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# early help

in County Durham

Autumn 2022

## Welcome

...to our Autumn 2022 'Early Help in County Durham - Newsletter for Education', delivered by the One Point and Think Family Services.

This newsletter has helpful information and useful contacts, a what's going on and know your teams section, as well as important dates to remember.

If you would like to contribute or comment on the content of this newsletter, please see our 'Have Your Say' section below.

### What is 'Early Help'?

- Early Help is not a service but a way of working.
- Early Help is early in the life of a child or early in the life of an emerging problem.
- Early Help is about getting the right support for a child, young person and their family at the earliest opportunity.



Think Family



Fun and Food Halloween half-term holiday activities with the Youth Hub, Dawdon, see page 2 for more details



*Do you have any questions or comments about this newsletter? What can we do better?*

*What are your suggestions?*

**Email: [StrongerFamilies@durham.gov.uk](mailto:StrongerFamilies@durham.gov.uk)**





# what's going on

## FUN & FOOD

What a fabulous Fun and Food summer and October half term we have had!

We can't thank all of our delivery partners enough for their commitment and support with the delivery of Fun and Food – its gets bigger and better with each holiday period. We have visited some wonderful projects over the summer and we love seeing so many happy faces via photos and videos.

See what families have been up to in our heart warming video of summer 2022



[funandfood@durham.gov.uk](mailto:funandfood@durham.gov.uk)



Look out for what's coming this Christmas 2022 at

[www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood](http://www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood) or join our Facebook group at

[lindsey.davison@durham.gov.uk](mailto:lindsey.davison@durham.gov.uk)



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/funandfoodcountydurham>

A snapshot of just some of the wonderful things the Fun and Food programme has achieved over the summer holidays 2022

**20777**  
children  
engaged

**47%**  
of children  
were eligible  
for free  
school meals

**1345**  
children with  
Special  
Educational  
Needs and  
Disabilities

**62855**  
meals  
provided

**222**  
providers  
offering  
**2379**  
sessions in  
total

**2930**  
10 minute  
shake up  
packs  
delivered

**8975**  
free  
swimming  
sessions

# FUN & FOOD

Holiday activities with healthy food

Durham  
County Council







## Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme in County Durham

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Education (DfE) recently launched a three-year Family Hubs and Start for Life (SfL) programme to deliver a step-change in outcomes for babies, children, young people, parents, and carers.

The Government's vision for Family Hubs and SfL is to provide a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services. Family Hubs will deliver these services from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities).

County Durham is one of 75 Local Authorities who will receive additional funding to develop its Family Hub and SfL offer and build on our current Family Centre offer to ensure we have a comprehensive, integrated, and accessible offer for ALL children, young people, parents, and carers (0-19 years up to 25 for children and young people with SEND).



An initial multi-agency workshop was held on 14 October with over 80 partners and parents in attendance. The aim of the workshop was to consider what we are already doing well and understand the gaps in our current offer to families and to begin to develop our consensus for change.

## Our Family Hub and Start for Life Vision



*Family Hubs will provide a system-wide model of providing high-quality, whole-family, joined up family support services from pregnancy, through the child's early years and later childhood, and into early adulthood until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).*



## Our Aims

01

ensure our offer of support is co-produced with mams, dads, carers, children and young people and key partner agencies

02

make a positive difference to parents, carers, and their children, through providing a mix of physical and virtual spaces, as well as home visits for families to easily access support;

03

provide a universal front door to families, offering a one-stop shop of family support services across their social care, education, mental health, and physical health needs;

04

develop and publish a comprehensive Start for Life offer for parents and carers;

05

facilitate professionals across public sector, voluntary, community and faith sector to work together, through co-location, data sharing and a common approach to their work with children, young people, and families.



## The DART Programme

Domestic abuse can both directly and indirectly disrupt the relationship between a parent and their child and it can have a significant impact on the child's development, education outcomes and mental health.

**NSPCC**

Over the Summer the Local Authority has been working in collaboration with the NSPCC to establish the delivery of their Domestic Abuse Recovering Together (DART) Programme as part of Durham's Domestic Abuse Recovery Programme.

  
**harbour**  
working for safer communities



### What is DART?

DART is trauma informed, ideal for strengthening, building and repairing the relationship between mother and child and tackling issues such as displaced anger. It is based on research and statutory guidance which highlights that children's outcomes are improved if the mother is supported to take an active part in the child's recovery.



