



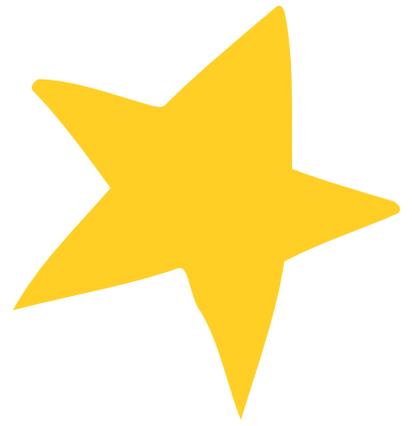
# Early Help for

**Your Family**

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.

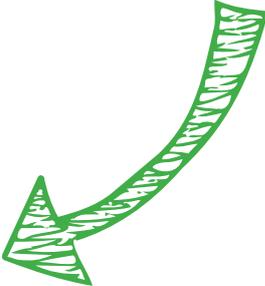


Someone might offer this to you, but other times you might want to ask for it.



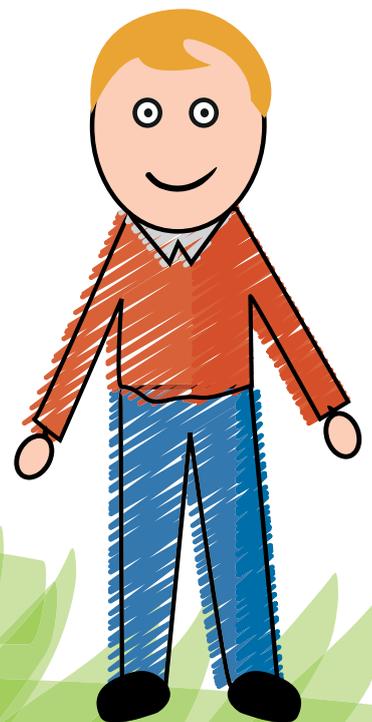
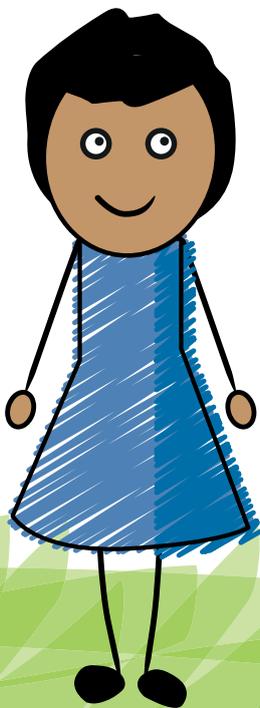
## Local Help

Direct Support



## Early Help

Ongoing Support



# What is Local Help?

Local help is available for families and residents to access when everyday issues become difficult but do not require ongoing or long term support.

Families and residents may need advice and guidance or additional help from services in the community such as health, St Leger Homes, Police and many more who all work together on issues in your community.

The teams know and understand the communities they work in. The teams work well together to support families with swift action when families, residents, or professionals have asked for help.

Staff will have conversations with families, other professionals, and the Your Place team to ensure their response meets local needs and expectations. Your Place teams will respond without delay to identify the best way to provide an appropriate solution.

This will happen quickly, with clear communication and without the need for assessment or formal pathways.

## Why would I seek Local Help?

Local help is here for if you are worried about your current finances, your housing situation, your child's behaviour or attendance at school, anti-social behaviour in your community, you want to access some parenting tips, you are feeling isolated, or you want to know what groups and activities are available in your community.

You may also be have worries about the place you live and the environment, and want to raise issues causing concern for you and your family. Local help is quick, direct and available to all. When accessed at the right time it prevents the need for long-term support and reduces complexity.

## Who and how do I ask?

You can have a conversation with your local GP, Teacher, Housing / Community Officer, Early Help Coordinator, Health Visitor/ School Nurse, Youth Worker, or you can contact the team directly by phone or dropping into the "PLACE" which is the base for the triage team. There is a simple form to complete.

### > Step 1

Have a conversation with a trusted professional or Your Place team

### >> Step 2

Trusted professional shares conversation & consent with Your Place team.

