



Early Help Practice Guide

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Purpose of the Practice Guide and National and Local Context

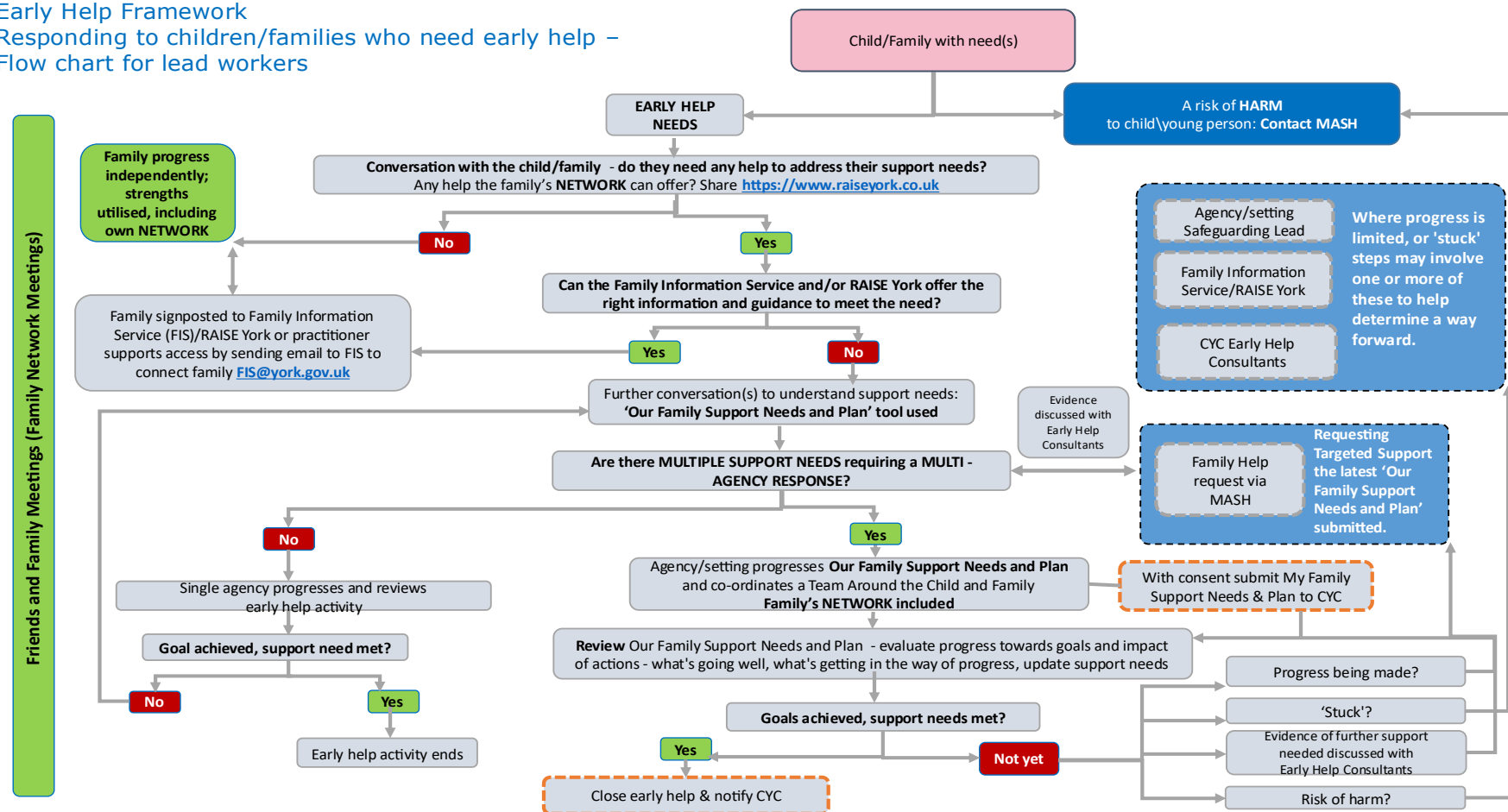
This guide is for all partners across City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP) who are working with families to improve children's outcomes. With early help being 'everyone's business' it guides workers on how best to respond to children and families who have early help needs and when and how to use the early help assessment and plan tools. It provides clarity about why, when and how to share early help work with City of York Children's Services and the source of on-going guidance and support available to workers.

This guide seeks to support partners to meet the expectations set out in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 statutory guidance that stipulates universal services and community-based early help will **'improve a family's resilience and outcomes or reduce the chance of a problem getting worse'**. This states partners need effective ways **'to identify problems and potential unmet needs'** and know **'what action to take to support early identification and assessment'**.