### Who is it for?

DART is for women and children (aged 7 - 14) who've been subjected to domestic abuse and where separation from the abuser has been successful. It is designed for one mum and one child per family who will over a 10-week programme, explore their issues within a safe and friendly environment, promoting openness and honesty.



### What can we do?

In Durham we are training a number of the Early Help Practitioners from the One Point Service along with practitioners from the Children and Young People's Team in Harbour to allow us to deliver a rolling programme of DART across the county. The first cohort of practitioners are now trained and the first DART programmes are due to rollout on, Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 at Bullion Lane Family Centre and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Woodhouse Close and, between 12.30pm and 3pm.



### Make a referral

To refer any families that you are working with on to the DART programme, complete a Harbour Support Services referral form [Make a referral \(myharbour.org.uk\)](https://myharbour.org.uk) and highlight that you wish the family to be considered for DART. The referral will be triaged by Harbour for DART and any additional support that would be beneficial. If the family meet the criteria they will be contacted to arrange completion of the DART assessment.

For further information about DART please contact Helen Ayton, Family Centre Team Manager: [Helen.Ayton@durham.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.Ayton@durham.gov.uk)/03000268379 or Samantha Neil, Team Manager Children and Young Peoples Team, Harbour Support Services: [samanthaneil@myharbour.org.uk](mailto:samanthaneil@myharbour.org.uk)/03000 20 25 25



## Amazing events for Dads in Durham schools

Here are some amazing events that some Durham Schools/Nurseries have already put on for Dads, the impact (not just for the children but for Dads and Schools) is invaluable!

See what Oxhill Nursery's Headteacher Julia Watson has to say about their experiences...

*'We have some very active dads in school and some who we never see. We wanted to give the dads a special event that would be for just them (and planned stereotypical man things to hook them in). It was an opportunity for all dads to come and spend time in the nursery environment with some of the staff and work with their child on a project. We chose the Friday before father's day weekend. We talked to them about the effects of 'forest bathing' and that we hoped they would leave us having the feel-good factor. We discussed the risk assessment and their task before the children joined us then we lit a campfire.*

*Their task was to make and decorate a photo frame out of sticks. We provided the tools e.g. junior hack saws, string, glue, scissors and some branches that they would need to cut down. We wanted the dads to teach their child how to use the tools and spend some quality time together. The dads were very engaged in their projects and the children seemed excited to have their dads in nursery. We took a lovely photograph of each dad and child pair and had it printed off ready to put in their finished frame to take home. We sang some songs and had hot chocolate and toasted marshmallows to finish.'*

”

**We've had a brilliant morning, thank you for organising it - when can we do it again?**

”

**I'm so pleased I have had the chance to come into nursery before she leaves for school**

”

**It was nice to meet some other dads**





## Dads, Dads, Dads!

A huge thank you and well done for embracing our 'Engaging Dads/Male Carer' agenda!

We are so lucky to have such vibrant and enthusiastic practitioners from across the Early Help System, including education colleagues, in helping to lead the way!

We have already seen some amazing examples of good practice and are always interested in your stories. The positive impact on outcomes for children in engaging a Dad/Male Carers (when there is one available and it is safe to do so), is immeasurable.

### Quick wins to engage Dads

Call Dad before Mam.

If parents are separated ensure to call Dad and Mam in the same week at least.

Even if parents are separated, if amicable, arrange a visit with both parents - take that 'whole family' approach.

Ask Dad when he is free and be flexible with appointments and visits.

Use digital technology if it helps to engage Dad.

Do a Dad 'check-in' - ask Dad how he is doing, show you care and that he, too, is important.

Use activities that engage Dads... ideas that are led by Dads e.g. Fishing, Bike Repairs etc.

What will your pledge be this week to better engage Dads?

### Did you know?

Fathers and infants can be equally as attached as mothers and infants. When both parents are involved with the child, infants are attached to both parents from the beginning of life.

Father involvement is related to positive child health outcomes in infants, such as improved weight gain in preterm infants and improved breastfeeding rates.

Children who feel a closeness to their father are: twice as likely as those who do not, to enter college or find stable employment after school, 75% less likely to have a teen birth and 80% less likely to spend time in prison.

Fathers, like mothers, are pillars in the development of a child's emotional well-being.

Fathers not only influence who we are inside, but how we have relationships with people as we grow. The way a father treats his child will influence what he or she looks for in other people.

Young girls depend on their fathers for security and emotional support. A father shows his daughter what a good relationship with a man is like.

Unlike girls, who model their relationships with others based on their father's character, boys model themselves after their father's character.

Fathers and infants can be equally as attached as mothers and infants. When both parents are involved with the child, infants are attached to both parents from the beginning of life.

High levels of father involvement are correlated with higher levels of sociability, confidence, and self-control in children.

Children with involved fathers are less likely to act out in school or engage in risky behaviours in adolescence.



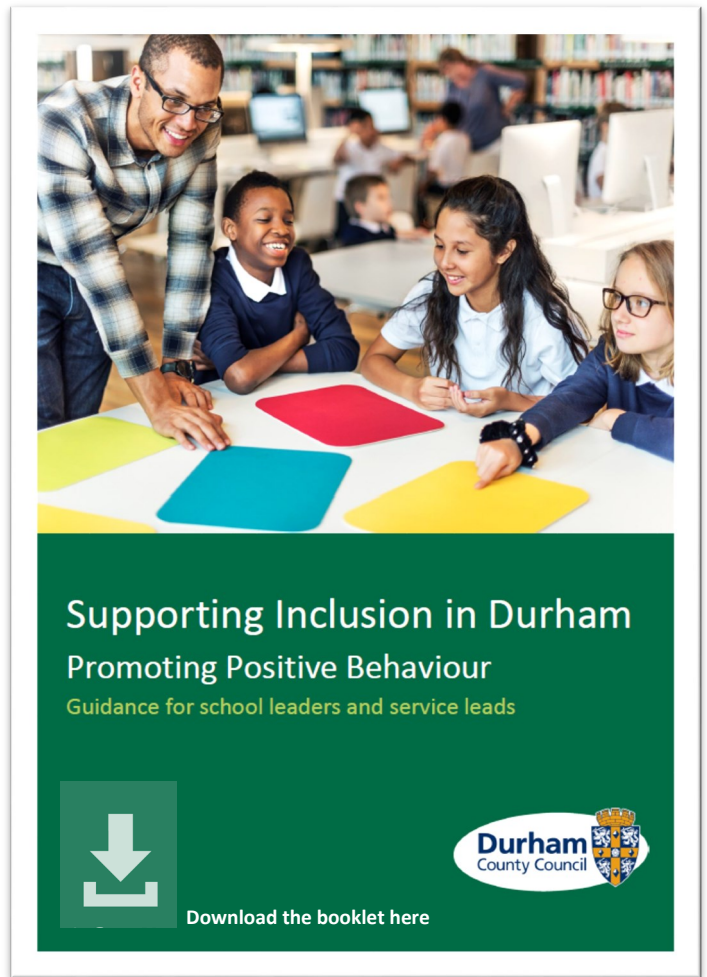


## Promoting Positive Behaviour

When working with families with school aged children where a child's behaviour has been identified as a worry, please refer to the Promoting Positive Behaviour Guidance which has been updated for 2022-23.

The guidance includes:

- An overview of the support offer available to Durham schools, and how this can be accessed
- A process for schools to follow when they want or need outside involvement to help them manage behaviours of concern
- Signposting to some useful resources in relation to commonly encountered needs that frequently underlie behaviour of concern
- Appendices specific to key areas of practice, including pastoral support planning and transition



**NEW**

## early help Assessment

*Now live! A special edition Newsletter was previously circulated to partners*  
 (click on the image below to download a copy).

In the first month of go-live (between 26 Sept 2022 and 26 Oct 2022), there has been:

- **175** Early Help Assessments submitted through the new Children's Services Portal
- **45** have been partners, including schools, telling us of the early help support you are leading on for families and
- **130** were submitted requesting (additional) early help.

We have pulled together some further support guidance to assist you in completion of the Early Help Assessment on the Children's Service Portal as have received some queries on this. Please see attached a [reference guide](#) you can keep somewhere handy to refer to!

We regularly seek feedback from partners, including education colleagues, through the Early Help Assessment Partnership Meeting. We would love to hear from you as to how you are finding it, good and bad, as we can then work to improve. Please send your feedback to:

Nicola James (Headteacher at St. Andrews Primary School) at [n.james201@staprimary.co.uk](mailto:n.james201@staprimary.co.uk)





# County Durham Family Outcome Framework



The new Family Outcome Framework was launched on the 3 October 2022. This has been reviewed by the national Supporting Families Programme (aka Stronger Families) and applies to all LA areas and partners nationally.