### >>> Step 3

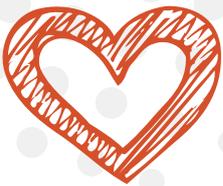
Your Place team review conversation request and will respond by:

- linking you to local support
- discussing support with other professionals and allocating services
- keeping track of progress of the support

You will be kept informed throughout the process regardless of the style of support provided.

## What happens if I need ongoing support?

If you need ongoing support you will be allocated a Lead Practitioner who can support your needs with a plan that you create together.



# What is Early Help?

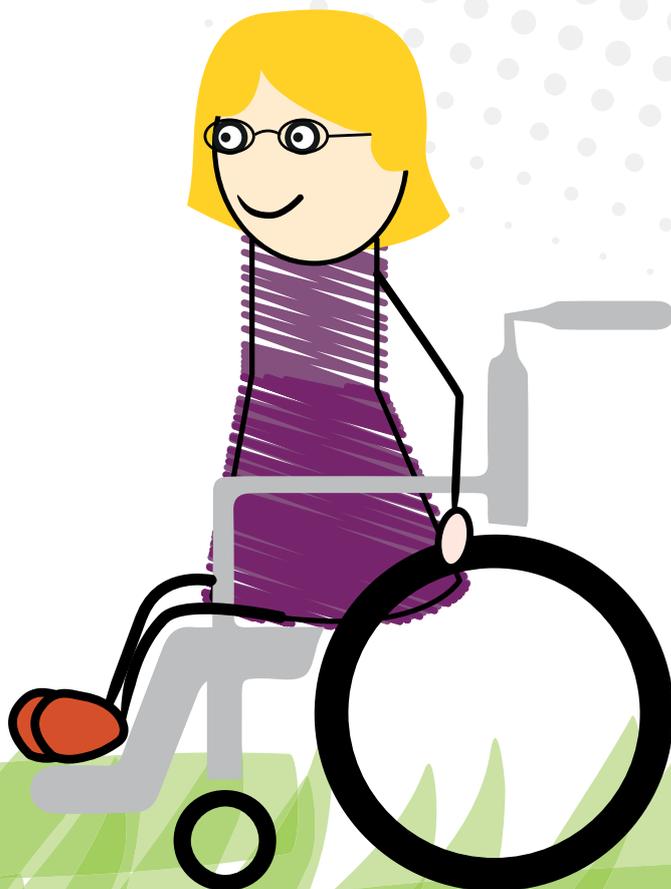
Early help is a way of getting extra help and support when your family needs it, but getting it as soon as difficulties start, rather than waiting until things get worse.

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 you, your child or your whole family are affected by relationships within the family, 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 as possible, we can help prevent or reduce potential problems for children as they grow up.



# 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 of all ages, some especially for children with extra needs.

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

## How do we work with you?

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

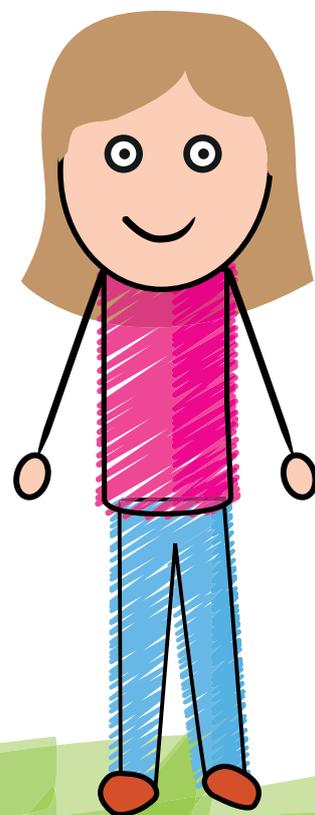
There is a huge range of services around Doncaster but it’s not always obvious which ones are available to you or how to find them.

