THE ECOMAP

The **EcoMap** is a simple visual assessment tool used to highlight relationships between a child, their family and their social network. Practitioner and service user together map out the key connections between the child, the family and their ecological environment. Identifying theses links clarifies and organises information displaying familial dynamics; raising issues about the character and reciprocity of relationships, and access to or absence of available resources.

The EcoMap uses standard symbols to express how the child/young person connects with the radial elements in their life – family, people, organisations, activities etc. For example, **a solid line** may indicate **a strong and healthy relationship**, while **a broken line** represents **a weaker tie**. Arrows can be added at the end of each line to indicate reciprocity of some relationships while **stressful or adverse relationships** are represented by **a dotted line crossed by several hashed lines.**

Using the EcoMap the practitioner can work directly with the child/family in an effort to better identify those relationships that are strong and resilient and those that may be characterised by risk and adversity.

As a simple visual tool the EcoMap can helpfully support the analysis and understandings of family relationships and assist improve grasp of the child's/young person's wider circumstances. Practitioners should:

- Place the person of focus – child/young person, parents/carers or family – at the centre

- Identify the significant relationships this person has to other people, organisations and activities

- Using the key below, draw connecting lines that identify the character of connection/relationship between the person of focus at the centre and the other people, organisations, and activities that are noted around them

KEY

──────── = A Strong Relationship

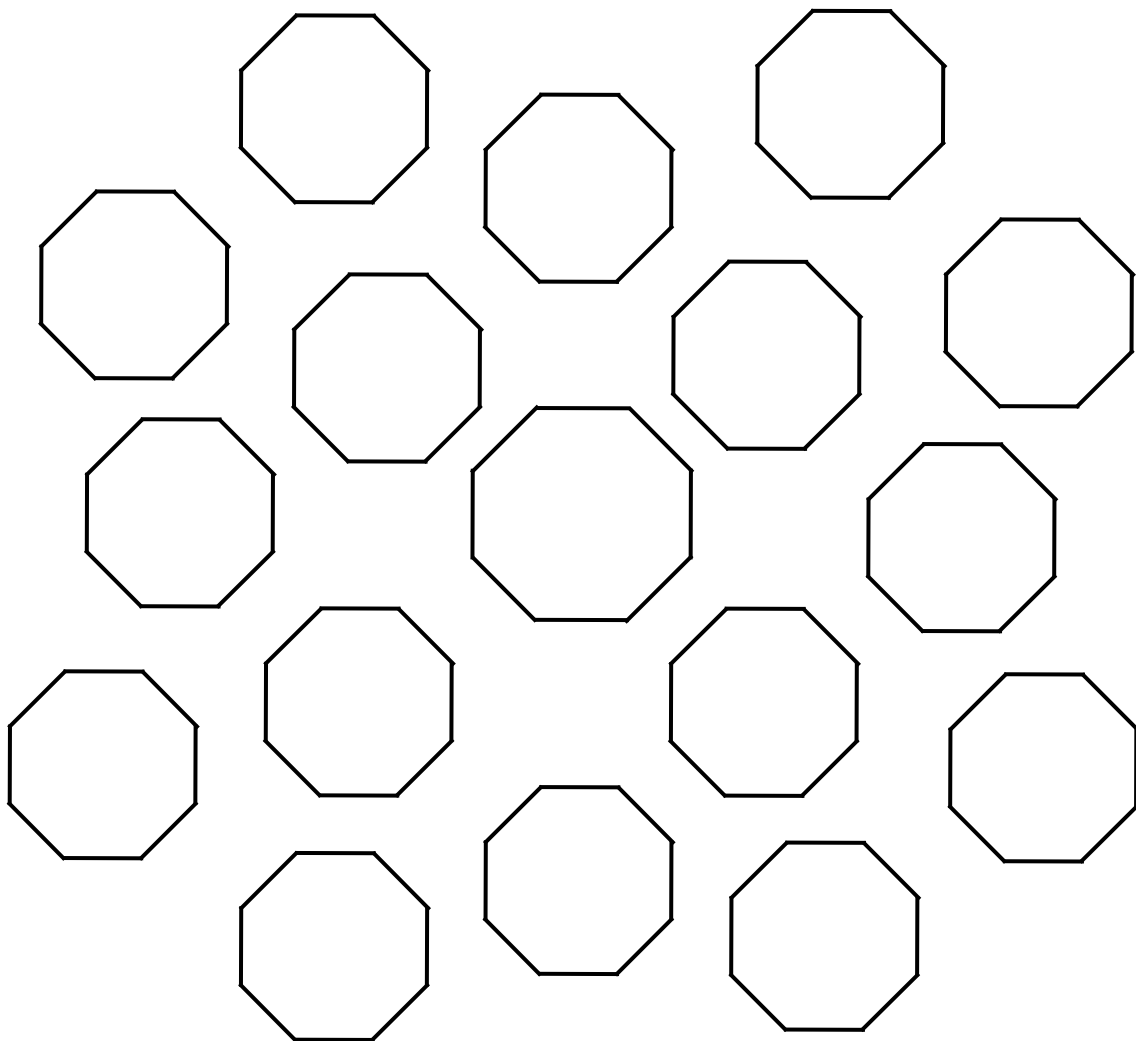▬ ▬ ▬ ▬ = A Weak/Vulnerable Relationship

▬/▬/▬/▬ = A Stressful/Adverse Relationship

Below are blank Templates – 2 different editable templates that can be completed on a laptop and a fixed template that can be used to simply draw out connections, links and relationships.