The main changes are:

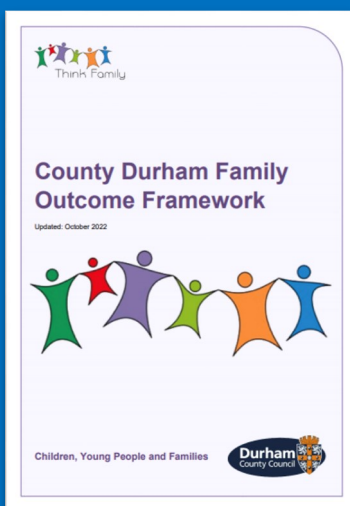
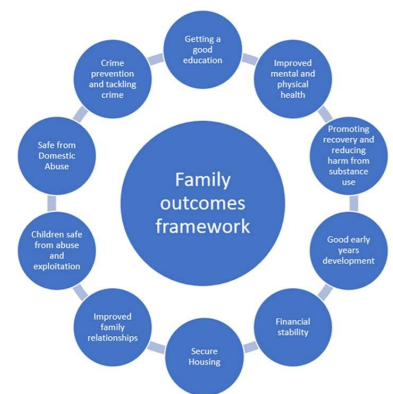
Old	New
Headline Problem	Headline Outcome
Identified Issues	Family Needs
Family Level Significant Outcomes	Outcomes
6 Headline Problems	10 Headline Outcomes
Stronger Families Eligible if 2+ Headline Problems	Stronger Families Eligible if 3+ Headline Outcomes

Some outcomes require **all individual family members to achieve**, not just a family member e.g. If multiple family members have identified:

Drug/alcohol needs - it is no longer the case that only one family member needs to achieve – all those identified need an achievement.

ASB/Crime - it is no longer the case that only one family member needs to achieve – all those identified need an achievement.

Mental Health - it is no longer the case that only one family member needs to achieve – all those identified need an achievement.



A new County Durham Family Outcome Framework Document is now available on the Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership Website at <https://durham-scp.org.uk/professionals/county-durham-family-outcomes-framework/>

Go to 'Professionals' at the top of the page and under 'Early Help' there is a tab for County Durham Family Outcomes Framework <https://durham-scp.org.uk/professionals/county-durham-family-outcomes-framework/>

## SAVE TO YOUR FAVOURITES NOW!

This will help you also when completing an Early Help Assessment.





# training and resources

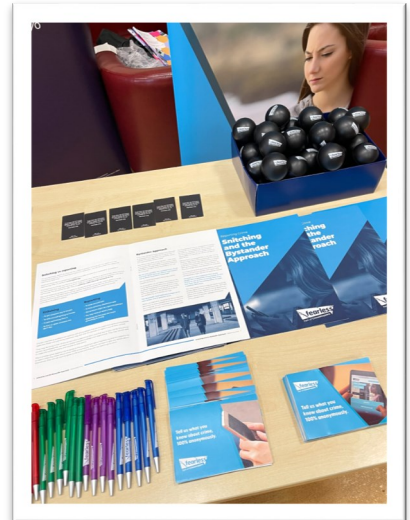


## Free Fearless Workshops

Many of you may not know the name Fearless but are aware of Crimestoppers – in short, Fearless is the dedicated youth service of

the charity Crimestoppers, which is independent of the police. We empower young people to speak up about crime by: promoting our unique service to give information about crime 100% anonymously; raising awareness of what constitutes a crime and breaking down the barriers to reporting crime.

We do this through our Fearless workers who are placed nationally. As of May this year, the Fearless worker for County Durham is Lucy who has been developing and presenting workshops on different types of crimes at schools and youth clubs (as well as spreading the Fearless message).



These workshops are currently about: Anti-Social Behaviour, Knife Crime, County Lines and the Fearless service. Lucy's role has been entirely funded by the Area Action Partnerships and the workshops she can deliver are entirely without charge.

If you or any contacts you may have who work with schools/youth clubs in County Durham would like to book Lucy for any sessions, please contact her at:

[lucy.milburn-greenwood@crimestoppers-uk.org](mailto:lucy.milburn-greenwood@crimestoppers-uk.org).

You can access free resources such as posters and further information at [www.Fearless.org](http://www.Fearless.org)

Download  
'Support for  
Parents, carers  
and young  
people in  
County  
Durham' and  
'The Solihull  
Approach'  
Resources here



Support for parents,  
carers and young people  
in County Durham



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD SOLIHULL APPROACH inourplace NHS

The Solihull Approach series

10 ONLINE COURSES

'UNDERSTANDING YOUR...'

Lift your spirits!

