

What is Early Help?

Many families, at different times, will need extra support for a variety of reasons. Most of the time this can be met through everyday services such as schools, nursery, pre-schools or GPs, but sometimes families might need extra support through a more coordinated approach. Early Help brings professionals together who will work with the whole family to try and improve things for everyone.

How can it help me?

As a parent/carer, you may be generally coping well but have concerns about your child's behaviour or development, for example: sleep routines, getting your child to school, or risk taking (typically in teenagers).

Or

You may have concerns which you have been trying to cope with for a while or feel worried about, for example: health and well-being, school, friends, angry behaviours. It may be that you find it difficult to set boundaries that your child sticks to.

Early Help has a range of support on offer, from a one-off discussion providing advice and tips, to weekly parenting groups to help develop skills and confidence.

“ I felt supported by everyone who was involved with my children, which was reassuring. ”

Who offers Early Help?

Early Help is offered by a range of services in your local community including:

- Schools, nurseries and education departments;
- Health visitors and midwives;
- Charities and voluntary organisations;
- District councils and housing;
- Mental Health and wellbeing organisations;
- Hampshire Children's Services – Family Support Service.

What help is on offer?

Services will work with you and your family either in your home or another community setting, one to one or in a group. How we work with you will be discussed and agreed with you. The support may be different for each member of the family and could include:

- Relationships;
- Behaviour that is challenging;
- Housing and finance;
- Health and wellbeing, including emotional and mental health;
- Alcohol and drug use;
- Domestic abuse;
- Education;
- Young Carers.

What is the Family Support Service?

- Part of Hampshire Children's Services – it offers support to families with children aged 0-19 or up to 25 for adults with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- The Family Support Service brings together local organisations to offer multi-agency support to families who need it. This support is arranged and coordinated through the multi-agency Early Help Hub.

How do I get support from Early Help?

There are **two ways to get support** from Early Help.

Route one

You have a concern and would like help.

How

You can talk to a professional who already has contact with your family – this might be school, nursery, your GP, health visitor or community worker.

Or

You can contact Hampshire Children's Services on **0300 555 1324**.

You can find out about local groups in your area by visiting the Family Interventions and Services Hub: <https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/home.page>

What happens next?

The professional you talk to might identify a range of issues that you need help with. They will then explore a request for support from the Early Help Hub.

If your concerns related to a single issue, the professional you talk to might be able to

suggest where to get support or arrange for you to have an appointment with the Family Support Service to discuss your concerns. Your worker will give you information about services and groups which can help and if you agree, will help you access these.

Route two

Request for support to Children's Services

How

In some cases, other agencies or people might make a request for support to Children's Services on your behalf because they have concerns. Other agencies will usually talk to you about making this request.

What happens next?

If the request is made because of multiple issues, the requester will be asked to present these to the Early Help Hub.

If the request is because of a single issue or concern, the person making the request will be given information about where to get support, which they can share with you.

What is the Early Help Hub Meeting and what does it do?

It is a weekly meeting attended by a range of local agencies to consider requests for support and agree how this support will be offered and by whom.

The meeting will also agree who will be the lead person to link with you (called The Early Help Coordinator). This will usually be someone you already have a good relationship

with or know, for example a teacher or health visitor – they will help you to access support and make sure your plan is working.

Families in Hampshire often tell us that if they have to speak to a lot of professionals, they have to repeat the same information about themselves over and over again. Families also tell us they want professionals to speak to each other and work together more to support families. To make this happen, we will share relevant information when needed and your Early Help Coordinator will keep in touch with you and the services working with you to review how things are going.