

PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST



**Meeting the Needs of Children
and Families in Lincolnshire**

2018

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INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE



This document sets out our approach to keeping children in Lincolnshire safe and protected from harm. Key to supporting children and families in Lincolnshire is our commitment to Early Help and ensuring safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This guidance is intended to help practitioners embed the Signs of Safety framework into their practice, looking at how practitioners in the first instance can offer help and encouragement to children and families to find their own solutions and within the content of their work offer help and support when needed. It is designed to ensure that, across the continuum of need, practitioners consider that the right help is given to the right children at the right time and for the right duration.

This ensures that there is no drift in the support provided and that resources are available to meet the needs.

The continuum of need is based on the principle that services should be provided as soon as possible, at the lowest level proportionate to the assessed needs of the child. The aim is to support families and prevent things becoming more difficult, in order that families can continue to get support in universal services. The model identifies four levels of need and how they can be met, these are: Universal services, Early Help, Child In Need/Specialist Support and Immediate Safeguarding. Further information regarding these thresholds can be found later in this document.

OUR APPROACH TO SAFETY AND SUPPORT

Safeguarding is everyone's business; therefore, it's important that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities. These are set out clearly in Working Together. Working Together states that having defined thresholds for action, which are understood by all practitioners, should ensure that services are commissioned effectively, and that the right help is given to the child at the right time. Thresholds should be applied consistently, including for children returning home from Care. The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board is committed to ensuring that those practitioners working with children and families are supported to make good decisions and focus on positive outcomes.

Support for children must promote welfare, safeguard the child and, where possible, prevent harm before the child's needs become more complex.

Lincolnshire's overriding philosophy states that if a child is in need, support should be provided using a range of interventions within a child centred approach as early as possible. Plans should take into account the wishes and feelings of the child, and should be developed by working in partnership with the family.

It is important that all practitioners working with children, families and adults are able to make an assessment of needs and provide support as soon as a problem emerges. This may be at any point in a child's life, from the foundation through to teenage years.



All multi agency documents, links and resources can be found at www.Lincolnshire.gov.uk/LSCB

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Lincolnshire's early help offer puts the responsibility on all professionals to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and families, irrespective of whether they are providing services to children or adults. The professionals working mainly in universal services are best placed to identify children or their families, who are at risk of poor outcomes.

The Lincolnshire Meeting the Needs document encourages an approach that facilitates early discussion when we have emerging worries about children. The document looks to promote safety and strengths within the family and their existing network, to properly address worries on a long-term basis. It also sets

out how to recognise signs of harm and what to do when we have immediate concerns for children's safety, to prevent any delay in protecting them and/or gathering evidence where a crime has been committed.

The approach recognises that all practitioners, no matter what agency they are from, have a role to play in safeguarding children from harm and promoting their welfare. It also recognises that in many cases, no one worker will be able provide all the support the child or family requires. A multi-agency approach, therefore, should be adopted through a Team Around the Child (TAC) or Child in Need (CIN) plan or Child Protection (CP) process, depending on the signs of harm identified through the assessment.



WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

It is important that all those working with children and their families work within a common set of principles which underpin good practice. These principles are drawn from our approaches to Early Help and specialist services, and are also informed by Signs of Safety, Lincolnshire's over-arching practice model.



Family and Child Centred and understood as a whole family

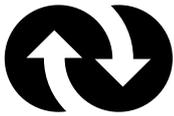


Rooted in Child Development



Listening to children and families and giving importance to what they say





Building on strengths as well as identifying the difficulties



Focused on actions and outcomes for children and families



Focusing on building networks that families have in place, to support them to come to their solutions



Understanding the families individuality, values, beliefs, spirituality and recognises difference



Open and honest communication about why we are involved, what we are worried about and what needs to happen



The importance of Early Help – doing all we can to support families at the earliest point, to help keep children safe, happy and well



Identifying the right support and agencies for families and working in a multi-agency forum



CONVERSATION OPPORTUNITIES

We use a range of conversation opportunities including telephone calls, meetings, emails and visits to families in Lincolnshire to identify appropriate support for the child and their family. We recognise that the importance of early conversation when we have emerging worries about children is key to addressing any worry at the earliest opportunity. Anybody working with children, young people and families is responsible for starting these conversations. These conversations may lead to an assessment and plan, which should ensure outcomes for children are improved, clearly showing everyone's responsibility within that plan.