York's Early Help Strategy sets out our collective vision and responses to how Early Help is delivered within the City of York: **'Early Help is a collaborative approach where we recognise families do best when they are supported by those who already know them and can assess and provide early intervention at the earliest stage'**.

The common early help approach for partners outlined within this guide aims to meet these expectations and, most importantly for our families in York, ensure a joined-up and consistent message for all.

Early Help Framework
Responding to children/families who need early help –
Flow chart for lead workers



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Early Help Framework in York

Early Help starts at the earliest opportunity with a conversation. Whilst this is usually with someone with whom the family has an existing, established relationship, some families may be isolated or have experienced previous service involvement leaving them fearful of sharing too much and asking for help. Our Early Help Strategy in York expects us to take collective responsibility by reaching out to these families and building relationships with them to empower them to access the right support at the right time.

If you are that person, in York we define you to be the lead worker and responsible in the first instance to be curious to understand what's happening for that child and family to determine the right response. That does not necessarily mean your agency/setting will remain involved or be the only service to offer support and it may be that the lead worker also changes throughout the early help process.

We have mapped this process onto a framework (page 4) to guide workers through early help. This framework and the guidance within this document aims to be clear about:

- when to encourage the family to draw on friends and wider family members (their natural network);
- when and how to connect the family to RAISE York and benefit from York's Family Information Service;
- when to use the early help assessment and plan tool, known in York as 'Our Family Support Needs and Plan';
- when and why share your early help work with families with the early help consultants at City of York Council;
- what is expected in terms of the cycle of assess, plan, do and review;
- how to co-ordinate a Team Around the Child and Family;
- what to do when progress is 'stuck';
- what to do when there is evidence further support is needed through Family Help;
- how to access early help guidance on an on-going basis;
- what you can expect when Family Help has completed work with a family and your agency is going to continue support;
- What you can expect when the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) asks your agency to offer early help.

Early Help Training, Support and Guidance - Early Help Consultants

To ensure that practitioners across the city are supported in the work they do with families and equipped with the necessary skills and resources to do this well, City of York has a dedicated team of Early Help Consultants. This team offer a package of support to lead workers or any other individuals or services who are providing early help to children and their families.

Practitioners are encouraged to contact the Early Help Consultants at *any* point during their work with families to benefit from the support and guidance they offer and which may include:

- information about the range of provision and services available to York's families;
- training, guidance and support relating to the early help framework and associated practice and process;
- coaching lead workers in early help practice by modelling the facilitation of family network meetings;
- coaching lead workers in early help practice by supporting conversations with families, modelling the use of the early help assessment and plan tool;
- advising lead workers about other agencies who may already, or potentially could, be involved to allow the development of an effective Team Around the Child and Family;
- coaching lead workers in early help practice by modelling the chairing of a Team Around the Child and Family meeting;
- facilitating group supervision at a locality level when progress is 'stuck';
- where the early help assessment and plan tool has been shared with CYC providing specific guidance and support to enhance the plan and/or improve progress;
- bespoke training and support tailored to the specific needs of partner agencies and settings;
- support from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Family Community Work Coach for those families who are open to early help and in receipt of out of work benefits including advice on appropriate developmental and training routes for individuals experiencing worklessness and support to overcome barriers to progressing to employment;
- follow-up guidance when there has been a recommendation by MASH that you and your agency/setting offer early help.

If there is evidence of a need for additional targeted support through Family Help, Lead Workers are expected to have a reflective conversation with the Early Help Consultants in the first instance.

Multi-agency Early Help Practice training is offered on a cyclical basis and includes access to resources and materials (e.g. questions, prompts and an exemplar) to complement this guide. To find out more and forthcoming training dates please contact the Early Help Consultant Team: earlyhelpconsultants@york.gov.uk

The Family's Network

"It takes a village to raise a child"

This African proverb originated from the Nigerian Igbo Community meaning that it takes a group of people or community to raise a child not just a parent. Being a parent is a really challenging full-time job and at times can be tough and requires the support of others.

There are a whole range of people in a child's life who play, or have the potential to play, an important role in supporting their development including aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbours, friends, siblings, etc. A whole group of individuals who enable the child to benefit from a wide range of knowledge, insights and experiences that support their well-being, growth, development and sense of belonging. It enables the child to learn not just about themselves, but the world they live in; how to interact, communicate and build relationships.

