned with the family involved CARE principle.

How to use this sheet:

Complete it with the child's voice central (directly, through advocates, or by drawing on known history). Bring it to supervision, Care Team meetings, or family contact planning.

1. Quick Self-Check (tick what fits today)

- ☐ I can name the key people (beyond parents) who matter to this child.
- ☐ I've asked the child who they miss, think about, or feel close to.
- ☐ We have explored safe ways to keep/contact with those connections.
- ☐ We've mapped the child's cultural/kinship links (where relevant).
- ☐ Our plans include siblings, cousins, Elders, teachers or other significant adults.
- ☐ We're documenting and *revisiting* this network regularly.

2. My People Map (Life Story Network)

Name & role	How they're connected (family/kin/significant other)	Why they matter to the child	Safe now? (Y/N/Unsure)	Current contact (how often/how)	Next step to (re)connect or sustain	Who will do it?	By when

(Add rows as needed. Revisit after every Care Team or supervision.)

3. Child Voice Prompts (age/developmentally adjusted)

- Who do you think about when you feel happy/sad/scared?
- Who used to help you with... (homework, dinners, sport, bedtime stories)?
- If you could talk to anyone from your family or community right now, who would it be?
- Who are your favourite grown-ups and why?
- Who knows your stories, your language, or your culture?
- What special traditions or celebrations do you want to keep doing?

4. Practical Actions for Carers & Practitioners

Carers

- Keep a photo wall/memory book of “my people”.
- Share safe updates (artwork, school awards) via the caseworker.
- Build a “connections routine” (e.g., weekly call to Nan, letter to sibling).
- Include cultural practices, language, food, and music in everyday life.
- Use strengths-based, respectful language about all family members.

Professionals

- Start every review with: “Who else matters to this child?”
- Use genograms/eco-maps/cultural maps to *visualise* the network.
- Embed sibling/kin connection actions in case plans with dates & owners.
- Involve Elders, cultural advisors, and community reps early.
- Re-check safety/appropriateness regularly—but don’t let “risk” erase identity.

5. Supervision Prompts

- Whose voice is missing from this child’s network?
- What safe steps can we take to include them?
- Are we unintentionally narrowing the definition of “family”?
- How are we documenting and reinforcing cultural and kinship ties?
- What systemic barriers (e.g., distance, permissions, stigma) can we help remove?

6. Care Team Meeting Insert

Standing Item: Family & Significant Connections

- Update the “My People Map”
- Review contact plans (what’s working / what’s blocked?)
- Child voice check-in: who do they want to hear from/see?
- Cultural/kinship connections, actions and supports
- Decisions, timelines, and responsibilities