

# Early Help for your family



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**Getting the right help and support for  
your family at the right time**

A Guide for Families

There are times  
when children,  
young people  
and families  
need extra help.

**Someone might offer this to you,  
but other times you might want to  
ask for it.**

## What is early help?

Early help is a way of getting extra help and support when your family needs it, but getting it as soon as difficulties start, rather than waiting until things get worse.

It's for children and young people of any age and their family. Help can come from all kinds of services and organisations who work together to support your family. You might be using some of these services already, but we want to make sure they are providing the right support for you and your family's needs.

## Why would I seek early help?

It could be that you're worried about your child's health, development or behaviour, or perhaps because you are caring for a disabled child. Maybe your child is affected by family relationships, drugs or alcohol or you are experiencing personal distress or anxiety, financial or housing problems.

By getting help from the right services at the right time, and as early in a child's life as possible, we can help prevent or reduce potential problems for children as they grow up.



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## Who do I ask?

Have a chat with a teacher, health professional or support worker – they can help you look at what types of support are available and who might be able to help. This person will steer you through the help and support you may need.

Your local Family Hub also has lots of services and support for families with children, some especially for children with extra needs.

## How do we work with you?

We work together with you whenever you need our support, and we don't judge.

There is a huge range of services around Doncaster but it's not always obvious which ones are available to you or how to find them.

While every family is different, the way we work is really straight forward. When you need some support for yourself or your child, we work with you to help you make an Early Help enquiry.

“When you start the Early Help process, you're on the path to getting support with any problem you might be facing.”

This enquiry will allocate you a lead practitioner who is likely to be someone you already know. They will work with you to do an assessment of your family's needs. This is known as an Early Help Assessment which helps us speed up your access to almost any service.

When you start the Early Help process, you're on the path to getting support with any problem you might be facing. Early Help is available at any point in a child's life, from pregnancy through to adolescence (and up to age 24 for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

## What sort of services or help do I get?

It depends on what you need and might include services you already get.

We will agree it with you and make sure it all joins up. Here are just a few examples:



### Education and learning

- Schools (teaching and pastoral /education support)
- Nurseries and childcare
- Early learning groups, such as Growing Friends, Sing and Shake, Jumping Tots, Let's Tell a Story

### Family and young people support

- Family workers
- Bereavement support
- Young carers service, or support for carers of any age
- Adult mental health support services
- Drug and alcohol support services

### Health

- GP's and Health Centres
- Health visiting school and nursing services
- Child and young people mental wellbeing services
- Young people's health and wellbeing service

### Advice and welfare

- Job Centre
- Housing support
- Families Information Service

## What happens if I ask for an early help assessment?

You will be fully involved and we will listen to you. It may be that we just talk to you and point you to the support you want. If it's a bit more complicated, we'll need to ask you for information that we write down or type. This is so we can get the right information and share it (if you agree) with people who need to know, so we can better understand your circumstances and match up services that would help you out the most. You'll get a plan showing what you want to achieve and the support you need.



## The stages of Early Help support

### Stage 1 Enquiry and assessment of needs

All services in Doncaster are part of Early Help – for example schools, GPs, housing, health visitors or mental health workers. A professional from any service that works with you or your child (perhaps a teacher, nurse or health visitor), will gather some details about your family. This professional might not be the right person to provide all the right help for you, so they will share your details through an enquiry to the Early Help team.

This team will find the right person to help you. That person will become your Lead Practitioner.

As a parent or carer, you will need to sign a consent form so that your details can be shared with the Early Help team and other services you may already know, or any service that could help you. There are more details about consent on the form at back of this document.

## Stage 2

### Your family plan and your lead practitioner working with you

Your Lead Practitioner will ask you about your needs and together with you start to make a plan for you and your family.

This plan will include access to the services that can give you the best help, for example a midwife; a teacher, job centre, housing officer or a family support worker. Your Lead Practitioner will work alongside you and is your main contact while you need early help support.

Your Lead Practitioner will be the person who will arrange appointments with you, your family and the other services that can help in the best way.

Your children will also be encouraged to discuss their needs and to be at some of the meetings and appointments to ensure the right help is being provided for them, and to ensure their views and wishes are being considered.

### Can I say no to an Early Help assessment?

Yes you can. But we would like to stay in contact with you in case your circumstances alter or you change your mind.

“You will be fully involved and we will listen to you. It may be that we just talk to you and point you to the support you want.”

## What happens when I stop receiving Early Help with a Lead Practitioner?

We want you to become confident and able to find your own solutions for your family. You can continue to use all services that have open access to families and children, but if your needs change then you can ask for further help if you need it at any time.

## Information for older children and young people

If you are a child or aged under 18 and have worries or concerns, you can contact the Early Help team yourself on **01302 734110**, who will be able to answer any of your questions or support you in any way you would like.

You can also call ChildLine for free on **0800 1111**. At ChildLine, you can get help and advice about a wide range of issues and there is always someone to talk to, whatever you are worried about.