Encouraging the family to involve the people in their lives that matter to them – friends and family members - and including them in conversations and/or meetings empowers the family to find their own solutions to problems. Taking this approach as early as possible can prevent the need for agencies to take a lead role and use the early support assessment, plan and review tool. More information can be found in the Involving Family Networks and Friends and Family Meetings (Family Network Meetings) Practice Guide for Partners on the Partnership Families First page: <https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/professionals/families-first-partnership-programme>

Raise York – Family Hub Network

Families and communities help to provide a foundation for children and young people to grow, develop and feel safe. Raise York brings together children; young people; families; communities and professionals so everyone can get the connections, help and support they want and need.

The Raise York network is a key component of how our city comes together to deliver the Early Help Strategy. The Raise York partnership has developed tools and information for families and partners accessible through Raise York - website at www.RaiseYork.co.uk

Family Information Service

The York Family Information Service (FIS) is a free and impartial information service for all parents and carers of children and young people aged 0 to 19 (or up to 25 for disabled children).

They can help with anything and everything around family life and being a young person including emotional health and wellbeing, Ofsted registered childcare for 0 – teens including school holiday clubs, activities and things to do and more. Practitioners can either signpost a parent/carer to FIS or make the initial contact as lead worker. Any question or unclear as to where to go, FIS is there to help and support to connect the family to the right service and/or guidance.

Contact details for York Family Information Service is as follows: on email: fis@york.gov.uk, by telephone: 01904 554444 (Monday to Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm), or by text on telephone: 07860 042712.

Early help assessment and plan tool - 'My Family Support Needs and Plan'

My Family Support Needs and Plan provide a single 'assess-plan-do-review' (fig. 4) tool that supports Lead Workers to effectively follow the Early Help Framework. The tool is designed to be used with the family to collaboratively understand their needs and build, monitor and review a plan of support together to meet these needs and achieve sustainable change.

Figure 4 Assess-plan-do-review cycle



The tool is presented as one single 'working' document to reflect an assessment is a dynamic process and not a 'one off'. At every review, any new support needs should be considered and the tool updated to ensure it reflects the 'current understanding' of need and the plan reflects the right support is in place at the right time and by the right person.

Using the Tool – Gathering an Understanding of the Family's Support Needs

Section 1 Our Family living with us at home

Work with parent/carers to gather information of all children and adults who live in the family household. This information is important as it enables an understanding of any additional and/or communication needs to be taken in consideration throughout the assessment and plan. Knowing who the early years, school/education provider is enables the opportunity to include additional workers if the outcome of the assessment deems it helpful.

Not all adults with parental responsibility will be living in the same home as the children. It is important to reach out and include these adults in your work with the family. Add the details of any adults who do have parental responsibility and are living elsewhere in this section. Note, you will need to obtain consent from this person, direct, to record these details.

Section 2 - Friends and family in our life who support us now or could in the future

Being a parent is a really challenging full-time job and at times can be tough and requires the support of others. There are a whole range of people in a child's life who play, or have the potential to play, an important role in supporting their development including aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, etc. It isn't always immediate family members who could help or support, it can also include friends and neighbours. Gathering this information allows the lead worker to understand who already supports the family and could support them in the future, allowing for the opportunity to think about how a plan of support can be sustained without the involvement of professionals.

Make a note of the '**named Family Key Contact**'. Taking a family-led approach, this offers choice to the parent/carers about who else within their natural network they might want to be the main point of contact, for the lead worker, on behalf of the family.

For further information and guidance on gathering information for this section see Involving Family Networks and Friends and Family Meetings (Family Network Meetings) Practice Guide for Partners [ADD LINK](#)

Section 3 - Workers involved with our family (including the Lead Worker)

Record all the workers who are currently involved with the children and adults living in the household. This may include statutory services such as health, police and education yet it is also important to explore other groups/activities which children may attend such as after school clubs, sports groups, guides, scouts, church groups etc. Understanding this information tells us about other adults who are key in a child's life as they form an important role in the family network. If the outcome of the assessment needs a multi-agency response for which there will be a Team Around the Child and Family add any new workers to this section as the Family Support Plan progresses.

Make a note of who is the '**lead worker**'. This is the person having the conversation with the family to use this tool. This may be someone the parents/carers or child/young person has approached to ask for help or it may be a worker who has recognised there are support needs that cannot be addressed through signposting to other local services. It is understood, as work progresses with the family, that the lead worker may change; if that happens, update the details in this section.