Learn how to:

- Observe
- Understand
- Respond

We provide the framework, you decide what's best for you and your family

- Not a how-to guide
- Not a list of do's and don'ts
- Not advice
- Not opinion
- Not just witch-ful thinking

...PREGNANCY, LABOUR, BIRTH AND YOUR BABY'

...BABY'

...CHILD'

...CHILD WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS'

...TEENAGERS' BRAIN'

...RELATIONSHIPS'

inourplace.co.uk FIND OUT MORE...

Do you live in Durham?

1. Visit [www.inourplace.co.uk](http://www.inourplace.co.uk)
2. Enter Access Code
3. Begin learning

Access Code: **DCCHDFT**

PREPARED for ALL parents, grandparents & carers

& more

8





# training and resources



EMPOWERING  
PARENTS  
EMPOWERING  
COMMUNITIES

Thank you to everyone who has helped support and facilitate Durham's first 'Parent Group Leader' (PGL) course. We have a group of parents training in the Horden area and also in the Bishop Auckland area. We are always looking for new parents who want to:

- Learn to lead practical, caring groups for local parents.
- Share tried and tested methods that give children the best start in life.
- Join a group of like-minded parents to make a difference to their local community.
- Develop skills and confidence.
- Gain experience that will help them fulfil their ambitions.

The next PGL course will run in the New Year (2023) but please discuss any prospective parents now with Laura-Jayne Lewis (EPEC Coordinator) by simply emailing [EPEC@durham.gov.uk](mailto:EPEC@durham.gov.uk)

Here are some videos as a reminder of what it is all about [Parent Group Leader](#)

Once the PGL's are fully trained, we will be looking for them to deliver a 'Being A Parent' course to their peers in community settings from the beginning of 2023.

This is a **FREE, UNIVERSAL** offer for parents, suitable for Mams, Dads and Carers with children aged between 2 and 11 years old.

Here is a link to a bit more information about the ['Being A Parent'](#) course. Further promotion will follow so watch this space!

If you think parents of your pupils would want to take part and you want to find out more please contact [EPEC@durham.gov.uk](mailto:EPEC@durham.gov.uk). We are currently in discussions with some schools about funding additional 'after-school club' hours to facilitate parents attending - we can do the same for you too!

Relationships Matter

## Parenting when Separated



We are now taking referrals for **'Parenting When Separated'**

Parenting When Separated is a practical and positive evidence-based course for parents who are preparing for, going through or have gone through a separation or divorce.

This is NOT suitable for parents where Domestic Abuse is a factor. If there is historical Domestic Abuse, advice would need to be sought from Harbour (Durham's Specialist Domestic Abuse Service) to discuss the appropriateness of the PWS course.

The six week (2.5hrs per week) FREE course supports parents in 'Parental Coping and Self Care', 'Parenting' and the 'Co-parental Relationship'. The programme highlights positive and practical steps parents can take to help their children cope and thrive as well as coping successfully themselves. As part of the referral process practitioners who are referring families for the course must complete a [Referral Stage Questionnaire \(RSQ\)](#). The RSQ is not just a form, it is a tool for schools/practitioners to facilitate a discussion with both parents about their relationship. Once the RSQs are complete please email them and the [Family Centre Referral Form](#) to [PWS@durham.gov.uk](mailto:PWS@durham.gov.uk) and Laura-Jayne Lewis (EPEC Coordinator) will be in touch. If you require support or would like to discuss a family where this would benefit please email Laura-Jayne Lewis at [PWS@durham.gov.uk](mailto:PWS@durham.gov.uk), leave your name and number and Jayne will give you a call.

[Download the Family Centre Referral Form here](#)







# training and resources

## Relationships Matter

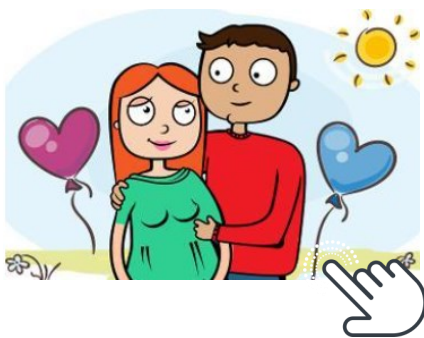
### FREE On-line Digital Resources for parent/carers



Why don't you promote these on your school/service website, Twitter, Facebook page or even pop in your newsletter to parent/carers

Durham's public facing [Relationships Matter website](#) hosts One Plus One's evidence based Digital Tools which allow parents to complete on-line courses in their own time.

