

Guide to completing an early help assessment

The early help assessment is a tool to help families identify and explore their needs and consider what support can be put in place to help them. This guidance will walk through the early help assessment tool and how to complete it.

The early help assessment also acts as a route to request targeted support where there is a **clear identified need**. Please read the information about the Targeted Intervention Service and what constitutes an appropriate referral prior to making a request for targeted support.

The early help assessment tool is available at www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/EarlyHelp. Contact **supportingfamilies@york.gov.uk** for advice and guidance at any point throughout the early help assessment and team around the family process.

1. Your household

Complete this section with details of all household members. If the child is unborn, please include the estimated due date if known.

2. Your support network

Use this section to identify the family's **personal** and **professional** support networks. This will outline what support the family is already receiving and help identify the right people and services to consider including in the team around the family.

3. Reason for assessment

Explain the reason for initiating the assessment. It may be helpful to answer questions such as: *What has prompted the early help assessment? What are the family or services seeing/experiencing which suggests they need some extra help?*

4. Family wellbeing tool/scale

This section can help the lead practitioner and family to explore the different areas of the family's life. It's important to consider what is going well so this can be built upon, alongside considering where there are difficulties the family need support with.

The final column is to record what needs to happen or change to make things better for the family. Consider, for example: what would 'good' look like in relation to the child's education? This could be asked of each area, particularly those scoring below a 6.

Following the areas of need, there is a scaling tool for the family to score their view of their overall circumstances. This can be really helpful to track progress for the family.

5. Family plan

Use the information within the family wellbeing tool to create the family action plan. This will outline what the family can look to achieve themselves and what is being asked of the professionals supporting them. The plan provides clarity on who is doing what, by when, and should be reviewed at the first team around the family meeting.

Sometimes it may be appropriate to create the plan at the first team around the family meeting. In this case, the initial plan may involve actions to set a date for the meeting and ensure relevant professionals are invited.

6. Additional views and comments

Use this section to record any additional information you or the family may want recording. For example, should a parent not wish their early help assessment to be shared with another family member such as an ex-partner, this can be recorded here.

7. Next steps

Once the assessment is complete, there will be a clearer picture of the family's needs which will inform what the appropriate next step is.

- Where the next step is either a team around the family meeting, single agency support, or support by universal services, please tick the appropriate box and send to supportingfamilies@york.gov.uk.
- If the assessment identifies a need to request targeted support, please tick box 4 and send to mash@york.gov.uk.

If you plan to support the family via team around the family meetings, but would also like to request targeted intervention to support a specific identified need, please send the early help assessment to both mash@york.gov.uk and supportingfamilies@york.gov.uk.

8. Agreement

As early help only takes place with the family's agreement, tick the boxes to indicate the family agrees to the sharing of their information within the assessment. Agreement must also be obtained and clearly recorded in order to refer a family for targeted intervention. Record the parent/carer's name and signature, or if the form is digital, the lead practitioner click the box to indicate the family has given verbal agreement.

9. Targeted Intervention Service referrals only

Only complete this section if you are requesting targeted intervention for the family. Provide clear details of why you are requesting targeted intervention. You must explain what specific support you are requesting from the Targeted Intervention Service, and why the family's needs cannot be met solely by universal services or the current involved agencies. **If this section is not completed, the referral will not be accepted.**

Once you have completed an Early Help Assessment please update the Supporting Families Team by emailing: supportingfamilies@york.gov.uk