

General guidance for engaging families in the Early Help Assessment (EHA)

Once it is identified that an EHA is needed, it is important to ensure you include all the children and young people within the family as well as adults, and record their voice.

Be honest about the process of assessment, the reason behind assessment and what the concerns are.

Be clear about the goals of assessment and be clear to ask each family member their goals to capture their voice.

Ensure you give the family members the opportunity to talk to you. They may not want to speak in front of their children/parents at this stage and children/young people should always be given the opportunity to be seen alone.

Use an environment that makes them feel as comfortable as possible.

Use active listening, and ensure they feel understood and listened to.

Ask direct and calm questions to ensure all information is captured.

Ask simple and clear questions.

Allow them to talk about their experience.

Allow them to use pictures if they wish – this is particularly important with young children who may not be able to articulate their views.

Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you are unsure of what they are talking about/mean. People are usually happy to explain.

The Outcomes Web is for the family to complete, however, if individual members want to complete their own, that is fine. This can help you develop SMART actions for each person.

If you are asked about something you are unsure of, explain to them that you do not have that information but will go away and find out for them. Remember the Locality Teams are available for further support.



The EHA can take up to 6 weeks to carry out, so don't worry if asking questions and discussions around issues are carried out over a number of sessions.

Once any issues are identified, there must always be an action to outline how support can be offered. Include them in looking for solutions, as they know better than anyone what they would like to happen/change.

All actions have to be: Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic and within a Timescale ie: SMART.

This means breaking big issues into 'bite size chunks' eg:

'improve parenting' is not SMART.....

'attend the weekly parenting programme and complete all the tasks for the full 4 weeks of the programme' is SMART

'improve school attendance' is not SMART.....

'make sure Jane attends school every day until half term' is SMART

'get a job and off benefits' is not SMART.....

'complete CV and attend the volunteers course before the next review meeting in 6 weeks time' is SMART