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

This enquiry will allocate you a lead practitioner who is likely to be someone you already know. They will work with you to understand 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
- 

## Health

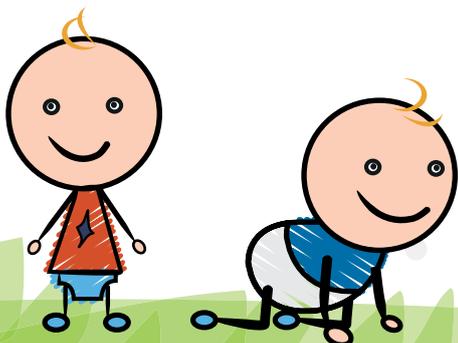
- GPs and Health Centres
- Health visiting school and nursing services
- Child and young people mental wellbeing services
- Young people's health and wellbeing service

## Family and young people support

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

## Advice and welfare

- Job Centre
- Housing support
- Families Information Service



# What happens when I agree to Early Help Support?

## Early Help Enquiry

After speaking with someone about your worries/concerns an Early Help Enquiry will be made to either Local Help or to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This information is then screened by to identify the best person and organisation to become your family's Lead Practitioner.

As a parent or carer, you will need to sign a consent form so that your details can be shared to ensure we find the right person to support you, and that you only have to share your story once.

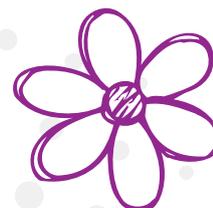
## Lead Practitioner

A Lead Practitioner will work alongside you and will be 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 will bring in the other service who might be able to help you and your family.

All services in Doncaster are part of Early Help and lots of difference professionals can hold the Lead Practitioner Role – for example schools, GPs, housing, health visitors, mental health workers, family lead practitioners and family support workers.

Your Lead Practitioner should be somebody who knows you and your family well and is able to build a trusting relationship with you.

Your Lead Practitioner will support your family and they will coordinate an Early Help Assessment, a Whole Family Plan and Team Around the Family meetings where needed.



## What is an Early Help Assessment?

An Early Help Assessment is a form completed in partnership with a family to identify strengths and needs. An Early Help Assessment can help practitioners to identify what a family would like to change and to develop a Whole Family Action Plan.

You will be fully involved and we will listen to you. Your children will also be encouraged to discuss their needs and have their voice heard during the assessment.

There are other tools that are used in Doncaster to support the Early Help Assessment such as Family Star Plus, My Star or the Graded Care Profile 2. These tools and more support your Lead Practitioner to identify the strengths and needs for your family.



## Whole Family Plan

Once the Early Help Assessment is completed you, your family and the lead practitioner will have identified what is working well, what you are worried about and what needs to happen next. The Whole Family Plan will focus on what needs to happen next. This plan should be reviewed regularly, to ensure everybody is working towards achieving the best outcomes for you and your family.

## Team around the Family

Once you have agreed the plan, some of the support your family needs may require other services input, for example a midwife, a teacher, job centre, housing officer or a family support worker. Your Lead Practitioner will talk with you and arrange the team who will support you in the family meetings.

The Lead Practitioner can call a Team around the Family meeting, which brings you, your family and all of the services working with your family, around the table to re-assess, review and amend the plan.

All members of the family can attend these meetings and it is really important that your children have a voice at these meetings. They can attend in their own right, or speak to somebody the trust to ensure the right help is being provided for them and to ensure their views and wishes are being considered.

## Do I need to agree to an early help assessment to get support?

We can point you in the direction of a range of support that does not require an early help assessment (see local help) but the assessment, if needed, will ensure access to more support. Whichever decision you make, we will support you as best we can and you can change your mind at any point.

## 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, and access local help if needed, but, if your circumstances change and you need further help you can ask for 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 who will be able to answer any of your questions or support you in any way you would like:  
01302 734110

You can also call ChildLine for free where 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: 0800 1111

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:

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



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



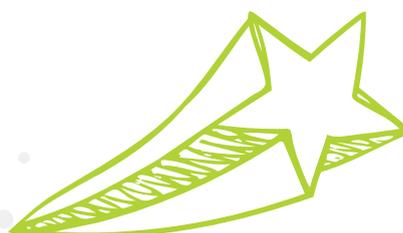
Family Hubs are where you can meet people face to face. There are 12 Family Hubs around Doncaster. To find out opening times, group and fun activities and contact details for the nearest Family Hub, visit:



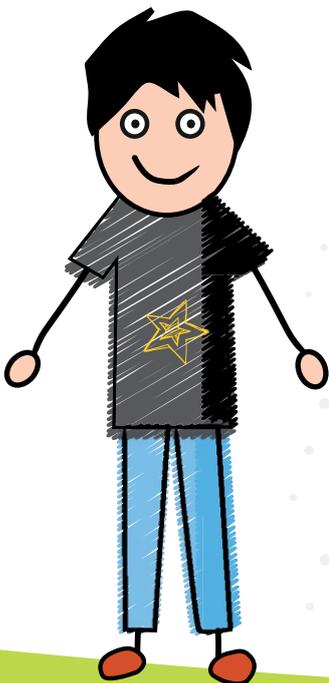
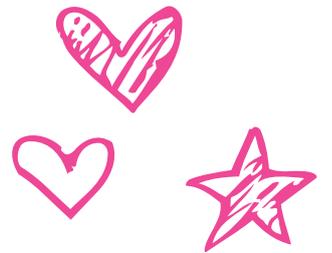
[www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/family-hubs-and-services](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/family-hubs-and-services)



The 12 Doncaster Family Hubs are also on Facebook.



“We want you to become confident and be able to find your own solutions for your family.”



# Privacy Notice:

Doncaster Council is the Data Controller for the purposes of the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. The information you provide helps us to support you and your family and meet our legal responsibilities, for example an assessment of social care or carer support needs. This Privacy Notice explains what information we collect about you, how we use it and your information rights.

This notice relates to Doncaster Council's Early Help services and systems and explains what personal data (information) we hold about you, how we collect it, how we use it and may share it. It also includes the lawful bases on which it does this and should be read together with our corporate privacy notice which provides more detail about how we process your data as an organisation and your rights.

## Doncaster Early Help services

Provides and works with a wide range of support services to children, young people and families. Dependent on your need, we can provide support through universal, targeted or specialist services, working with you, other teams within Children's Services and partner agencies, to make sure you get quick and easy access to a wide range of support when you need it. We aim to reach families who are vulnerable to life's challenges and those with multiple complex needs. Our services are offered across the borough in a range of community settings.

The data collected will include personal characteristics such as your name, contact details, family situation, and ethnic group and may also include any medical information. We need to use this personal, and often sensitive information, to:

- Help make the right decisions about the type of service, you or your family might need
- provide appropriate support and care to meet your families needs.
- assess whether our services are making a difference
- develop and improve services and measure how well the council as a whole is doing
- administer and protect public funds

We may use your contact details to ask if you would like to provide feedback or take part in local or national surveys about early help.

The Council is committed to meeting its data protection obligations and handling your information securely. You should make sure you read and understand this notice before submitting your information to us.

## What information about you do we collect?

We use the following information to help in different ways:

- personal information (such as name, date of birth and address)
- characteristics (such as gender, ethnicity and disability)
- details of the services and events that you have accessed through Early Help targeted services
- Information you provide to us through the early help assessment and family plans (this helps us understand what support you need, by whom and when. This is also monitored to make sure that we have the right involvement at the right time)

## How will your information be used?

As a Local Authority we ensure that the use of personal/special category data meets all of our legal and statutory duties.

We use personal/special category data to:

1. support children, young people and families, and to monitor their progress
2. provide children, young people and families with help that meets their personal, social (wellbeing), emotional, academic and employment needs
3. assess the quality of our services
4. evaluate and improve our policies on how we provide support to families
5. safeguard and protect children and young people
6. to contact you and get feedback on our services and strategies, to ensure we can deliver a better service
7. to let you know about events/activities/ services that may be of interest to you, if you have agreed for us to do so

## How do we collect information about you?

We collect personal/special category information through various sources including direct contact from you and your family, assessments, from other professionals, telephone conversations, email communication, face to face visits, surveys and questionnaires. In order to comply with GDPR, we will inform you at the point of collection, whether you are required to provide certain information to us or if you have a choice in this.

