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# Terms of reference for a Team Around the Family

## Description

**A Team Around the Family (TAF) where there is an Early Help Assessment (EHA) in place is the group of people meeting together with family members to create and review a plan to improve the outcomes for the Young People involved.**

### (1) Functions

- The purpose of the TAF is to bring a family together with all agencies working with them, to develop a holistic and fully informed assessment of the needs of all family members. The focus will be on improving outcomes for the Children and Young People in the family by the creation of a plan to respond to what people are worried about as identified in the assessment. Information that has not been shared with a family should not be revealed at the meeting. There should be 'no surprises'.
- Being part of a TAF will allow the Young Person, Parents or Carers to have their voice heard and to input to the planning.
- Where there are gaps in the Early Help Assessment (EHA) TAF members should identify who best to gather the information.
- When additional unmet needs are identified TAF to consider additional support needed. This may be part of the wider family network or other agencies.
- TAF to meet regularly and review plan. This will measure the progress and impact on the well-being and success outcome.
- Where progress is slow or there is no progress, steps should be taken to assess the impact of this on the young person involved and to consider gaining consent for referral to the Early Help and Family Support Panel. Where the level of worry clearly indicates that there are significant CP risks this should be referred via a Single Contact Form to the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub.
- Where an Early Help Assessment is in place for longer than nine months a review of the effectiveness of the plan should be undertaken at the ninth monthly meeting and where necessary advice sought from the locality Early Help Officer. Where the plan is in place for longer than 12 months the coordinator will be contacted by an Early Help Officer.

### (2) Frequency

The first TAF should meet within four weeks of the initiation of the EHA including a plan. The date of the next TAF must be set at this meeting and should be within 6 weeks.

### (3) Venue

The TAF should be held in a venue that is acceptable to the family and where they will feel comfortable and able to contribute to the conversation.

### (4) Membership

- Membership of the TAF should be discussed with family members as part of the initiation of the EHA and attendance will be with their consent. It should include the range of agencies working with the family as well as relevant family members. Where the representative from an agency cannot attend they should send a colleague.
- If this is not possible detailed updates should be provided to aid discussion. Where a pattern of non-attendance is identified this should be addressed with the individual by the coordinator or with the Early Help Officer for advice. As new agencies become involved in the TAF, consent for them to attend and have information shared with them must be gained from the family and recorded on the original EHA.
- Where the assessment includes a family living separately (eg separated parents) this should be accommodated and where necessary separate sections of the meeting should accommodate family members unable to meet together at the same time.
- The Early Help TAF Meeting Register of Attendance (available on the Early Help pages of the CSCP website) should be used with attention drawn to the associated confidentiality statement.

- If the parents cannot attend the TAF and have given their consent for the meeting to go ahead the discussion held must be recorded and shared with the family.

If consent is denied the agencies can meet if they have a justifiable reason to do so. It is important that the reason for the meeting going ahead is recorded within their own recording systems. .

#### **(6) TAF Chair**

The meeting should identify a member to Chair the meeting. More commonly this would be the Coordinator of the EHA however there can be circumstances where this is not appropriate. Consideration in some circumstances could be given to a family member chairing.

#### **(7) Recording**

It is not necessary to complete detailed minutes of the TAF meeting - however the Chair will be responsible for providing the current plan for review and recording the updated outcomes of the meeting discussion. They should then distribute this following the meeting to all members of the TAF.

#### **(8) Dispute resolution**

Where there is any level of disagreement between members of the TAF, advice should be sought from an Early Help Officer to advise on the most appropriate method of resolving this.

#### **(9) Step Up and Closure**

Where an escalating level of concern has resulted in a Child and Family Assessment being initiated the TAF should continue to meet until the outcome of the statutory assessment has been completed.