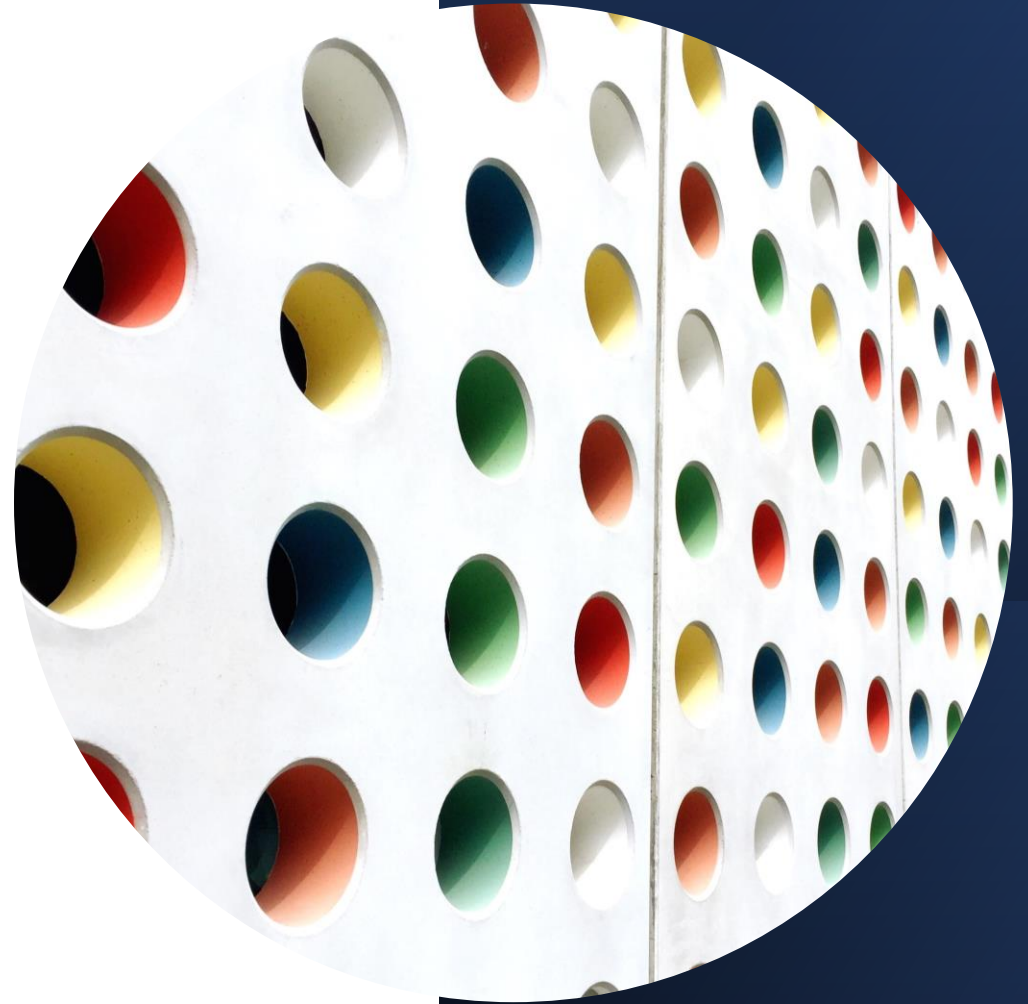


Practice Development: Continuum of Need

Early Help Assessment & Plan

September 2021





Information Sharing

Go straight to Level 4 as soon as risk of significant harm is suspected

If in doubt, consult with agency safeguarding leads, or the Duty Social Worker in your area:
Lancashire 0300 123 6720; Blackpool 01253 477299; Blackburn with Darwen 01254 666400

Revised CON

Considering who is this level for and what support will be provided.

Level 1 needs

Universal

Most children, young people and families will experience challenges in their lives that impact on their wellbeing. Most families will be able to weather these challenges (are resilient to them) either without help from services, or with advice, guidance and support from universal services, including empathy and understanding.

Level 2 needs

Universal Plus

Some children, young people and families will need support from people who know them well and have established relationships with them to meet some challenges where advice and guidance has not been enough to help the family achieve change or where a child or young person needs additional support to help them to thrive.

Level 3 needs

Intensive

A small number of children, young people and families will experience significant difficulties and will need coordinated support from experts working with them to find sustainable solutions that reduce the impact of challenge on the wellbeing and development of children and young people.

Level 4 needs

Specialist

In exceptional cases families need specialist, statutory support that is designed to maintain or repair relationships and keep families together wherever possible. In some very specific circumstances, the needs are so great that children need to be away from their family to ensure that they are protected from harm and in these circumstances the local authority becomes their "corporate parent".

Introduction: Your Family's Early Help Assessment

The Family's Early Help Assessment will replace the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across Lancashire as of the 6th September 2021.



The Early Help Assessment is an intervention with a family to gather, explore and analyse with them information about all aspects of the child or young person (and their family's) life and then to identify areas where change will address support needs and positively impact on their lived experiences.



This information is recorded on an Early Help Assessment form which includes the family's Early Help Plan.



Your Family's Early Help Assessment is available to all practitioners and professionals working with children, young people, and their families across Lancashire. Working alongside families from a holistic, strength-based approach when areas of support are first identified to prevent escalation towards crisis and the need for more intensive and specialist intervention.



The Early Help Assessment and Plan, will be reviewed via Team Around the Family meetings for the wider partnership of services to provide families with the right support at the right time.

Assessment and Plan

All Early Help Assessments and Plan must be submitted to the Early Help Assessment Team within Lancashire County Council who are, as guardians responsible for the storage of all records.

Prior to submitting the Early Help Assessment, a Service User number (SU No.) for each child must be requested by sending the full name and date of birth / estimated due date.

Planning.....the process can be thought of in four stages

Stage 1 – Identify and respond to the child / young person's needs early and seek consent

- The most appropriate person to support the family discusses with them the needs identified, explains the benefits of an Early Help Assessment and asks if they would like to progress.
- Work with the family to undertake the assessment jointly, ensuring that all child / young people are spoken to alone where age appropriate any contact other services involved.

Stage 2 – Prioritise the areas of need and start to develop the initial Plan

- Explore family networks and identify who may be able to give support and plan a Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting.
- Agree with the family Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Realistic, Timely (SMART) outcomes and record them on the assessment within the action plan. Remember to set clear timescales for each individual aspect of the plan.
- Agree with family the sharing of information with other professionals involved in the plan.

Planning.....the process can be thought of in four stages

Stage 3 – Co-ordinate support through a Team Around the Family (TAF)

- As soon as possible following the completion of the Assessment and Plan, an initial TAF meeting of all professionals supporting the family must be arranged
- Agree the action plan and ensure that all professionals and family members are aware of their responsibilities and contributions to the plan.
- Agree a date for the next Team Around the Family Meeting within 4 to 6 weeks (depending on the level of need) to review the actions and progress made.
- Work with the family over the forthcoming weeks to complete the actions in the Plan.

Step 4 – Review progress through subsequent Team Around the Family Meetings

- The children / young people within the family must be supported to contribute so that their voice is heard.
- The scaling RADAR will be re-visited briefly during each TAF meeting as a measure of progress in the parent / carer approach to change. ▪ Any additional support needs identified and the action required to address these can be included in the plan.
- At the final TAF meeting when the action plan has met the family's needs and there is evidence of positive impact on the children / young person the Early Help Assessment can be closed.
- An exit strategy including signposting to universal services and identified strategies for the family to sustain progress without ongoing intervention should be in place.

Early Help Assessment

Reason for
referral/support.....

D: WHAT'S HAPPENING FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

What has led you to request support for your child(ren) and your family?

Tools/Resources/Strategies to help complete this section:

- Request for support

Referral has been made by school due to the escalating behaviour of Sam at school and home. Sam lives at home with his mum (Stacey) and younger siblings (Oliver and Erin). Sam's mum and step-dad (Mark) have separated 4 months ago. Mark is dad to Oliver and Erin. Mark no longer lives in the area and has very little contact with the children. Sam does not see his biological father. Mum states that she is struggling to manage Sam's aggressive outbursts and him "trashing the house". It is starting to impact on the younger siblings as they are witnessing Sam's outbursts.

Sam is aware of the referral and has said "**I feel angry all the time, I don't mean to get mad but can't help it**".

Early Help Assessment

Radar Scale

E: FAMILY RADAR: ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN AND FAMILY

Thinking about the different areas of family life; What do you think is going well for your child(ren) and family? What you are concerned about? What do you think is having an impact on your child(ren)? Where do you want to make changes? What are the views of the people supporting you?

Feeling Safe	Do you feel that you are?	1. Stuck <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Ready for Change <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Exploring Options <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Taking Action <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Achieving <input type="checkbox"/>	6. Maintaining Change <input type="checkbox"/>
	Supporting information: Tools/Resources/Strategies to help complete this section: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Capture voice of the child use resources to support with this.- Capture the voice of both parents, make sure you evidence each voice and show this clearly - who says what and if there is difference- Other agencies perspective i.e. school have raised concerns about home environment- Reference cycle of change- Enter here any discrepancy between FSW view and families view on the score, families and professional scores and what evidence supports this - at this point you can document challenge						

Being Well (Body and Mind)	Do you feel that you are?	1. Stuck <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Ready for Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. Exploring Options <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Taking Action <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Achieving <input type="checkbox"/>	6. Maintaining Change <input type="checkbox"/>
	Supporting information: Example: Stacey has said it has been difficult since Mark (<u>Step-Dad</u>) has left, especially since he has not been in touch recently as Sam and Mark always had a good relationship and spent time at the weekends going to football. Mum said she tries to spend time with all the children but sometimes struggles to do things with Sam because of having the younger children. Stacey says she tries to keep calm when Sam is acting up but sometimes she does shout back as she doesn't know how to handle his behaviour. Sam's angry outbursts are starting impact on the younger children are they are witnessing them and getting upset. Sam says that he "Doesn't know how to stop feeling so angry" he tries to calm down by going in his room but sometimes this doesn't work. "I try and go for a walk, but mum needs my help with my brother and sister or doing jobs in the house".						

Other areas of radar....

- Learning, Education and Work
- Home and Money
- Family Life, Hobbies and Activities
- Being Well – Body and Mind
- Parenting, Behaviours and Boundaries
- Feeling Safe
- Relationships, Friends and Support Network
- Goals and Ambitions

Early Help Assessment

CYP'S Voice.....

What are the child(ren) / young person's thoughts about the situation? What do they feel is going well? What are they worried about and what do they feel needs to change? (Professionals can use the activities available in the Enabling Children's Voice Toolkit to support this section)

Tools/Resources/Strategies to help complete this section:

- For younger children ensure you use observation, watch parent child interactions, observing play etc... (Observe all CYP)
- C&YP Radar should be used for this
- FIDO
- Use age appropriate tools to capture the voice of the child open ended questions
- List each CYP separately, add voice of child in Bold

Example:

Sam

Sam feels safe at home and when out with friends, however, wouldn't feel as safe around the town on his own. Sam states that he has never tried drugs "**because I know what it does to people.**"

School report that Sam has been achieving well in all subjects until recently. When asked what Sam thinks causes his outbursts at school he said, "**I get blamed at school for nothing, I get bored in lesson as I have done all my work before the others so I end up trying to talk to my mates, the teachers shout at me and then I get mad back, they usually end up sending me out of class**". Sam said his favourite lesson is engineering "**I really like engineering as I get to use the machines and my teacher is really nice**". Sam said he would like to do an engineering course at college.

Sam reports to feeling mostly happy at home although recently he said he feels more angry, "**I hit the wall sometimes and throw things but I wouldn't hit a person I sometimes get mad at my mum and shout at her.**" When asked what causes Sam to feel like this he said, "**Mum is always asking me to help out at home, I never get time to play on my x-box like I used to do**". When asked if Sam sees Mark he said, "**No, not anymore I don't know why?**". Mum reports that the children haven't seen Mark (Dad) in the last 3 months he hasn't been in touch apart from the odd text to Sam. Mum Said Sam and Mark usually spent time together at weekends and went to football.

When asked what Sam feels needs to change, he said, "**I just want to feel back to myself and not as angry**".

Early Help Assessment

Background info.....

G: YOUR FAMILY'S STORY

Have you, your child(ren) or family members needed support in the past? What was this for? Who did you get support from and what helped?

Tools/Resources/Strategies to help complete this section:

This is the opportunity to find out more about the family. Choosing from the suite of available tools may support you in getting more information from family members, this may provide a more complete assessment and a better understanding of the lived experience of the CYP than if you just complete the sections as part of a conversation. Visual tools can be very helpful. This section is not just about the 3 questions above it is recording the family story, what are the significant events and relationships that make up that story and what it is like to be a child within it.

The Health and Wellbeing Grid – is quite a simple tool that explores strength, difficulties, introduces the possibility of change and puts children at the centre of this.

Chronologies/Life road map – will help to visually explore family history.

Cultural Genograms – Helps sort out family relationships, where support and protection can be found, where ongoing conflict is an issue, and patterns of behaviour re-occur over generations.

These tools may be used whilst completing other sections of the assessment also particularly the family radar when the family are contemplating what changes are needed.

Example:

The family have previously received support from the CFWS. The focus was on parenting and managing behaviours within the home as well as Stacey's capacity to set boundaries, respond to some of her children's needs, to understand her own emotions as well as Sam's emotional anxieties and behaviour.

Sam was referred to the Youth Council Group to allow him to express himself, have an outlet, and to contribute to the community and become aware of mental health issues which he did attend for a period of time. Direct work sessions were also held with Sam focussing on emotion and behaviour. These helped a bit but did not address how Sam deals with his anger. A referral to Child Action North West was completed for Family Therapy which ceased due to the Covid restrictions in place. Several Team Around the Family meetings were held to bring additional services together to ensure that support was in place for the whole family which resulted in an increase of support from Sam's school.

Family Group Conference has been discussed with the family; however, they don't feel that this would be the most appropriate support.

Some of the tools above could be used to explore their needs further and help them to recognise what support would be helpful to them.

Early Help Assessment

Analysis.....

I: ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS (To be completed by the professional, see guidance for support)

How is, what is happening within the family impacting on the day to day lives of the children? What are the strengths, protective factors and levels of resilience within the family? Are the family ready to make change? What needs to happen to improve outcomes for the children & young people now and over the coming weeks? What are the concerns if no changes are made?

Tools/Resources/Strategies to help complete this section:

This is where you review all the information gathered from all family members and other professionals through the use of tools, observation and motivational interviewing techniques to draw together your informed professional analysis of the situation and the parental capacity to change. Identify the strengths and protective factors in addition to making recommendations of what needs to happen to improve outcomes.

Example:

Sam reports that he has been feeling increasingly angry although has struggled to articulate the reasons for this. There have been previous periods of instability in Sam's life; he has witnessed previous domestic abuse towards his mum from her first partner (Sam's dad) and periods of parental conflict between his mum and step dad who have recently separated. Prior to this separation Sam and his mum describe a close attachment between Sam and his step dad who spent regular time together at weekends but there has been little contact from Mark over the last 3 months. In my professional opinion the cycle of conflict and loss of contact with his dad and step dad is a significant contributory factor to Sam's current lived experience and his feelings of anger.

Sam's school report that he was been doing well academically until recently where he has been displaying angry outbursts. The timing of this has coincided with the separation of his mum and step dad. These outbursts have resulted in Sam being sent out of the classroom. There are concerns that Sam could ultimately face a period of exclusion if the situation does not improve, leading to poorer educational outcomes.

I have observed positive attachments and emotional warmth between mum and Sam. Mum is in employment, I have witnessed structured routines within the home and she demonstrates the capacity to keep the children safe. Mum has a positive relationship with her mother who sees the children regularly. Sam identifies his grandma as a source of affection.

Mum reports that she struggles to know how to manage Sam's angry outbursts and will often shout back. Mum's life map highlights her experiences of parental conflict as a child and she acknowledges the impact this has on Sam. Mum shows a willingness to work in Sam's best interests to initiate change in how she handles conflict situations. Triple P Teen Positive Parenting Programme could help resolve this.

Sam recognises that he would like support to understand why he feels angry and how to manage these feelings so that he can start feel himself again and it is recommended that 5 sessions of 'programme x - evidence based intervention' be delivered weekly over the coming 6 weeks.

TAF Plan

This is the opening part of the meeting where the children and young people should be asked how things have been for them, what are their worries and concerns and what has gone well over the past few weeks.

D: YOUR FAMILY'S VIEW

What's going well? What are you still worried about? What's changed and what difference do you feel it has made for you and your child's day to day life? Have you come across any obstacles and what have you done about this? How do you feel about the support you are getting?

Child(ren) / Young
Person's thought and
feelings:



























Parents / Carer's thoughts
and feelings:



TAF Plan

This is the part of the meeting that reviews the actions detailed in the plan and records any updates. where are they family up to? What changes have resulted for the family, if any?

E: YOUR PLAN					
This information is taken from Your Family's Early Help Plan and will be reviewed and added to by everyone during your meeting.					
What are the key things you and your child(ren) need support with?	What needs to happen to change this?	Who needs to be involved?	When does this need to happen by?	How will things be better for your child(ren) when this changes and how will we know?	What has changed for your children and family? What progress has been made so far?
 #			 [icon]		
 #			 [icon]		
 #			 [icon]		
					

TAF Plan

Summary and Next Steps draws to a conclusion the meeting by the Lead Professional.

G: SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

Summary of the progress your family have made, what difference has this made for your child(ren) and what action is now needed over the next 4-6 weeks?

1
1
1
1
1
1
1
1

Agreed date of next meeting:	[]	Time of meeting:	[]	Venue:	[]
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If the Lead Professional is changing who will take this role going forward?

Name:	[]	Agency:	[]	Contact Details:	[]	Date of transfer:	[]
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1

TAF Plan

Section H Moving On is only completed at the final Team Around the Family meeting where it is apparent through the review of the Early Help Plan that all the needs within the plan have been met and that there is evidence of a positive impact for the children / young people and this is substantiated through their voice.

H: MOVING ON (Please complete if this is the final Meeting) <i>What have you learnt? What new skills have you got that will help you in the future? Do you feel more confident in dealing with challenges? Who in your community (friends, family, neighbours, groups or services) will support you to keep moving forward? Is there any further information and advice that we can give you?</i>		
Closure Reason (Please select the relevant closure reason for the support):		
All Needs Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Child / YP Deceased <input type="checkbox"/>	Consent Withdrawn <input type="checkbox"/>
Family Moved to Another Authority Area <input type="checkbox"/>	Stepped Up to Children Social Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Disengaged with Support <input type="checkbox"/>

Q&A



Thank you for your time 😊

Useful links

- On completion please submit with any other supporting assessment tools to eha@lancashire.gov.uk
- for more information please go to <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/>
- <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/early-help-assessment/>