We also work with and collect information from other sources, that can include:

- schools (attendance and exclusion information, details to support statutory processes, unique pupil number and pupil characteristics) employment services from our internal services and the Department of Work and Pensions (adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people who are at risk of worklessness)
- the Probation Service and Police (anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, criminal offenses, probation information and young people missing from home)
- health services (information about your additional requirements)
- housing providers

This list is not exhaustive and will depend on the services you and your family need.

## How long will we keep your information?

We only keep your information for as long as we need to, early help case files and all other information will be securely destroyed 6 years from the date of the last contact.

## Who will your information be shared with?

We sometimes need to share your information within the Council or with other organisations. We will only share your information when necessary and when the law allows us to, and we will only share the minimum information we need to. For Early Help we may need to share your information with:

- Government departments such as the Department for Education (DfE), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Home Office
- Ofsted and other joint agency inspectorates for the purposes of Children Services Inspections and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Other council departments such as Adult Social Care teams, Finance departments
- Commissioned partners/contractors who undertake our work
- Health providers, such as the NHS
- Other District/Borough Councils
- Police for the purposes of fraud and crime prevention
- Education providers such as schools that a child attends or has attended
- Other Local Authorities who have contact with a child
- Regulators, such as Ofsted
- Support services for a child or a parent
- Courts for the purpose of any proceedings in relation to a child or adult; and
- Any other agency responsible for safeguarding children and young people

We share your personal information with the above partners and organisations as part of our contractual agreements and legal duties as a local authority.

In certain cases, we may also share your information with other individuals and organisations. For example, information may be shared if you make a complaint to your Councillor, if the sharing would help with a safeguarding issue or to help to prevent a crime. Sometimes, we might share your information without your knowledge.

The Council will never sell your information to anyone else.

## Data Protection Officer (DPO)

The Council is required by law to have a Data Protection Officer. The DPO has a number of duties, including:

- monitoring the Council's compliance with data protection law
- providing expert advice and guidance on data protection
- acting as the point of contact for data subjects
- co-operating and consulting with the Information Commissioner's Office

The Council's Data Protection Officer can be contacted by email at: [information.governance@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:information.governance@doncaster.gov.uk)

**If you would like a printed copy of the full Privacy Notice, please ask your lead practitioner or your trusted professional.**

Alternatively, the full Privacy Notice can be viewed online at: [www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/early-help](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/early-help)

# Consent Statement



**DONCASTER  
SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN  
PARTNERSHIP**

Single Agency support and The Early Help Assessment and TAC/F is a voluntary process and consent from the Child, Young Person and Family is required before the information in this assessment is shared outside of your agency.

## Family Consent Record

**Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board Children and Young People's Services**

**Informed consent for:**

Parent/Carer

Parent Carer

Child/young person

Child/Young person

**Consent dates:**

**Privacy notice issued:**

(If no, please action this as soon as possible)

**Consent decision:**

- Child can make his/her own decisions and has agreed to the single agency support or an Early Help Assessment
- One Parent has agreed to single agency support or to the Early Help Assessment
- Both parents have agreed to single agency support or the Early Help Assessment
- Child & Parents have agreed to single agency support or to the Early Help Assessment
- Parent (s) have agreed to single agency support but NOT agreed to the Early Help Assessment
- Neither child nor parents have agreed to the Early Help Assessment.

**If proceeding with enquiry without consent please specify the reason for this:**

(This is mandatory to be completed if consent not sought)

**Related Person(s) deciding on the consent:**

**Other Person(s) deciding on consent:**

**Further details:**

**Consent given for ALL departments and users**

**Comments:**

### **Signatures of Consent**

I agree to single agency support or to an Early Help Assessment taking place.

I understand that the information that is relevant for my child/my needs will be recorded and securely stored as a paper or electronic file.

I agree that information can be shared with other professionals in order to help provide and co-ordinate support to my family.

Parent / Carer / Child / Young Person

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

Practitioner

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**