Section 4 - What the children say

The child's voice, their lived experience and the impact of worries and their views on what could make things better should always be at the forefront and centre of our work with families. How they have their say will vary, for example for very young children or those with profound communication difficulties, observation as well as discussions with those who know the children or situation well can build the best possible picture of their views and lived experiences.

Remember it is important to honour the family as experts in their own lives and for very young children especially, the parents/carers are well placed to share their observations. Others who can support gathering children's views, and with the consent of parents, are trusted adults such as a teacher, community leader or family friend.

Section 5 - Our Family Support Needs

Our worries (what concerns us)

Detail the worries about the child/ren. It is important to be behaviourally specific and record what is seen and heard, when (i.e. what time of day or night, what part of the week?) and where (i.e. at home, in a setting, in the community?), how often (i.e. every day, once a week, three times a week?), for how long (i.e. half an hour, 3 hours) and over what duration (i.e. since x date, for the last y months).

Example 1: A school age child (10 yrs). Rather than broad statements such as 'Jack is not attending school' and 'Jack is upset at home afterwards', be specific about what's happening now:

- *Jack is not attending school on Mondays and Tuesdays*
- *Jack is half an hour late on Wednesdays*
- *Jack shouts and cries and throws toys at Mum at home, every day when he has been at school and this goes on for about an hour.*

Example 2: A pre-school child (3 yrs). Rather than broad statements such as 'Asmina is struggling to play with other children' and 'parents are struggling at bedtimes' be specific about what's happening now:

- *Asmina hits and pulls the hair of other children when they go to play with her during morning sessions.*
- *Asmina does not engage in basic back and forth conversations with other children and adults (other than her key worker) – every day.*
- *Asmina will not go to sleep at night in her own room without her Mum staying with her – every night.*

Our strengths (what works well)

Drawing on the existing strengths of the family, detail what is working well to manage the worries. It is important to include:

- ✓ what are the good things that are happening in the child's life and family in relation to the worries?
- ✓ what is the family doing currently that is working well to address the worries?
- ✓ who in the family's natural network is involved already helping the family to address the worries and how?

- ✓ when the worries might have been an issue but they did not happen because the family/network took action what did they do?

Example 1:

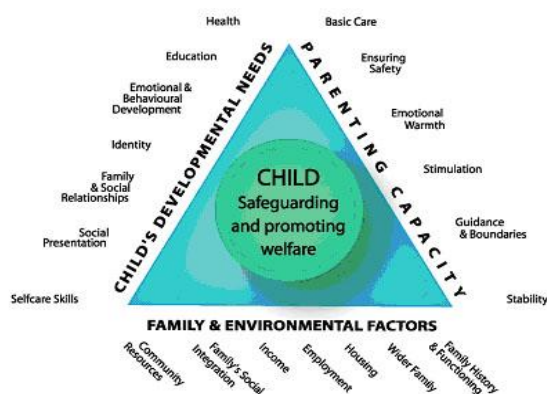
- *When Jack is in school he engages in his lessons and works well with his peers.*
- *Jack has a small group of friends at school that he plays with.*
- *Jack is able to calm himself after an hour and the rest of their evening activity goes well.*
- *When Mum's friend call round after school with her children to play, Jack settles more quickly.*
- *Jack openly tells Mum that he starts to feel tired after lunch everyday.*
- *Mum's new partner, Dan, has started to spend time with Jack to get to know him and Jack has said he likes playing football with him.*

Example 2:

- *When Asmina has had her afternoon nap she will approach other children to play.*
- *Asmina loves the home kitchen corner and when playing there she interacts positively with other children.*
- *When Dad drops Asmina at nursery she is quick to settle into the day's morning routine.*
- *Mum and Dad have introduced a new bedtime routine that involves both of them and say that Asmina has started, a few times, to go to sleep on her own.*
- *When Nana Diya comes to stay, Asmina goes to bed and to sleep easily.*
- *Asmina loves animals; she reaches for all these books and will seek out her key worker to show her; when she does this she is very talkative.*

As you discuss the worries and the strengths. it is important to take a holistic approach. To do this refer to the assessment triangle (fig. 5) which outlines the factors that could be contributing to the worries and strengths. This will help ensure a balanced understanding of the family's support needs.

Figure 5 Assessment Triangle



Worry Statement

This is a shared understanding of the worry. To write this use the information you have gathered, to set out who is worried. By this point, having worked *with* the family it is expected you and the parents/carers will be aligned with what the concerns are and may include any other members of the family or workers involved at this stage. State what you are most worried about and what will happen to the child/ren if nothing in the family changes?