Always call **999** if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.





## Getting family information, advice and support at any point in time

There are lots of places you can find out for yourself about the help and support available to you in Doncaster.

The following websites and places have advice, information, activities and groups that might be useful to you in your everyday life at any age.



Families Information Service at  
[www.doncaster.gov.uk/fis](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/fis)



Your Life Doncaster at  
[www.yourlifedoncaster.co.uk](http://www.yourlifedoncaster.co.uk)



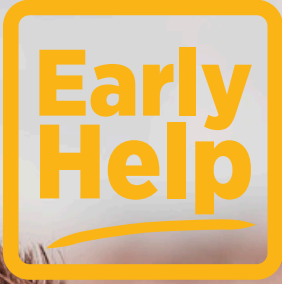
Family Hubs are where you can meet people face to face. There are 12 Family Hubs around Doncaster Borough. Visit  
[www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/family-hubs-and-services](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/family-hubs-and-services)

to find out opening times, group and fun activities and contact details for the nearest Family Hub to you.

The 12 Doncaster Family Hubs are also on facebook.

“We want you  
to become  
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**If you are a child or aged under 18 and have worries or concerns, you can contact the Early Help team yourself on 01302 734110, who will be able to answer any of your questions or support you in any way you would like.**



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## Privacy Notice: What we will do with your data

The information we will be asking you to provide will be used to help us to understand the level of support your family requires.

The information you provide will be processed in accordance with:

- **Children Act 2004:** Safeguard and promote the welfare of children / young people
- **Localism Act 2011:** Public Interest: Prevention and detection of Crime and ASB
- **Other:** Please state

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Please **X** here if this section if not applicable

In order to provide you with the most appropriate service(s) we may need to share your information or gain further information from the following organisations:

- Education establishments, including nurseries, schools, colleges
- Health services, including Health Visitors, Midwives, School Nursing, GP's, CAMHS
- St Leger Homes
- Doncaster Children's Services Trust – Family Support
- Doncaster Council
- Adult & Community Services
- Family & Youth Hubs
- Other voluntary agencies such as Green Gables, Doncaster Foyer, Doncaster YMCA
- Other agencies as required

We will not re-use your information unless the law allows us to or unless you give us further permission for the re-use of your information.

All information supplied will be stored securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

If you have any questions about the collection of your information or if you wish to ask about what rights you have or wish to complain about the use of your information, please contact the Doncaster Children's Services Trust Data and Protection Officer: **DPODCST@dcstrust.co.uk** or **Doncaster Children's Services Trust, Colonades House, Duke Street, Doncaster, DN1 1ER.**

## Family Consent Statement

I have read and understood the Privacy Notice and agree that the information I have provided can be shared with the relevant organisations as listed and understand that my information will be stored securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

### Informed Consent given for:

Child / Young Person Name (1):

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Child / Young Person Name (2):

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Child / Young Person Name (3):

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Child / Young Person Name (4):

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Child / Young Person Name (5):

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Child / Young Person Name (6):

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### Informed Consent Decision:

Child/Young Person can make their own decisions and have consented to accessing Early Help



One Parent has consented to accessing Early Help



Both Parents have consented to accessing Early Help



Child/Young Person's & Parents have all consented to accessing Early Help



Other Person(s) have all consented to accessing Early Help, Please state who & Relationship:



### If proceeding without consent please specify the reason for this:



Children Act 2004, Safeguard and promote the welfare of children / young people



Localism Act 2011 (Public Interest), Prevention and detection of Crime and ASB



Other: Please state



### Informed Consent Restriction:

Please specify any organisation, department or people who information cannot be shared with:



### Signatures of Informed Consent:

Please tick as appropriate (✓)

<b>Name:</b>	
Parent <input type="radio"/> Carer <input type="radio"/> Young Person <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="radio"/> _____	
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Name:</b>	
Parent <input type="radio"/> Carer <input type="radio"/> Young Person <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="radio"/> _____	
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Name:</b>	
Parent <input type="radio"/> Carer <input type="radio"/> Young Person <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="radio"/> _____	
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Name:</b>	
Parent <input type="radio"/> Carer <input type="radio"/> Young Person <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="radio"/> _____	
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Name:</b>	Professional <input type="radio"/>
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

Please confirm that family members have been made of aware of the request for additional Early Help Support, that they have been informed of the next steps and that they will be seen by a identified professional to complete their Early Help Assessment and develop a Family Plan:      **Yes**       **No**

### Next steps:

Early Help Enquiry to be completed by the professional which can be found online at:

[www.doncasterchildrenstrust.co.uk/worried-about-a-child](http://www.doncasterchildrenstrust.co.uk/worried-about-a-child)

A copy of this consent form to be emailed directly to: [EarlyHelpHub@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:EarlyHelpHub@doncaster.gov.uk)



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**Doncaster Children's Services Trust Limited**  
**Colonades House**  
**Duke Street**  
**Doncaster**  
**DN1 1ER**

Telephone **01302 734385**