

# Early Help Bitesize Briefing

## Who is involved?

### Early Help can be provided by every agency.

Early Help required agencies to work together, so that families can help themselves and be supported as soon as a need arises.

Early Help should involve all relevant family members and support networks who currently or could contribute to identified support and should always remain child-centred and responsive to the voice of the child.

## What is Early Help?

**Early Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's outcomes or reduces the chance of the problem getting worse.**

- It is not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by agencies working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in the area.
- The purpose of Early Help is to empower families to be able to make a change that can be sustained to enhance the lives of children and young people, providing the right support is in place at the right time.
- It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family's consent to receive support and services offered. These may be provided before and/or after statutory intervention.

## Top Tips

### Top tips outlined below:

- **A Lead Practitioner can be from any agency:**  
This practitioner should be chosen in conjunction with the family and be the one who is best suited to liaise with the family regarding updates. A Team Around the Family meeting can be held whenever it is felt the best action to explore the family's needs as a collective.
- **The Lead Practitioner is not expected to do everything:**  
They should work in conjunction with other agencies involved and roles shared such as minute taking, chairing meetings etc.
- **Early Help does not just happen within Early Years:**  
This is the period where needs are identified and supported, this is not the age and stage of the child.
- **Early Help does not mean that a child is being harmed, or that the parenting is poor:**  
This involves implementing support as early as possible to prevent children from being harmed. Many parents work hard to meet their child(rens) needs, and sometimes need extra support with things like relationships, housing, finance or their mental health needs. It is important to recognise that we all need help from time to time and offering or accepting this is a strength.

## Remember

### Your Early Help Approach should be:

- Empowering
- Accessible
- Flexible
- Transparent

## Supporting Positive Engagement

**Ways to help support positive engagement with a family when needs have been identified.**

- Hold regular Team Around the Family meetings to ensure all voices are captured and that intervention is responding to the strengths and risks identified.
- Ensure the family have a Lead Practitioner to advocate for them as well as keeping them informed.
- Working collaboratively with the family in a non-judgemental way.
- Reflect on practice that worked well and barriers to elements that did not.
- Use professional curiosity to identify areas that may be missed.
- Work openly and transparently with the family.
- Be aware of language used with families and consider any potential triggers.
- Engage with advice and guidance from the Family Front Door.
- Active and respectful challenge is important when you disagree with the plan to safeguard the child.

## Other Supportive Material

### Other supportive resources to use include:

- Effective Early Help Workshop
- Podcasts
- Resolving Professional Differences
- Effective Support Document
- Needs and support should be captured on an Early Help Assessment (EHA). If required, it can be submitted for further service involvement.
- The Family Strengths and Needs Toolkit
- Consultation Line: 0300 123 2224
- Information Sharing Document
- Trauma Informed Network