Example 1: Sally (Mum), Uncle Joe and Louise (teacher) are worried that Jack is missing school on Mondays and Tuesdays, arriving late on Wednesdays, and experiencing intense outbursts at home where he cries and throws toys. If this pattern continues, Jack may fall behind in his learning, miss out on vital social development, and experience ongoing emotional distress that impacts his long-term wellbeing.

Example 2: Amy (Mum), Asif (Dad) and Jenny (key worker) are worried that Asmina's challenges with two-way communication and her physical responses to peer interactions (hitting/pulling hair) are hindering her ability to build positive social relationships. Additionally, her inability to sleep independently at home is impacting her routines. If she is not supported to develop her communication, emotional regulation, and independent coping skills, these factors may lead to further social isolation and increased anxiety both in the setting and at home.

Wellbeing Goal

Goals explain what needs to change – what does everyone need to see to be confident there are no longer any worries? Goals should be a 'flip' of the specific worries and be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time orientated) so it is clear how everyone will know the goals have been achieved.

When writing goals take care not to slip into writing specific actions. Action is the activity that will happen to help achieve the goals and are recorded in the support plan.

Example 1:

- *Jack is on time and attends school every day.*
- *Jack is calm and settled at home after the school day and enjoys playing and having fun.*

Example 2:

- *Asmina plays with her peers showing consistently behaviours that are gentle and age/stage appropriate.*
- *Asmina engages daily in basic back-and-forth conversations with peers and adults (other than her key worker), maintaining a topic for at least two exchanges.*
- *Asmina goes to sleep in her own bed in her own room every night without requiring her mum to stay in the room until she falls asleep.*

Section 6 - Wellbeing Scale

We use scaling to help everyone - family and practitioners – rate the current level of worry about a child's well-being so we can have a shared and measurable way to track progress over time and focus our conversations on specific tangible changes needed to reach the well-being goal(s).

The early help assessment and plan tool has a generic scaling question to cover any type and range of worries:

On a scale of 0-10 where 10 is things are working well, the right support is in place and the family no longer need a lead worker and 0 means the family is struggling and without support the worries will get worse - where do people rate the situation?

Record the name of each person involved in the scaling.

Record the scale 0-10 the person rates the current situation and their rationale.

Record what each person needs to see for the scale to increase by one or two.

Section 7 - Next steps

Next steps are determined by the outcome of the family's support needs. Select one of three options.

☒ **Our family will take action - no further involvement of the lead worker is required**

Section 5 will have identified the strengths and skills the family are using already to manage their difficulties and address the worries. Your conversation with them will have included reflection on these existing strengths as well as identify who can help from their natural network of friends and family members. The ideal situation is that building on this further the family do not need any additional support of workers and they will take their own action to solve the challenges presented. In this case your work is complete and this can be indicated in section 11, 'when the role of the lead worker ends'.

☒ **Our family need support from the lead worker to review our family support plan (single agency response)**

Using this common standardised plan across the whole system supports everyone - families and workers – to use the same language and promote a shared understanding. It also supports a seamless transition should the plan be started with the support of a single agency and later require the input of other agencies. Agree with the family a date to review the plan.

☒ **Our family need support to be co-ordinated by the lead worker who will bring together a Team Around the Child/Family (TACF)**

If a multi-agency response is required as lead worker you will be responsible for co-ordinating other partners to bring together a Team Around the Child and Family (TACF). Make a note here of the date of the first TACF meeting. Remember to encourage parent/carers to invite friends and family members so the support of their natural network can be maximised.

Be sure to complete section 9, privacy notice because you will need to share this early help assessment and plan tool with other agencies/settings and there is an expectation that the tool will be shared with Early Help Consultants, City of York Council (see page 13).

Using the tool – Co-producing the Family Support Plan

Section 8 – Our Family Support Plan

The plan belongs to the family – it is theirs not ours. Given the importance of taking a strength-based approach to working with families, the plan should, in the main, shift responsibility to the family and their network to take action to do all or most of the work rather than be dominated with what workers are doing. Using the tool at the earliest opportunity can also mitigate the need for lots of agency involvement. Update section 2 with any new members of the family's network identified to take action.

Where actions are being taken forward by workers, use the column 'who will do this' to be clear in the family's plan the worker's name. If there are new workers identified, remember to update their role and contact details in section 3.

