

# EARLY HELP PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

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Purpose...

**The Early Help Practice Framework is the agreed approach for early help delivery across agencies and disciplines in the borough. Its purpose is to provide a strategic reference Point for practitioners, which will be developed in day-to-day practice via training and support from each organisation's managers, supervisors and DSL'S**

# Principles of our shared practice framework

**1. Relationship  
first**

**2. Whole  
family  
working, one  
family plan**

**3. Team  
around the  
family**

**4. Lead  
professional**

**5. Family voice**

**6. Encouraging  
resilience**

**At the foundation is a strength-based approach**

Strength based practice approach

- ❖ Our overriding approach to Early help is strength-based practice, starting from acknowledging what is going well and not the family's limitations as a foundation to building a rapport with the family.
- ❖ It also encourages families to identify the support they require to address their needs. It is outcomes led and not services led.
- ❖ Strengths-based practice focuses on individuals' and families' strengths as well as social and community networks



## Relationship first

- ❖ Strength based practice creates an entry way for a positive relationship to be formed, to avoid families feeling stigmatised from the start of the intervention. The aim is to ensure a 'doing with' rather than a 'doing to' approach.
- ❖ Relational practice considers the relationship itself as the vehicle through which change can be achieved.
- ❖ Relationship first model works with families with dignity, respect, compassion and hope, acting as role models for behaviour change.
- ❖ Through engaging with families to understand their needs and using strengths-based conversations this enables practitioners to co-produce outcome focused plans with the family.



Whole family working - Think child, think parent, think family:

- ❖ Supporting families requires focusing both on individuals' needs and the whole family's needs.
- ❖ Whole family working improves the experience for families, reducing the need for them to tell their stories over and over, or multiple workers dealing with separate children.
- ❖ Whole family working means working with parents as well as the child and their siblings



## Team around the family (TAF)

- ❖ TAF's allow for a co-ordinated and multi-agency response when more than one agency is required to support a family, it prevents families having to retell their stories and reduced duplication or gaps in support.
- ❖ Any practitioner across the partnership could be responsible for the chairing and setting up of TAF meetings.
- ❖ TAF meetings work to ensure that that families are at the heart of all we do.
- ❖ TAF meetings should be viewed as key interventions in themselves, not just another meeting.
- ❖ It is recommended that TAF meetings are held at the start of the intervention and every six-eight weeks, depending on the needs of the family and progress made.



## Lead professional

- ❖ There should always be a Lead Professional for the family who takes responsibility for monitoring the progress of the plan.
- ❖ Any practitioner in the borough may be called upon to act as a Lead Professional, as part of their role with families.
- ❖ A Lead Professional for a family is agreed collaboratively by the Team Around the Family and is usually nominated due to being:
  - The practitioner who has the best relationship with the family, and/or
  - The practitioner whom the family specifically wish to be their Lead Professional,
  - The practitioner whose professional discipline best reflects the main presenting needs of the family (e.g. a family with predominantly learning needs are likely to be supported by a Lead Professional from Education, with predominantly health needs or by a Lead Professional from Health etc.)



## Family voice and one family plan

- ❖ Children and young people should be as fully involved in the TAF process as appropriate to their age, ability and willingness to participate, their preferences and those of their parents.
- ❖ For some children and young people, attending the full TAF will be appropriate. Others may attend part of the TAF to put forward their views and participate in the planning process.
- ❖ Others again may prefer not to attend but to prepare their thoughts and feelings outside of the TAF to be relayed by a chosen practitioner or parent/carer, for example in a drawing, letter, video, or informal discussion.
- ❖ There should always only be one family plan.
- ❖ The family plan should be agreed by and shared with the family – they should feel ownership of the plan.
- ❖ The family plan should include SMART objectives which are clearly understood by the family.



## Encouraging resilience

- ❖ The decision to close a TAF should, if possible, be made together with the family and all TAF members. Ideally, the decision to close a TAF will be made due to the family having made good progress with their plan.
- ❖ It is important to consider the family's transition and exit planning when closing a TAF.
- ❖ Identifying community or universal services that the family can access and support them to build relationships before the end of the TAF, can be crucial in preventing the need for the TAF to be re-opened.
- ❖ Families understand their needs and are accessing any support they need to meet them



6 principles – 6 steps