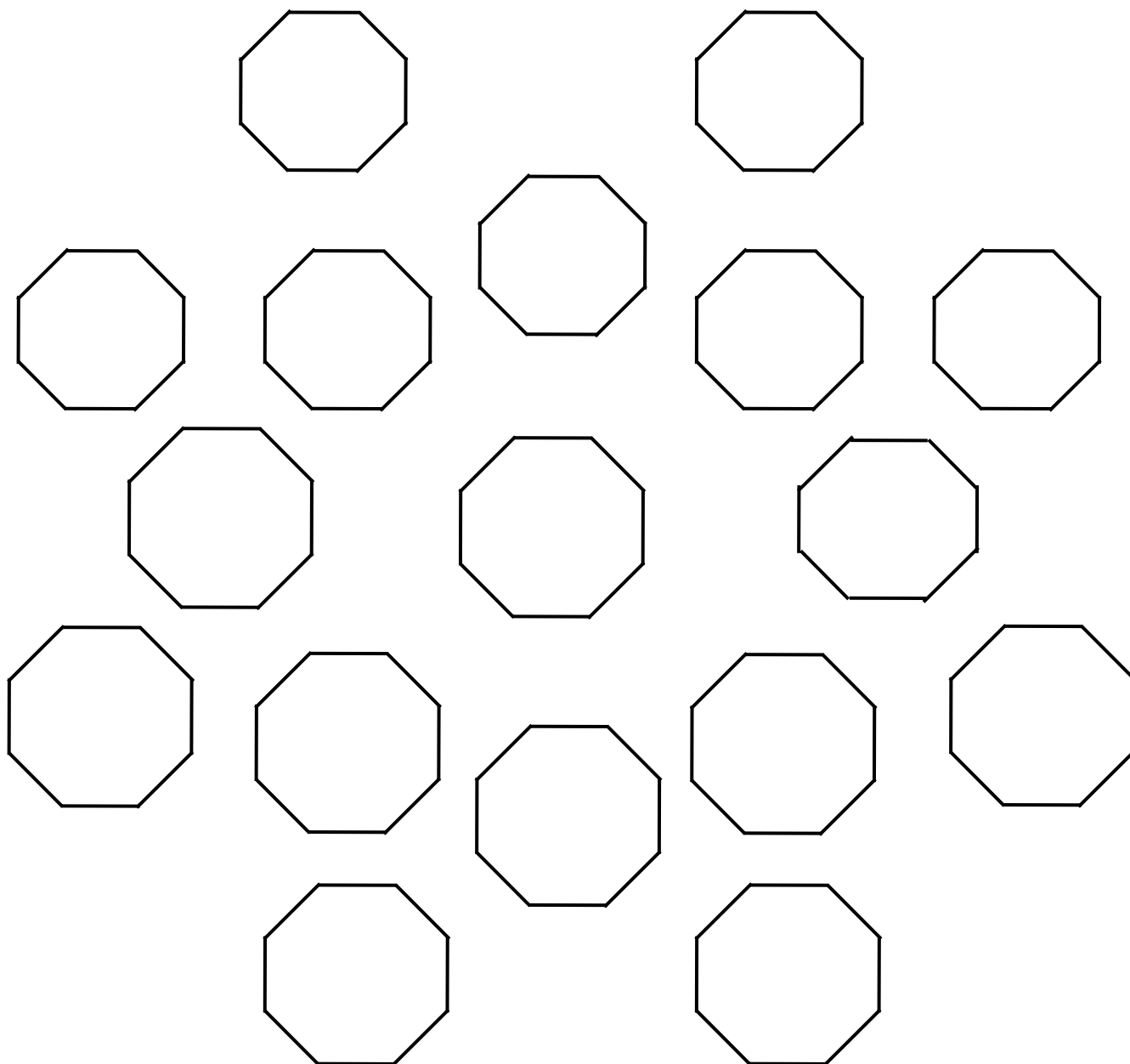**BLANK TEMPLATE FOR ECOMAP**

NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:

DATE STARTED:

NAME OF WORKER:
DATE COMPLETED:

BLANK TEMPLATE FOR ECOMAP

NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:
DATE STARTED:

NAME OF WORKER:
DATE COMPLETED: