



Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership



Quick guide to ...

Early Help in Cumbria

Our Vision



"In Cumbria all children will be part of a strong family network living in a thriving community being happy and healthy and able to succeed with a sense of pride."

Our commitment - 'Early Help is Everybody's Business'

Cumbria benefits from robust, effective, successful and longstanding multi-agency working across the diverse and rich partnership. The Cumbria partnership is committed to providing the support that children, young people and their families need, as soon as they need it, when they need it and by the people who are best placed to help.

Anyone from a service which supports families can initiate an Early Help Assessment - Signs of Well-being and Success (EHA) and this can be carried out with any child or young person from pre-birth up to age 19 (up to the age of 25 if the young person has a learning difficulty or disability).

Research suggests that Early Help can:

- *protect children from harm;*
- *reduce the need for a referral to child protection services;*
- *improve children's long-term outcomes.*

(Haynes et al, 2015)

Why Early Help is important

Early Help is a way of working. Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early Help can also prevent further problems arising. Early help can offer children the support needed to reach their full potential (EIF, 2021). Early help can also support a child to develop strengths and skills that can prepare them for adult life (EIF, 2021). It can improve the quality of a child's home and family life, enable them to perform better at school and support their mental health (**EIF, 2021**).

Early Help Team

Early Help Officers provide Early Help consultancy to support any agency undertaking Early Help work.

Early Help consultancy includes:

- Be the first point of contact for advice and guidance, when an agency is unclear if a contact needs to be made to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub, (SHUB).
- Advice if the child or family is already open to Child and Families' Services.
- Support others to complete an Early Help Assessment.
- Support Early Help coordinators, to understand and coordinate the Team Around the Family process.
- Develop skills and knowledge for the effective delivery of Early Help through briefings, workforce development, information, advice and guidance.
- Provide support and challenge to agencies to ensure the work they are completing, alongside children and families, has significant and sustained impact.
- Identify and address any drift or delay.

For more information see the [Early Help Contact Card](#).

Early Help Training

- How to Support Children and Families with Early Help.
- Part A and Part B Training - now enhanced in response to your feedback!

This training will help you to increase your understanding of the Early Help – Signs of Wellbeing and Success assessment and process. Understand your role within the multi-agency Team Around the Family. Gain confidence in how to complete and contribute to the refreshed Early Help – Signs of Wellbeing and Success assessment. Identify and understand how to access support for your further training needs.

Early Help Resources

Early Help Bottom Lines

The Bottom Lines sets out the practice expectations for Early Help support for families in Cumbria.

For more information about the vision for children, young people and families in Cumbria:

Cumbria Early Help Partnership Strategy 2020-2023

The Cumbria Safeguarding Youth Voices have developed a toolkit for safety happiness and health, for young people.

Safety Happiness and Health Toolkit

Early Help and Family Support Panels

If you feel the Early Help support you are coordinating is 'stuck' and not making a difference for children, you can make a referral to the Early Help and Family Support Panel (with parents' consent), to discuss further options of support. To develop the right help at the right time.

Role of the panels:

Provide targeted Early Help services to improve the outcomes for the child.

To provide support that will improve a family's resilience and outcomes or reduce the chance of a problem getting worse.

To provide support to Early help Coordinators and the Team Around the Family to manage risk.

See: **Practitioners Guide**

Recording concerns

It's important to record any concerns you may have about a child, to build up an overview of the child's lived experience so patterns of potentially abusive behaviour can be identified. These records should be shared with your nominated child protection (safeguarding) lead who will consider all the available information and decide whether a referral to the **Cumbria Safeguarding Hub** is necessary.

A message for children and young people....

Sometimes you may need help or extra support to sort out a problem. You don't need to feel alone.

Leaflet for children and young people can be found [HERE](#)

A message for parents and carers....

When your child needs extra support, we want to find the best way forward as soon as possible.

This leaflet explains how everyone will work together to put your family at the heart of decisions made about your child.

Leaflet for parents and carers can be found [HERE](#)

Research in Practice (RIP) Day 2 - Parental Substance Use and Voice of the Child

This is a reminder of the information circulated in yesterday's 5 Minute Briefing.

The impact of parental substance use on child development: Frontline Briefing

Consider the potential impact of problematic parental substance use across different domains of child development to support analysis and critical thinking about the nature of need and risk for individual children and families.

Young person-centred approaches in CE - promoting participation and building self-efficacy: Frontline Briefing and Tool

Explore how to work with risk and the perceived 'choices' of young people affected by child exploitation, in order to build resilience, self-efficacy and involve young people in decision-making about their care.