

# Portsmouth's Family Early Support

## Why would I want Early Support?

Everyone needs a little help sometimes. When one person in your family has a problem, it often affects everyone else too.

Every family is unique, so Early Support can help in a range of situations. It could be that you're worried about your own or your child's health, development or behaviour, or how things are going at school.

Perhaps because you are caring for a disabled child, or you are a young person caring for other people or maybe you've had bereavement in the family that's made life a real challenge.

It may be that you're worried about money or housing and how that is affecting your family.

Maybe your family is affected by domestic abuse, drugs, alcohol or crime.

In these instances Early Support can be a way of helping. We are here to work with you - to support you and your family get to where you want to be.

## How can you find out more?

Talk to a professional who is in contact with you or your family. This might be at your child's school or nursery, your health visitor, your housing officer or a youth worker.

For more information you can visit:

<https://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk/parents-carers/getting-help-early/>



All agencies that work with children, young people and families are responsible for listening to your concerns and worries. To work closely with you to make sure you and your family get the right support at the right time.

To help you identify and build on your strengths as a family and to support you in finding long term solutions to your worries. Through this you will develop the skills you need to manage any future challenges.

## **What is Early Support?**

It is the extra support your family can get if you need it. It may be that you want to prevent a problem or change things for your family before the problem becomes more serious.

Early Support is not a specific service or team. It's an approach that brings together people from a range of services and teams who will work together with your whole family to help improve the situation for everyone. It can offer support to families from pre-birth to adolescents.

## **What will happen if I want Early Support?**

### **Step one – getting help**

A worker your family is already in contact with, such as a teacher or health visitor, might suggest that you would benefit from Early Support. You could also speak to a someone currently working with your family to find out more.

The information you and your family provide will only be shared with the people who need to know about it, and only with your permission. You and your family will be central to drawing up your goals, and we won't make any decisions without your involvement.

### **Step two – talking with you**

If you decide to accept Early Support, the worker will talk with you – and more importantly listen to you – to find out about any difficulties that you and your family are having. They will also want to know about what is going well for your family and any strengths that you have that can be built upon. The worker will ask about the extra support that you think you might need and advise you on what is available.

### **Step three - developing a Family Early Support Plan**

You will be invited to a meeting with the different people who could help your family. This could include workers from schools, health visiting, youth services, housing and a wide range of other services. This is called a **Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting**.

At the TAF meeting everyone will support you to decide on your goals and actions and what support is available for you to achieve them. A plan will be agreed saying who is going to do what and when.

Everyone will decide on a **Lead Professional**. This person will be your main contact who will keep you informed, listen to your views and support you during the process.

### **Step four – the review**

This is where everyone will come back together and see how well the plan is working and if anything needs to change. At this stage everyone might decide that things have improved enough for Early Support to stop. Alternatively, if there are still things that your family needs support with the Family Early Support Plan will continue and a further review date will be set.

## **What are the Benefits of the Team Around the Family?**

Families often report that they have to speak to lots of professionals and repeat the same information about their situation over and over again, or that it seems as if all the professionals involved don't speak to each other. Because you will have a team of professionals working with your family, they can share information with your permission to ensure that you receive the most appropriate help to meet your needs.