The well-being goals (section 5) are transferred into the Family Support Plan. Consider each well-being goal in turn and **identify actions** that:

- ✓ draw upon the family's existing strengths – what is currently working that the family could build on and/or do more of?
- ✓ draw upon what the children say – what's good in their life and what they think could help them.
- ✓ address **perpetuating factors that are keeping the worries going** - what action can be taken to tackle these specific factors?
- ✓ are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) that will help work towards achieving the well-being goal(s);
- ✓ avoid looking too far ahead and writing too many actions which could overwhelm the family - start with a focus on what the family and you think will have the greatest impact;
- ✓ will help to address more than one of the well-being goals;
- ✓ keep sustainability in mind, consider actions that the family can continue once any intervention ends;
- ✓ are clear who will take the action, making sure all of the contact details of any family, friends and workers are included in sections 2 and 3 respectively.

Section 9 - Privacy Notice and Consent

The overall purpose of the privacy notice is to explain how an organisation processes personal information and the basis on which this is held and shared with other organisations. This privacy notice references City of York Council and partner organisations to reflect that the document will

be processed by the agency with whom the family has completed the early help assessment and plan tool and City of York Council when submitted as a notification of early help with this family.

It is the responsibility of the lead worker to go through and help explain the privacy notice with the parent/carer who has parental responsibility and, subject to the age of the child, a young person. The lead worker is to gather their signature to confirm they are aware of the privacy notice. A signed copy of My Family Support Needs and Plan should be given to the family and stored as appropriate in line with the lead worker's recording system.

When submitting the document to the Early Help Consultants at City of York Council by way of notification – **always when there are multiple support needs requiring a multi-agency response** - to help minimise administrative tasks (which would involve printing, signing, scanning, uploading etc.), lead workers are simply asked to declare that the family have consented to working with them and have seen the privacy notice by ticking the box at the bottom. The document can then be emailed (see below).

There is a very clear rationale for sharing the Family's Support Needs and Plan with City of York Council which can be explained to families:

- ✓ **Early help guidance** – the lead worker can access bespoke guidance from an Early Help consultant who can guide and steer intervention specifically tailored to the full understanding of the family's needs, over and beyond the general guidance available around early help process, practice and provision across York.
- ✓ **Further support for the family** - evidences a graduated approach to support families should there be a need for further or specialist intervention in the future.
- ✓ **Right conversation, right time** – if there's a new situation that has led to another agency making contact with MASH, the MASH team can contact the lead worker and get a fuller understanding of support needs and make informed decisions in the best interests of the child and family.
- ✓ **Evidencing resource needs** - gathering this information enables data analysis to inform resource allocation across the city and access to funding streams to sustain early help provision.

To notify City of York Council simply email the Family's Support Needs and Plan to York's Early Help Consultant Team – earlyhelpconsultants@york.gov.uk. You will receive an automated response acknowledging receipt of the notification. The Early Help Consultant Team will make contact to offer further guidance and support within 2 working days. If you wish to make contact to update any information, (e.g. a change to the lead worker), you can do this through the same email address; please quote the personal details (name, date of birth, address) of one of the children within the family.

It is recognised that there are times when a family may refuse to give consent for the Family's Support Needs and Plan to be shared with City of York Council. If a family does not consent, practitioners should seek to understand why this is the case and explore their concerns.

Using the tool: Reviewing the Family Support Plan and Recording Outcomes

Section 10 - Review of Our Family Support Plan

Regular planned reviews help to keep plans on track, avoid drift and hold everyone accountable for their part in the plan.

When to review the Family's Support Plan should be needs-led yet as a guide they should be held at least every 6 weeks with the family.

The review presents an opportunity to evaluate whether the actions are on the right track towards meeting the well-being goal(s), reflecting on:

- ✓ What went well?
- ✓ What didn't go as expected?
- ✓ How can any barriers be overcome?
- ✓ Remember to evaluate and understand why things have gone well and whether this learning can be applied elsewhere - a vital part of sustainability.
- ✓ Are there any new actions to be added that can better address the worries and help to meet the well-being goals?

'Blips', even 'crises', may occur along the way. Avoid assuming that these mean there are new worries. It's often an example of what you are already working on. New information may also come to light in reviews. Again, this does not necessarily mean there are new worries and this information is often related to factors that trigger the worries or keep the worries going.

If there are completely new worries update the family's support needs (section 5) and identify a new well-being goal ensuring there are SMART actions recorded to be reviewed next time.

The tool has only one Review template included. It is for the lead worker to copy and paste as many templates as are needed within this dynamic early help assessment and plan tool.

Wellbeing scale at review

Use this section to make a note of everyone who attended the review.

Once actions have been reviewed and progress towards well-being goals discussed, ask everyone in attendance to rate the current level of worry about the child's well-being using the generic scale:

On a scale of 0-10 where 10 is things are working well, the right support is in place and the family no longer need a lead worker and 0 means the family is struggling and without support the worries will get worse - where do people rate the situation?

This offers a powerful space to honour the family's strengths; changes they are making and their progress towards their goals. It also enables an open and honest discussion to identify what needs to happen to increase the scale and to identify any new actions to be added to the family plan that better help to reach the goal(s). It may, if not already raised, bring to light new worries which may require new well-being goals and actions. Importantly, it also gives focus and structure for any differences in professional judgement to be talked through and transparently with the family to determine solutions.

Record the name of each person involved in the scaling.

Record their previous scale 0-10 (if applicable)

Record the scale 0-10 the person rates the current situation and their rationale

Record what each person needs to see for the scale to increase by one or two

➤ **Date of next review**

If support is to continue with the involvement of a lead worker, make a note here of the date of the review.

Submit the updated Our Family Support Needs and Plan to earlyhelpconsultants@york.gov.uk

Section 11 – When the Role of the Lead Worker Ends

There may be multiple reasons for the role of the lead worker ending. It does not necessarily mean that the Family's Support Plan is ending; the strength of the family network may mean that the plan will continue yet without the involvement of a lead worker and/or other agencies.

Mark ☒ to indicate one or more of all applicable reasons for the role of the lead worker ending.

➤ **Well-being goal(s) met**

Mark ☒ to indicate whether the goals have been met. Choose one of four possible outcomes - fully, mostly, some and none.

Section 12 – Summarise how progress will keep going

'Slips and dips' will happen. An important part of the early help process aims to empower families to see for themselves the strengths and skills they have to be able to deal with challenges and manage future problems. Capturing this as a summary on closure draws attention to what works for the family well and what needs to continue to sustain progress. This minimises additional service involvement and reduces the need for agencies to intervene in future.

If a new incident occurs after the role of the lead worker has ended, this section is an important point of reference - as a lead worker you can refer the family back to what works well and the resources they have available to them that they may have stopped using. When shared with

children's services MASH can draw on this information to evaluate with the family the need for further service intervention.

Notifying City of York when the role of the lead worker ends

In all cases if you submitted the Family's Support Needs and Plan during your early help work with the family (expected when multiple support needs or a Team Around the Family was required), submit this again - earlyhelpconsultants@york.gov.uk as a complete document to notify City of York Council your role as lead worker has ended.

Holding a Team Around the Child and Family

It is the role of the lead worker to co-ordinate and facilitate the Team Around the Child and Family (TACF) meeting.

▪ Before the meeting

- 1) Arrange a date, time, duration and location with the family to hold the meeting.
- 2) Invite other workers who needs to attend (if they cannot attend request an update from them on the progress being made related to their work with the child/family).
- 3) Encourage and support, as appropriate, the family to invite any friends and family members that they want to include in the meeting and ask them to let you know who will be attending.
- 4) If this is a first TACF meeting, have copies of the Early Help Assessment and Plan Tool, 'Our Family Support Needs and Plan' ready for the meeting (it is advised that this is shared in advance).
- 5) If this is a first review meeting, in the Tool, copy and paste section 8 – well-being goal(s) and action(s), into section 10, 'Review Our Family Support Plan' ready for the meeting.
- 6) If this is a subsequent review meeting, in the Tool, copy and paste section 10, to have a new review template with the goal(s) and action(s) from the last meeting, ready for the review meeting.

▪ During the meeting

- 1) Ask everyone to introduce themselves.
- 2) Be clear with everyone on the purpose of the meeting, duration and expectations.
 - a) if a first meeting - to explain the worries, share the strengths and well-being goal(s) and to agree actions to achieve these goal(s).
 - b) if a review meeting – to share and discuss the impact of action(s) towards achieving the well-being goal(s).
- 3) Use the Tool to structure and steer the discussion with everyone – if a first meeting - see section 8 (page 12) of this guide and if a review meeting - see section 10 (page 14) of this guide.

Record what is said direct onto the Tool in the appropriate section – 8 if a first meeting and 10 if a review.

NB: If there are any new worries, the TACF will also need to identify an associated well-being goal. Consider if this needs to include any new action; existing action(s) may be sufficient to address this worry and meet this new goal.

- 4) Complete the well-being scale - see section 10 (page 14)
- 5) If there is going to be a further review, agree a date, time, duration and location.
- 6) If the role of the lead worker is to end, complete sections 11 and 12.

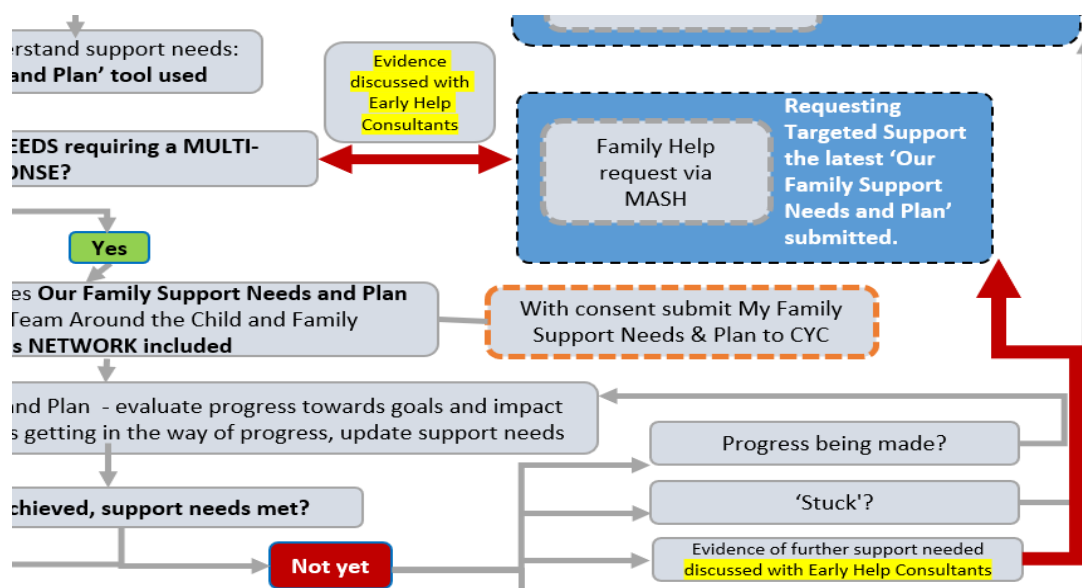
▪ **After the meeting**

- 1) If there were any new worries and well-being goal identified update section 5, Our Family Support Needs.
- 2) If there any new workers or members of the network involved update section 2 and 3.
- 3) Send a copy of the Family's Support Needs and Plan to everyone involved in the TACF.
- 4) If this is the first TACF, send a copy to City of York Council – see section 9 of this guidance.
- 5) If the role of the lead worker is to end make sure sections 11 and 12 of the tool are complete and send a copy of the Tool to earlyhelpconsultants@york.gov.uk

Requesting Family Help

When the early help framework has been applied it is expected that a request to MASH for Family Help will only be made when the Family's Support Plan has been tried and tested and reviews have evidenced that without more intensive support the child and family situation will worsen. It is recognised that there may be exceptions, where during exploration of the family's support needs, the level of worry and complexity of need evidences a possible role for Family Help. In either situation, a discussion with the Early Help Consultants (fig. 6) is expected prior to this request being made to MASH with the most up-to-date copy of the Family's Support Needs and Plan also submitted. Please note, concerns about harm or risk of harm are always to be made to MASH direct.

Figure 6 Requesting Family Help



Please access the image here: [https://i.postimg.cc/PxD0fjBW/image-\(3\).png](https://i.postimg.cc/PxD0fjBW/image-(3).png)

Transfer from Family Help to Early Help

Families may need on-going support beyond the involvement of Family Help. When this happens it will be the responsibility of the Family Help Lead Practitioner to engage the family and liaise with relevant agencies to agree the on-going support and intervention. It is expected that this will be achieved through a Team Around the Family meeting arranged by the Family Help Lead Practitioner at which an early help lead worker can be nominated and the plan can be transferred into the early help assessment and plan tool.

When MASH recommend Early Help

The outcome of an agency or a family contacting MASH includes an early help response is most appropriate. If there is no current lead worker, and as a key professional known to the family, you may be asked to take forward a conversation with the family and use the 'Our Family Support Needs and Plan'. MASH will discuss with you the worries that have been raised and their rationale for their decision that early help is the right response. As part of this conversation, there will be a recognition of any current support and activity in place to determine who is best placed to be the lead worker. In most cases, the family will have spoken about who they feel they would like to undertake this role, and this is usually based on the positive relationship that the family have built with this professional. If you are identified to be the lead worker, MASH will share a summary of the worries, strengths and reasons for early help so that you can use this as a starting point for your conversation with the family.



Raise York
Your Family Hub Network