Information sharing decision tool

Use this tool when you are unsure whether to share information about a child or family with another person or agency. When in doubt, speak with your supervisor first.

Step 1 – Is sharing needed to protect a child?

Ask yourself	If yes
Is there an immediate or serious risk of harm to the child?	Share information without delay, even without consent. Document and notify supervisor.
Does sharing information support the child's safety or wellbeing?	Consider sharing, but assess with the questions below first.
Are you legally required to share this information (e.g., mandatory report)?	You must share. Follow your mandatory reporting obligation.

Step 2 – Consider the key questions

✓	Item
☐	Why does this information need to be shared? (Safety, legal obligation, continuity of care)
☐	Who is the appropriate recipient? (Only those with a legitimate need to know)
☐	What information is relevant and necessary? (Do not share more than needed)
☐	How will the information be shared securely? (Not verbally in public areas; use approved systems)
☐	Has consent been given by the relevant guardian? (If so, has it been documented?)
☐	Is consent required, or does safety override consent in this situation?
☐	Are there any court orders, parenting arrangements or guardianship restrictions to consider?

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Step 3 – Decision guide

Situation	Action	Document
Immediate risk of harm to a child.	Share information without delay. Notify supervisor.	What was shared, with whom, when and why.
Mandatory reporting obligation applies.	Make the report. Do not delay seeking consent.	Report made, agency, time, reference number if given.
Consent has been given (written or verbal).	Share relevant information with named recipient.	Consent provided by whom, date, what was shared.
Unsure whether consent is needed.	Do not share until you have spoken with supervisor.	Guidance sought, from whom, outcome.
A family member requests information.	Check guardianship/parental authority before sharing.	The request, your response and any advice received.
Sharing between services for continuity of care.	Share with guardian's consent unless safety overrides.	Consent, what was shared, with whom, for what purpose.

Step 4 – Record the sharing decision

What information was shared:

Shared with (name, role, organisation):

Date and time shared:

Reason for sharing / basis for sharing without consent:

Consent obtained?
□ Yes
□ No – reason:

Supervisor consulted?
□ No
□ Yes – name: