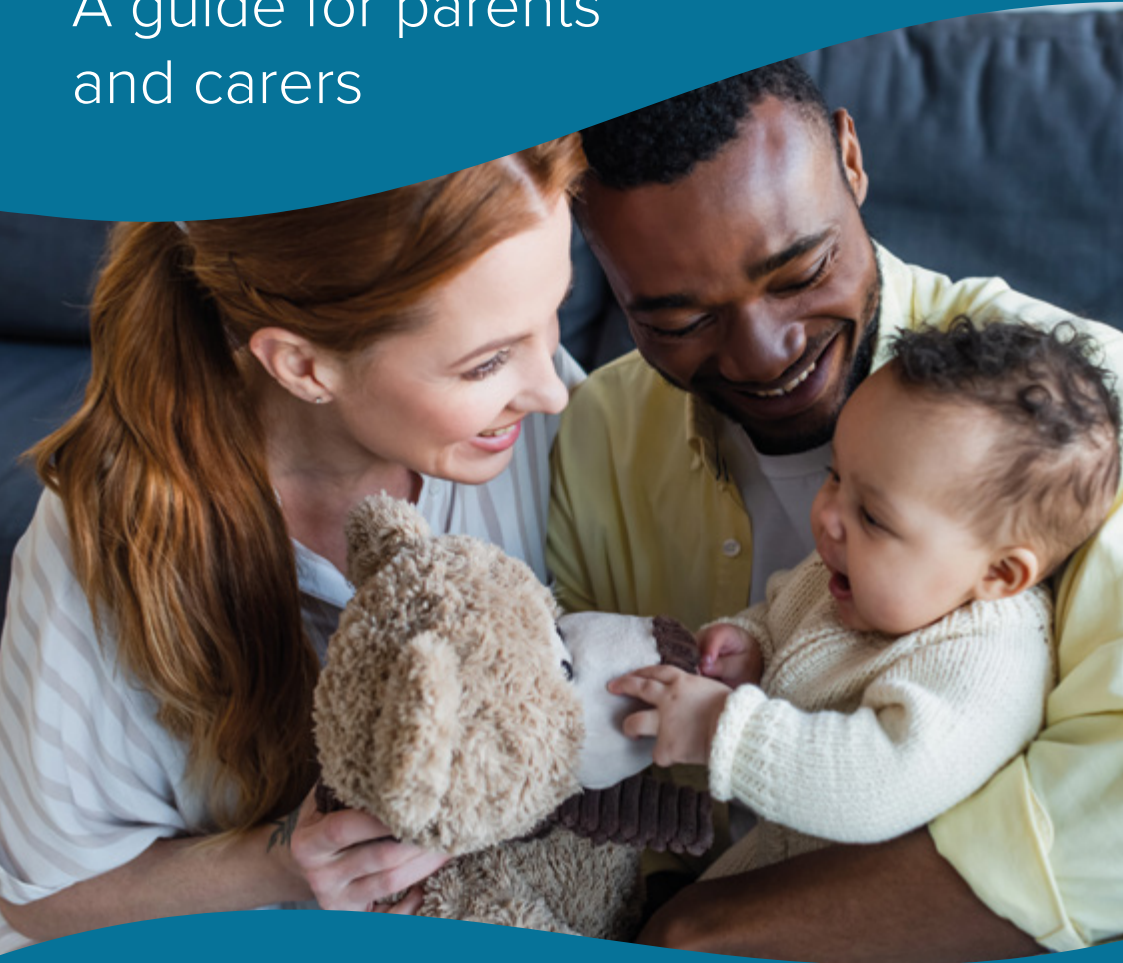


# Early Help Assessment

A guide for parents  
and carers



Our aim is to help your family receive the right support from the right people at the right time.



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

## What is the Early Help?

All families can go through difficult times and may need some support. Early Help is about a conversation to work out how to stop small problems turning into bigger problems.

## Where can I get Early Help?

If you feel you and your family need support, ask someone in your life that you trust about Early Help Assessments. This could be your health visitor, school teacher, nursery worker or housing support worker. Sometimes someone who is already working with you may ask you if you would like to talk about Early Help.

## What will happen?

This support is voluntary; you and your family can choose if you wish to go ahead. We will ask you some questions, write down what you say and talk to you and your family to help us get a good picture of your needs.

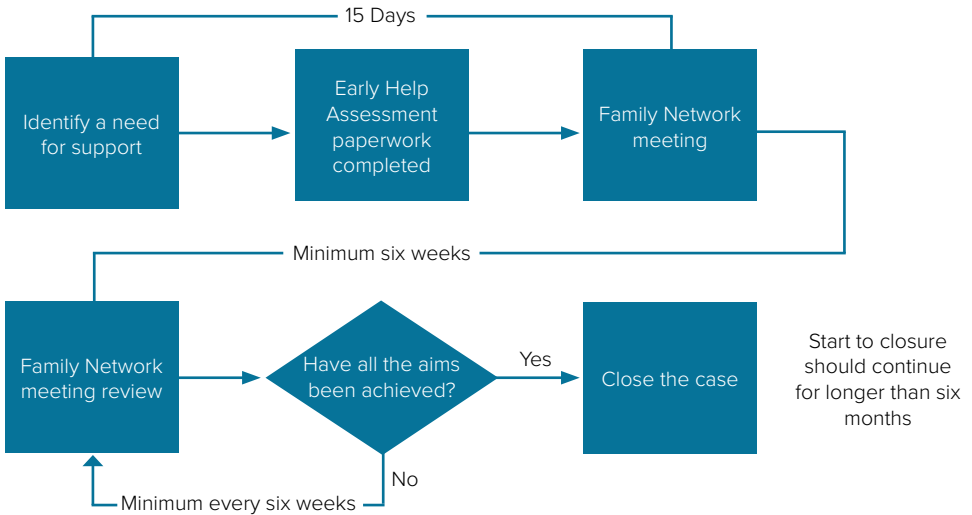
Based on the information you provide, we will find the best people to support you. Someone will be chosen to be your main worker. They are called the **'Lead Professional'** and will be your key point of contact so you do not need to tell your story over and over again.

What happens next can be different for every family. Everyone who is working with you will be invited to a meeting called a **Family Network meeting**. Together you will talk and write down a **family plan**.

This team will work with you to help you.

Your views and the views of your children will be gathered throughout.

## The Early Help Assessment journey will look like this:



## Consent and Information Sharing

We will only share your information with those people who can support you. You will need to give consent by signing the consent form to receive the support and for us to share your information. The only time we will share your information without your consent is when:

- Somebody is at risk of harm.
- To help prevent or detect a serious crime.

All data is stored and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. You have the right to see the information we hold about you at any time. If you wish to see your Information you can email [complaints@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@darlington.gov.uk) or telephone **01325 406777**.

## Feedback and Complaints

Our aim is to put you and your family first and provide you with the best possible service. It is important you have the opportunity to tell us what you think about the services provided. Your lead professional should talk to you about how you feel about the way things are going throughout the time they work with you so you can speak to them about the problem. Alternatively you can:

- Telephone: 01325 406777
- Email: [complaints@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@darlington.gov.uk)
- Contact the Early Help Coordinator on 01325 405635.

## Safeguarding Concerns

Where there is a concern regarding a child's safety, an Early Help Assessment would **NOT** be appropriate - an immediate referral to the Children's Front Door is required.

Telephone: 01325 406222 (Option 2).

In an emergency, where there is a concern for the child's immediate safety, call Darlington Police on 999.

Information about other services for children & young people and adults service providers can be found on the Darlington Living well website - [livingwell.darlington.gov.uk](http://livingwell.darlington.gov.uk)

This document will be made available on request in Braille, large print, audio, easy read, electronically and in other languages.

Telephone 01325 406222.

This leaflet is endorsed by  
Darlington Safeguarding Partnership.

