

# Early Help is a way of thinking and working together between services with families that have **additional, multiple or complex needs**.



**Working together**  
for stronger families

Early Help is preventative, by providing support to families when a need is identified or as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from conception through to teenage years. It can also prevent further problems arising by building resilience with families to find their own solutions in the future.

## Who is Early Help?

We are all Early Help! Early Help should not be seen as a specific service, but any service, and crucially how services work collectively through tailored support packages for individual family needs. It is simply the collection of services in Doncaster. There is 'no wrong door' to Early Help.



A guiding principle of Early Help is that parents (mothers, fathers or carers) are children's first source of support, along with universal services.

Parents can find out more (or you can support them to know more) about the services available to them and their families through the Families Information Service at [www.doncaster.gov.uk/fis](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/fis)

## Why is it important?

By changing the way we all work, from a late reaction to chronic and acute need, to a focus on the root causes of social problems, outcomes for children and families improve, and costly statutory interventions can be avoided.

## Continuum of need and response



If you are unable to help a child or young person on your own, or the child's needs are unclear, or broader than your service can address alone, fill in the online form at [www.dscb.co.uk/early-help](http://www.dscb.co.uk/early-help). If you need information, advice or guidance before completing the form, Early Help enquiry staff will check to see if the family is already receiving help or whether they need a coordinated response managed by a Lead Practitioner. If you are identified as Lead Practitioner, you will receive a package of support. If your Early Help enquiry is assessed as acute and beyond Early Help, it will be handled by Children's Social Care Referral and Response.

### One online form for making an Early Help enquiry or reporting a concern about a child.



One form (one front door). Two responses.

**1**

**Early Help Enquiry**

TAC / TAF Identify a lead practitioner

Early Help will provide information, advice and guidance to professionals who have queries about children who may need a coordinated Early Help response. Early Help enquiry staff screen all Early Help enquiries and gather intelligence to ensure an appropriate level of response to the child and family. They support Lead Practitioners. They are not a direct service to families.

**2**

**Children's Social Care Referral & Response**

Partner Agency Staff

Social Worker Family

Statutory responsibility held by Social Worker working with partner agency staff and the family.

### Lead Practitioner Support Package

There is a range of support for practitioners and services delivering an Early Help response:



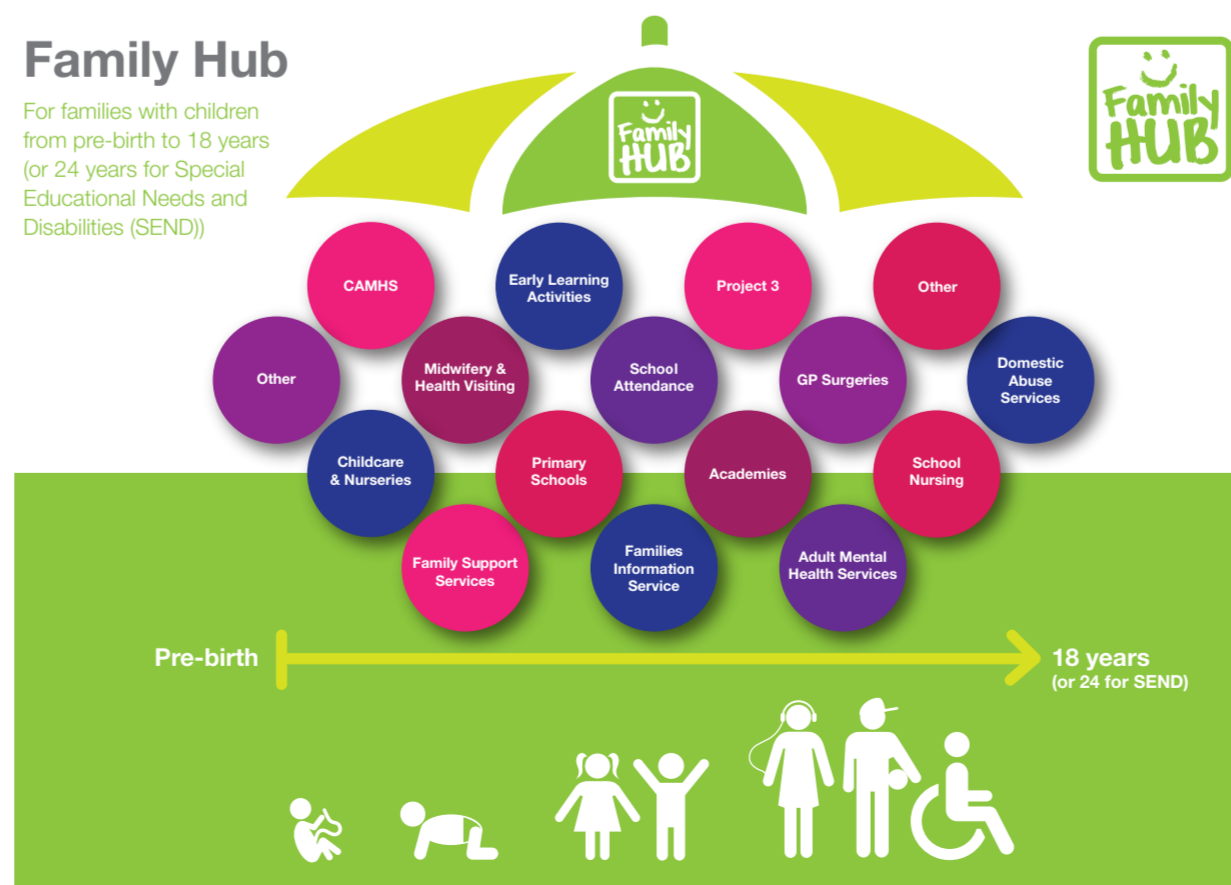
When you are identified as a Lead Practitioner, an Early Help Coordinator, based in one of the Family Hubs around Doncaster, will support you in a number of ways:

- One to one support:** As required, on all aspects of the role.
  - Early Help and Lead Practitioner Networks (weekly):** Covering case work discussions, (not management supervision), information sharing, and developing practice.
  - Early Help multi-agency case file audits:** Including assessing and evaluating the multi-agency response to the family's needs and the outcomes achieved from whole family plans. (N.B. this does not replace single agency audits were services are auditing the quality of their own professional practice.)
  - Training and courses:** The case management system; What is Early Help; Role of Lead Practitioner; Assessment; Outcomes and Plans; Outcome Star; Other training as required.
- To book onto Lead Practitioner training, visit [buy.doncaster.gov.uk/training](http://buy.doncaster.gov.uk/training)
- For full support and information, advice and guidance, download the Early Help Handbook.
- Lead Practitioners are also offered information, advice and guidance from specialists, for example in:
- Children's mental health (CAMHS) • DVA (Domestic Abuse Navigators) • Employment advisors • CSE / EPIC •
  - Substance misuse / sex education / smoking cessation (Project 3) • Child development 0 to 5 yrs •



## Family Hub

For families with children from pre-birth to 18 years (or 24 years for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND))



Family Hubs for children and young people have a distinct brand to attract children and their parents and other family members. Within the Family Hubs brand, a Youth Hub brand has been developed to appeal specifically to young people and help them access the services they need and want.



Family Hubs across Doncaster can also help families access almost any service they may need. For details visit [www.dscb.co.uk/early-help](http://www.dscb.co.uk/early-help)



If you need information or advice about a child or young person before completing the online form, call **Early Help** from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday on

**01302 734110**