Practitioners will start most constructive conversations with the child and family they are already working with because of a worry they have. The value of the knowledge and trust that this practitioner has built up through working with the family must not be underestimated. Different practitioners will each have important information, which play a crucial role in supporting a family.

We want these conversation opportunities to be constructive, clear, open, honest and, importantly, involving the family and their wider network. Sometimes, these conversations may be challenging. Practitioner and family may not always agree. It is important that everyone has the opportunity to express their worries, as well as to identify those strengths and safety plans which are in place currently. The group of practitioners, together with the family and network, will build on these strengths to bring about safety and positive outcomes for all of the children involved.

Regardless of the threshold we are working within, we need to ensure that our involvement is helpful and that the outcomes for children are positive. This highlights why conversations are so important, and why drawing practitioners, families and their networks together in a co-ordinated way to work towards a whole family plan is such a positive and constructive way of working.



WHAT DO SERVICES IN LINCOLNSHIRE LOOK LIKE?



Our vision in Lincolnshire is for children, young people and families to be:

- helped to make changes for themselves
- seen as a positive solution to the challenges they face
- able to get the right service at the right time
- understood as a whole family

Supported by an integrated children's services workforce that:

- uses evidence informed practice
- understand and applies Relationship Based Practice
- is Restorative in approach
- is well trained and supported

Enabled and equipped by:

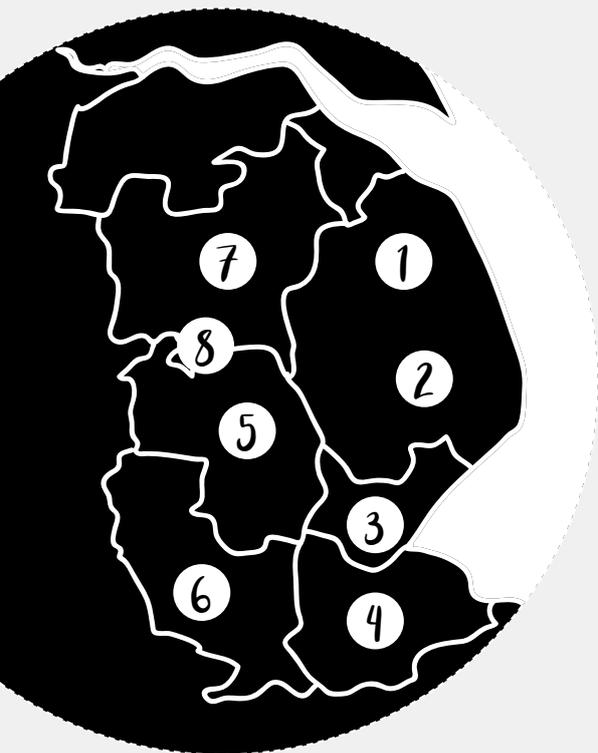
- clear governance that put children and families at the heart of how support is planned and delivered
- using Signs of Safety that builds on families strengths



LOCALITY AREAS

Lincolnshire Children Services delivers in 8 localities across the county, which is in line with the boundaries of the district councils, these are:

- 1. East Lindsey North**
- 2. East Lindsey South**
- 3. Boston**
- 4. South Holland**
- 5. North Kesteven**
- 6. South Kesteven**
- 7. West Lindsey**
- 8. Lincoln**



Lincolnshire is the 2nd largest county in England and despite the rurality we are committed to ensuring children and families have their needs met in Universal Services where possible, but we also recognise that at times some families may need some additional help.

The Lincolnshire Children's Safeguarding Board's vision to aim...

"that every child and young person in Lincolnshire is safeguarded via the provision of accessible, timely, co-ordinated, high quality multi-agency services to children, young people and families"

DON'T FORGET

Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board is a multi-agency board made up of representatives from the Local Authority, Police, Health Service, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, Youth Offending Service, the Voluntary Sector and others which brings all agencies together for the benefit of children and families and offers training, advice and support – please visit:

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb
for more information



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THRESHOLDS?

As practitioners, we generally describe services using four tiers of need. The language we use can make little sense to the children, young people and families we support, and we must be aware of this when working with families.

It is important to recognise that understanding what is happening to a vulnerable child is a process; even where it is initiated by a single event. Safeguarding involves all those who may be working with a child or family, as well as all the people involved in that child's life. Effective safeguarding requires trust and communication, and we must ensure that any changing circumstances are understood and put in context in terms of impact on the child.

Making a judgement on need and threshold is not an exact science and is very much about the individual child, family and their needs. It should be emphasised that this document seeks to provide guidance to support a consistent understanding and

applications of thresholds by professionals from across the spectrum of services for children. The key to getting it right for children in terms of identifying a child and families level of need will be always be an evidence-based professional judgement.

In making a professional judgement about

level of need and determining whether to make a safeguarding referral to children services, professionals should seek guidance and approval from their line manager or safeguarding lead within their agency. Where there is identified harm and or likely harm and it appears that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, children services should be contacted immediately on: **01522 782111**.



UNIVERSAL SERVICES

What does this look like in Lincolnshire?

Universal services are accessible to all children and families in Lincolnshire, whatever the level of concern, to help them reach their full potential. This will often be one single agency working with a family or child.

What we mean:

Children Centres **Health Visitors** **GP**

Community Service Support **Schools**

Nurseries **Childminders** **Midwives**

Voluntary Sector **Housing Services**

National Probation Service **Police**

Community Rehabilitation Service

At a Universal level families know how, and are able to, seek out information from the internet or library, can ask for support from services such as the GP and Schools. Universal services have longer involvement with children and families and play a key role in helping them throughout stages of life. Services are encouraged to help and support children and families resolve need at this level.

EARLY HELP

What does this look like in Lincolnshire?

Some children and families will need some additional help for a little while, primarily from one professional or agency to prevent needs escalating. We refer to this as Early Help. Early Help is to work with families to come to their own solutions to the problems they are facing as early as possible, so we can hopefully work together to stop these getting worse.

What we mean:

Early Support Care Co-Ordination (ESCO)

Empowering families to come to their own solutions with a little extra help

Positive Futures **Early Help Workers**

Additional Help **Additional Support**

Team Around the Child Meetings

Early Help Assessment and Plan

Co-ordinating services

Early Help can mean one agency primarily supporting the family with concerns, or a number of agencies working together to address the identified needs of the whole family.

A much smaller number of children and families will need statutory involvement with a social worker leading a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan, either because there are more immediate concerns for the welfare of the child or because it has not been possible to improve life for the child by working alongside the family with an Early Help Plan. Getting these decisions right can only be achieved by practitioners and families working together, with honest communication and challenge, and thorough evidence and evaluation.

CHILD IN NEED/SPECIALIST SAFEGUARDING SERVICES

IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING

What does this look like in Lincolnshire?

A Child in Need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired without the provision of services.

Specialist services may be a single provision, for example a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school, or may need multi-agency support.

For some children, an holistic assessment of need by a social worker is required to decide what ongoing multi-agency services and support are needed to keep them safe, healthy and well. When the assessment is complete, it is shared with the family and, together with the social worker and the supporting agencies, a plan with a focus on actions and outcomes is put together.

What we mean:

Offenders Remanded into the care of the Local Authority

Children subject to Care or Supervision Orders

Looked After Children

Practical support

Child In Need assessment, plans and meetings

Section 17 of the Children's Act Child in Need

Children who are privately fostered

Social Worker, Youth Offending Officer or Lead Practitioner

Complex Additional Needs

What does this look like in Lincolnshire?

Sometimes, when children are thought to have suffered or be at risk of significant harm, there is a need for immediate referral to Children's Services and or Lincolnshire Police. A multi-agency enquiry led by a social worker is needed to ensure children are protected and kept safe.

What we mean:

Strategy Meetings

Core Group Meetings

Child Protection Chairs

Legal Teams

At immediate risk of physical, sexual, emotional harm or neglect

Section 47 of the Children's Act

Child Protection Conference

Multi Agency involvement

In immediate safeguarding we talk about 'significant harm' as a threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life and the best interest of the children. Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development.



CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICE 0-19 YEARS

A new health services model for Lincolnshire, improving support for children and their families went live on the 1st October 2017. Lincolnshire County Council now directly deliver the Children's Health Service 0-19, supporting a national drive to better integrate health and social care services.



AGE 0-6

Health Visitors (HVs) and Family Health Workers will continue to support children and families from ante-natal through to the end of reception year as part of the new Children's Health Service 0-19 provided by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC):



SCHOOL AGE

(Year 1 to age 19 or age 25 SEND)

Children and young people from year 1 up to age 19, or up to age 25 for those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), will be supported by Children and Young People's (CYP) Nurses as part of LCC's Children's Health Service 0-19.



AGE 0 -19

A new Emotional Wellbeing Service will be available for school age children up to age 19 (25 SEND), provided by Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT)

Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board, alongside all of Lincolnshire's Children's Services, has adopted Signs of Safety as the basis of work with children and families across all partner agencies engaged in providing services for children in Lincolnshire. Signs of Safety is a strengths based, solution focused model which looks to assess risk and concerns, identifying solutions. It asks four simple questions when working with a family:

1

What are we worried about – we talk about harm and complicating factors

2

What's working well – we think about strengths, safety and when it works

3

What needs to happen – we think about next steps and everyone's goal

4

How worried are we on a scale of 0 -10

5

Following this, a plan is put together with the family network. This is referred to as a 'safety plan'.

OUR PRACTICE MODEL: SIGNS OF SAFETY FRAMEWORK

This model is designed to help children, young people and their families participate, helping us to identify where there are strengths we can build on. Where there are worries, we look specifically at whether the child has experienced harm, and the impact on and evidence for this, as well as what complicates the situation. We then, importantly, look at what the family, Children Service's and practitioners can do to support the family to keep the children safe, happy and well.



Signs of Safety underpins all of the work we do, including conversations, assessments, meetings and plans. It aims to support families to come to their own solutions, whilst being clear about the harm- or potential harm- a child has, or may, suffer, as well as what needs to happen for practitioners to no longer be worried.

Below are some questions you might want to think about when you have any type of worry or concern about a child or family. This is based on the Signs of Safety model and will also help when attending Early Help, Child In Need meetings, Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings. As the model is strengths based and solution focused, we always start with our 'working well questions'.

What's working well?

- What have been the things that have minimised the harm or made things better?
- Is the child currently safe? If so, how do you know? Does this happen daily, weekly?
- Who else helps to keep the child and family safe, happy and well?
- In relation to the worry, what do the family and child do already that makes things even a little better?
- What has worked in the past to help?
- What do the family love about their family?
- What are the family currently doing to try and make this problem better?
- Who else can support the family?
- Do they have a network around them?

What are we worried about?

- What have you seen or heard that worries you? Who saw this and what did they see?
- What are you worried will happen if nothing changes?
- Have things become worse recently?
- What has been the impact on that child? What does their day to day look like?
- Have you spoken to the child? What are they worried about? What did they tell you?
- What is making this situation even more difficult and complicated?

What needs to happen?

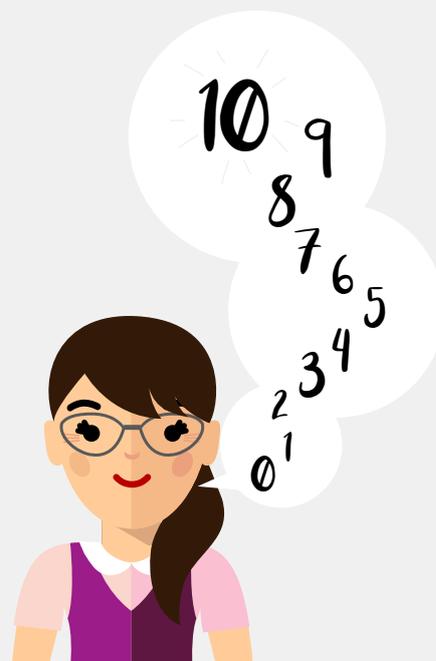
- What do you think needs to happen to make the situation better?
- Are there any questions that need to be asked to clarify the situation?
- What do the family and child want to happen? How do they think they could make things better?
- What would make you less worried?

SCALING QUESTIONS

Scaling Questions are used in all of our work and can be used in a variety of ways. Scaling helps to give clarity on why a person feels a certain way. They can help us to bench mark progress or worries, and are a powerful way of obtaining further views and information.

When the worry is so significant that we have looked at Child Protection meetings, we will always ask the family and practitioners to scale how safe a child is. In other meetings we may scale different things which are in relation to the worry. It is always on a scale of 0 – 10, with 0 being the worst it can be and 10 the best it can be.

The next part of the scaling question is thinking about what a scale point higher would look like, and how the family might achieve this. This is an important part of the process. We don't ask that you agree with others as to what your scale point is; we do however ask that the answer is fully explored based on evidence, and that there is a clear rationale as to the risks and what needs to happen.



ASSESSMENTS

At all levels of service provision, the needs of the child/young person and family should be assessed and completed with the family. This will provide a holistic, evidence based view of the child and their family, proportionate to need and a true reflection of their day to day lives.

Assessments are based on Signs of Safety, Lincolnshire's practice model (please see page 15 for more information). Signs of Safety assists practitioners to make informed judgements on the safety and strengths, harm and impact to a child and, importantly, what needs to happen. Information about the family, their needs, the risks posed and any additional needs which require a level of support must be gathered in order to reach a judgement on how to proceed with a case.



Some of the key principles involved in completing assessments are:

- **That assessments are child centred and involve the child, the family and their networks**
- **Gives families the opportunities to come to their own solutions**
- **Factual and evidence based**
- **Builds on previous assessments**
- **Are holistic in approach**
- **Ensure equality of opportunity and a respect for diversity including family structures, culture, religion and ethnic origin**
- **Gives as much focus to the strengths as to identifying difficulties**
- **Is outcome focused and leads to action being taken**
- **Is transparent and open to challenge**

EARLY HELP ASSESSMENTS

SOCIAL CARE ASSESSMENTS

'Preventative services will do more to reduce abuse and neglect than reactive services, and the co-ordination of services is important to maximise efficiency' Eileen Munro, 2011.

The Early Help Assessment has been developed in line with Signs of Safety methodology, which is an evidence based approach to safeguarding children and young people. The assessment provides a clear template to facilitate a meaningful assessment with the participation of the child, young person and their parents/carers. It centres on the key principles of building relationships, honesty, transparency and Appreciative Inquiry to focus on the key issues and what needs to happen to improve them.

Some children and their families will, at times, need a coordinated multi-agency approach and a Team Around the Child Plan to help identify and address emerging worries, build on existing strengths and access early help services that can work with the family to help them.

Getting these decisions right can only be achieved by practitioners and families working together, with honest communication, challenge and thorough evidence and evaluation.

A social care assessment is a statutory assessment which replaces previous initial and core assessments. The Social Care assessment will cover the same areas as an Early Help Assessment, but is completed by a qualified social worker with a focus on whether threshold for significant harm has been met and to understand the risk presented to a child. Once completed, a judgement is made based on evidence and analysis which may lead to the case being held as 'Child in Need', escalated to 'Child Protection' or it may be felt that the case could be held within the Early Help Team, with the Early Help worker or another practitioner becoming the Lead Practitioner.

It is acknowledged that in addition to the Early Help Assessment (which all practitioners in Lincolnshire use to make an initial assessment of a child's needs) and the Social Care Assessment, universal and specialist services will all have their own assessment tools. These tools help agencies determine which services in their agency can best support the child and/or family and how they can best work with them.



FAMILY NETWORKS

We see our families in Lincolnshire as having the solutions to their own problems. We recognise the importance of families having people around them to support them, to make sure the plan in place is achievable and, importantly, to keep the child safe, happy and well.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK THE FAMILY TO BRING TOGETHER THEIR NETWORKS

- Is there anyone else supporting you at the moment?
- Can I talk to them as part of your support network?
- Have you told anyone about this before? If so has this helped? Could they help again now?
- Is there anyone in your network who could or already does help to look after the children? (this can be a few hours, weekends, babysitting etc.)
- Who would you go to if you were poorly and needed someone to help with the children?
- Do you have people you can talk to about your worries? If so, who are these people?
- Who cares about these children? (even if you don't get on with them!)
- Who would the children want involved?

TOOLS TO SUPPORT WORK WITH CHILDREN

The Signs of Safety model has a number of tools which can support practitioners to really gain the child's voice to inform assessment and planning, including the 3 houses, wizard, fairy and word and pictures documents. These explain to children why practitioners are involved, what the worries are and are, in effect, the child's own safety plan.

For further explanations on these tools and to download a blank copy please visit:

<http://microsites.lincolnshire.gov.uk/children/child-protection/munro-champions/tools-and-best-practice/>



DO WE NEED CONSENT TO SHARE INFORMATION?

Conversations about worries take place with the family first. This allows practitioners to test whether the family shares their worries, and to assess what help might be needed.

In Lincolnshire, all practitioners use the Early Help Assessment when assessing the needs of a child and family. If parents understand that you are trying to help, and are willing to work with you, they may be open to you making a referral for them to get additional support as required. This will need their explicit consent. Consent means that the family is fully informed about the services they are being referred to, agree with the referral being made and understand what information practitioners are passing on and why.

While it is usually good practice to seek consent for making any referral, there are some exceptions when it comes to protecting children. For example, you do not need consent if having a conversation with the family would place the child or someone else at increased risk of suffering harm. There is no need to seek consent if doing so might undermine the investigation of a serious crime

This includes making a child protection referral for a child who has made an allegation about a physical or sexual assault by a parent or carer, or where a delay in getting consent may mean the child or young person is put at further risk of harm. There may be occasions, such as criminal investigation or Local Authority proceedings, which require an element of confidentiality from the family involved. Any professional ambiguity should be clarified with the relevant agency to ensure that investigations or proceedings are not compromised.

7 GOLDEN RULES

1

Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2

Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3

Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

4

Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5

Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6

Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7

Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

The Department for Education advice about information sharing offers further clarity for people working with children, young people, parents and carers.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice



REFERRALS:

In Lincolnshire, we are proud to have a strong Early Help approach to support families and children at a time of need. Early Help is a term used to describe the support and intervention offered to children and families when a problem or worry starts to emerge, or there is a worry this problem will continue to get worse.

Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation through to teenage years.

Lincolnshire's Early Help offer recognises the crucial role that all family members – not just mothers and fathers, but step parents, grandparents, siblings and other extended family members and carers – play in influencing what children experience and achieve, as well as the consequences when families are in difficulty.

An Early Help Assessment should be completed by any practitioner at the earliest opportunity when they are worried about a child or young person's health, development, welfare or progress; or if the child, young person or their family raises a concern in line with the Early Help Pathway.



EARLY HELP ADVISORS

An Early Help Advisor is a Social Worker who is available to all practitioners to provide case consultation in relation to the Early Help that they are providing to vulnerable children in Lincolnshire. Any practitioner at an Early Help level who has contact with children, young people and their families can have a consultation with an Early Help Advisor. The child/young person must live in Lincolnshire for the consultation to take place. Practitioners will ring the same central Customer Service Centre number **01522 782111**. Practitioners will speak to the call advisors who will briefly establish the nature of any concerns and will be asked whether the call is requesting a consultation with an Early Help Advisor or whether they want to make a safeguarding referral to the Children's Social Care.

The consultation with the Early Help Advisor will focus on guiding and supporting the practitioner in their practitioner role to safeguard vulnerable children. The consultation will engage the practitioner about the needs of the child or young person and the early help being provided in order to establish what further support may be required. The Early Help Advisor will support practitioners in their decision making. They will not take on cases themselves or facilitate safeguarding referrals into Children's Social Care. The practitioner will be directed back to Customer Service Centre to make a safeguarding referral. The Early Help Advisor can help practitioners consider a range of assessment tools to help inform or identify needs or generally offer safeguarding support to practitioners.

Early Help Consultants

The Early Help Consultants provide support, advice and guidance to lead practitioners on existing Team Around the Child cases. They will use Signs of Safety methodology to map and/or quality assure cases in order to secure improved outcomes for children, young people and their families. The Early Help Consultants also offer a variety of workshops and forums to support Lead Practitioners regarding completing Early Help Assessments, Reviewing and Planning and best practice.

Website:

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac

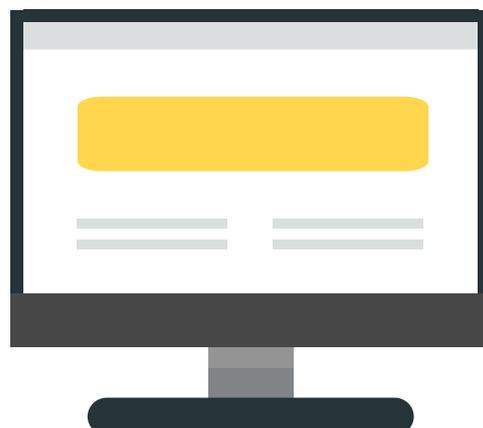
www.lincolnshirechildren.net

TAC Administrators

TAC Administrators provide administrative support, maintain records, monitor processes, and can signpost practitioners to local services.

Further Support for Schools and Academies

In addition to the support outlined above, schools and academies can request case supervision for all Team Around the Child cases where the Lead Practitioner is employed in an educational setting. For these cases, administrative support can also be requested in the form of arranging meetings and typing of assessments and plans. This support can be accessed via the Request Forms at www.lincolnshirechildren/tac



STATUTORY INTERVENTIONS

If you suspect or believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (including any form of mistreatment or abuse) you should ALWAYS report your concerns

In an emergency always dial 999

If there is no immediate danger to the child, or if you need some advice or information, you can contact the Children Services Customer Service Centre (CSC) on **01522 782111**. If it is outside normal office hours you can contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on **01522 782333**.

Telephone calls are answered by customer services staff and they will always ask for the child's name, date of birth and address and will check if the child already has an Early Help or Social Worker involved. They will then ask a number of questions which is based on the Signs of Safety model to help to understand what your concern or worry is.



**In an
emergency
always dial
999**

STILL WORRIED?

WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM STILL WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD AND I DON'T THINK THE RIGHT DECISION HAS BEEN MADE?

During the management of a case, practitioner differences of opinion and judgement will sometimes occur. There are a range of situations in which practitioner disagreements arise; however, they are most likely to arise as a result of differing views of thresholds, a lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities and the need for action and communication.

Good practice includes the expectation that there is practitioner and constructive challenge amongst colleagues within agencies and between agencies.

Where a member of staff from any agency is concerned that worries or agreed actions regarding a child are not being addressed or acted upon in a timely and consistent manner, it is expected that the LSCB practitioner resolution and escalation protocol should be used to reach a satisfactory outcome that is in the best interests of the child.



RECORDING WHAT WE DO AND THE DECISIONS WE TAKE

All involvement with children, young people and families should be recorded appropriately and in accordance with each agency's procedures, in order to show that a conversation took place, what was discussed and what was agreed.

