



Early Help in Cambridgeshire



What is Early Help?

Early Help is about ensuring that children and families receive the support they need, at the right time, by bringing together professionals who will listen and work with the whole family to help make things better for everyone.

Who is Early Help for?

Early Help is for everybody in the family, for children, young people and adults. It's your choice whether you have it or not.

Why would I want Early Help?

You might be worried about your child, or you and your family might start to experience some changes or difficulties that you just cannot manage by yourself. Whatever it is, there are a number of ways that Early Help can support you and your family so that small problems do not become big problems.



Step 1: Getting help

If you feel you and your family might benefit from some support, you can approach a professional in your life for example your doctor or a teacher at your child's school to find out more.

Or, it may be that someone else is worried that you are having some problems and they may ask you whether you would like to talk about Early Help and how it could help you.

Step 2: Taking part in an assessment

If you decide to take up Early Help, a professional will talk with you but more importantly listen to you, to find out about any challenges that you and, or your family, are experiencing. They will summarise the discussion in an Early Help Assessment. The assessment will consider the needs of your whole family and help everyone understand your family's situation. This will include the things you want to change and things that may be of concern to others as well.

The assessment is a way of exploring all of these things and is not about blame. It is important you share as much information as you can as this will help get you the right support. However it is up to you how much you say.



Step 3: Consent

The Early Help Assessment is entirely voluntary. At the end of gathering the information, the professional who is doing it with you will ask you to sign the form to agree that the information in this assessment can be shared with appropriate services. There is more information about how your information will be used on the Council's website.

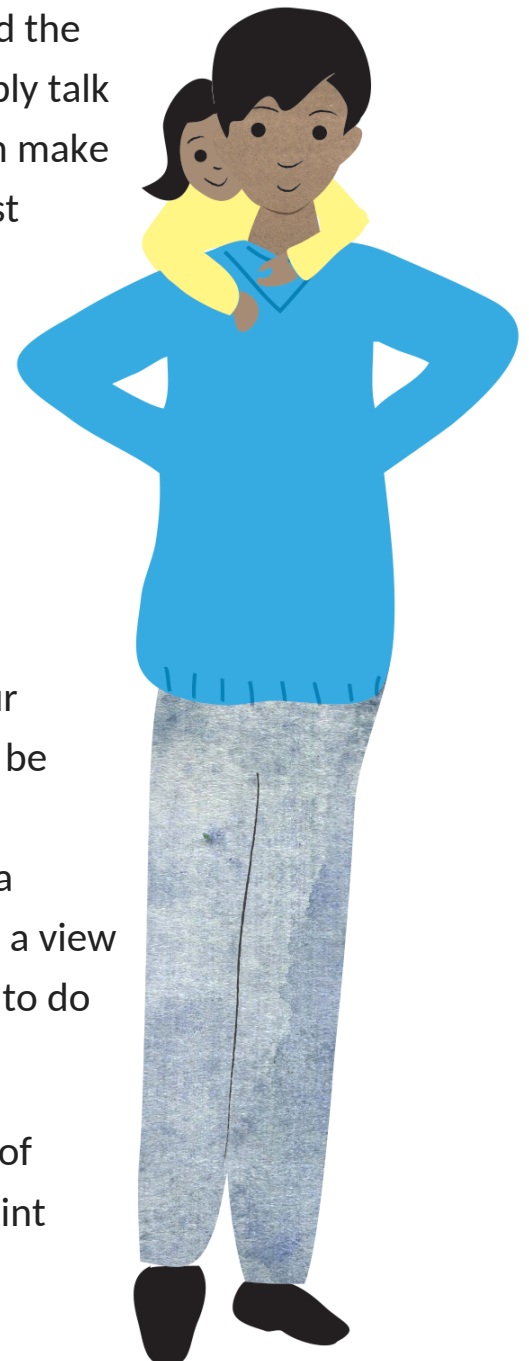
Step 4: Services working together

The Early Help Assessment will be sent to a team called the Early Help Hub who will look at the information, possibly talk to other professionals who know your family, and then make a decision about what service or services would be best placed to support you.

When there needs to be a number of different professionals working with your family, we want to make sure they are working closely together and the work they are doing is well co-ordinated. We call this a Think Family Approach.

So that we can make sure that all of the work with your family is co-ordinated, one person will be identified to be your Lead Professional. They could be from a range of different agencies for example someone from school, a family worker or health visitor. You will be able to give a view about who is best placed to do this and you may want to do some of it yourself.

The Lead Professional's job is to co-ordinate the work of all of the different services involved and be a single point of contact for you.



Step 5: One family plan

One or more different services may become involved alongside the Lead Professional to support the different needs which have been identified.

They will work with you to create one family plan which is your plan of support to help you and your family achieve agreed aims.

It will include:

- A summary of what you want to see change
- What support will be provided for you and different members of your family to help
- Goals or measures so that everyone involved knows what to look out for to see if things are getting better



Step 6: Checking how it is going

When we are working with you, we call all the professionals involved with you, a 'Team Around the Family'.

We expect that the Team Around the Family meet together, including you, at least every 3 months to see how the plan is working and make any changes that are needed such as the support you are receiving.

Step 7: Ending our work with you

When we have reached the point that the goals are being achieved, we will hold one last Team Around the Family meeting to end our work with you and celebrate success.