Recording needs to be clear, concise, distinguish fact from opinion, respectful to those involved and explain the evidence and analysis made. The decisions made should be clearly recorded, including the people responsible and timescales. Crucially, records should be understandable to others and, where possible, always capture the views or behaviour of the child or young person. This should be reflected in the recording.

The use of the Signs of Safety practice model is a great tool to support recording and making decisions, which is evidence based and focused on specific observable behaviours rather than judgement or interpretations. Signs of Safety can be used at all levels of need, including universal. All meetings within Children's Services in Lincolnshire follow a Signs of Safety methodology.



TOP TIPS!

Language

– ensure this is plain and simple so the family and other professionals really understand what the worry is

Evidence based

– where possible focus on the specifics and observable behaviours which have been witnessed

Child and Family Voice

– what do they want to happen? What do they think of the worries?

Strengths is as important as the worries

– remember to include strengths as part of your recording and decision making even when things appear really bad, consider what is currently working or has worked in the past

Outcome focused

– be clear what the family and you want to achieve, what would this look like?

Reflect

– Take time to look over what you've recorded and reflect over what this means, what support is in place, where there are strengths and what are the worries for each child.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

Agency:	Phone:	Website:
Addaction in Lincolnshire general enquires	020 7251 5860	www.addaction.org.uk
Adult safeguarding and support	01522 782155	www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/adult-care/safeguarding-adults
Barnardo's	0208 550 8822	www.barnardos.org.uk
CAMHS Practitioner Advice Line	01522 309120	www.lpft.nhs.uk/our-services/specialist-services/camhs
CEOP Child Exploitation Online Protection	0870 000 3344	www.ceop.police.uk/contact-us
ChildLine	0800 11 11	www.childline.org.uk
Community Mental Health Services (adults)		www.lpft.nhs.uk
Children's Services	01522 552222	www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/childcare-and-family-support
Children's Services Customer Services For all Safeguarding calls	01522 782111 out of hours: 01522 782333	
Domestic Violence support for Men	0808801 0327	www.mensadvice.org.uk
Domestic Violence support for Women	8082000247	www.domesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
EDAN Lincs – Ending Domestic Abuse Now in Lincolnshire	01522510041	www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/domestic-abuse
ESCO (Early Support and Coordination)	01522 782111	www.lincolnshire.fsd.org.uk
Healthy Minds	01522 309777	www.lpft.nhs.uk/our-services/specialist-services/healthy-minds-lincolnshire
Home-start	01507 308030	www.home-start.org.uk
Jobcentre plus customer service	0800 055 6688	www.jobcentreguide.co.uk
KOOTH Online counselling support for young people		www.kooth.com
LGBT support for young people	0345 3 30 30 30	www.LGBT.foundation
Lincolnshire County Council child information and guidance	01522 552222	www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb/professionals/support/early-help-and-team-around-the-child/126092.article
Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Home check and smoke alarms (for a safety checklist for homes)	01522 580397	www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lincolnshire-fire-and-rescue
Lincolnshire Healthy Families Practitioner Telephone Contact	01522 504380	www.lincolnshirehealthyfamilies.nhs.uk/sexualhealth
LSCB Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board		www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)	0808 808 1001	www.nyas.net
PACE Parents Against Child Exploitation	0113 240 5226	www.paceuk.info

There are some really useful resources which can be accessed on the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board website, which also includes training and workshops which can be accessed for further learning and development. There are also links to further resources to support writing assessments, risk assessment tools, general advice and support around safeguarding. You can also sign up to the newsletter for monthly updates!



Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb



Websites:

For information on services in your locality such as children centres, activities for children and young people, guidance and support, funding for child care etc. Please visit our Family Information Service.



Visit:

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/parents/family-support/family-information-service



Telephone:

0800 195 1635

Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm



Or for Practitioners:

Visit <http://microsites.lincolnshire.gov.uk/children>

- where you can access forms, advice and resources.



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