There are three on-line courses available:



#### Me, You and Baby Too

This online course is for new and expectant parents. Having a baby is one of the biggest changes couples can go through. They'll both be tired and stressed, and may argue more. Me, You and Baby Too is designed to help them find their way through these changes so they can sort out any disagreements and keep moving forward together. This will be better for them, their partner, and better for baby!



#### Arguing Better

This course is for parents experiencing high levels of stress and couple conflict. It is all about finding helpful ways to communicate during stressful times. Parents learn why arguments happen, how they can affect them, and the best ways to support them and their partner or co-parent. It may be particularly useful for anyone who is dealing with a lot of stress or arguing more than they'd like to.



#### Getting it Right for Children

This course is for separating or separated parents experiencing high levels of conflict. The goal of this course is to minimise the effects that parental separation has on children. It is designed to help separating parents communicate better for the sake of their children. Parents don't have to complete this course in one go but it's often best to spread it over a few weeks to give them time to reflect and practise the skills.

Parent/Carers can access the FREE online courses by registering at:

**[Parent/Carers can register and sign into the courses, on their own without a practitioner.](#)**

**REMEMBER** - These courses are **NOT** for parents in **Domestic Abuse relationships**. If parents are in a relationship where there is a power imbalance or they feel afraid please encourage them to reach out to you or contact Harbour (FREE Domestic Abuse Service) by telephoning 03000 20 25 25 (24 hours) or emailing [info@myharbour.org.uk](mailto:info@myharbour.org.uk)



## Relationships Matter

### FREE On-line Digital Resources for parent/carers

Conflict between parents is a natural part of relationships and family life. Not all conflict is damaging, but the way conflict manifests – its frequency, intensity, and how it is resolved – can negatively affect children.

Children who witness severe and ongoing parental conflict can display:

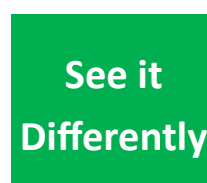
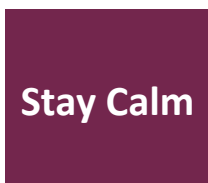
- externalising problems (such as behavioural difficulties, antisocial behaviour)
- internalising problems (such as low self-esteem, depression and anxiety)
- academic problems
- physical health problems
- social and interpersonal relationship problems.

In the long term, the above poor child outcomes are associated with: mental health difficulties, poorer academic outcomes, negative peer relationships, substance misuse, poor future relationship chances, low employability, and heightened interpersonal violence. The impact of interparental conflict on children can therefore be varied and long-lasting, as well as the risk that relationship behaviours and problems are repeated across the generations, as evidence suggests these children can go on to experience destructive conflict in their own future relationships.

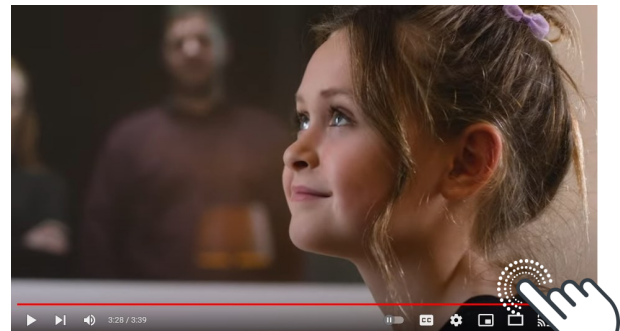
### See it Differently

"See it Differently" are useful video clips showing how parents can communicate better. We all argue sometimes. Whether that's with our partners, our parents or other family members, life stresses can put strain on families and lead to arguments which affect children. The videos show a different way of doing things to make life easier for everyone in the family.

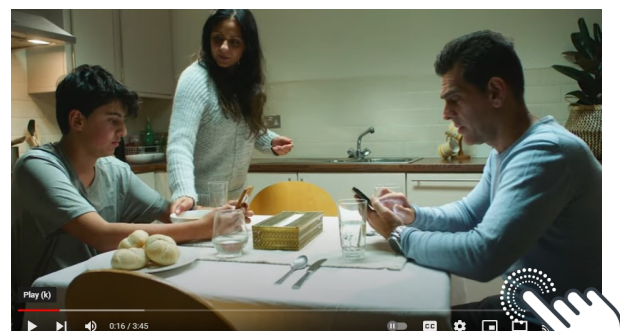
Key messages are to:



Maddie's Family



Chloe's Family



Mahmoud's Family



Jag's Family



## early help Advisors

The Early Help Advisory team supports partners from across County Durham's Early Help System who are working with children, young people and families. We provide one to one support and mentoring. From the earliest of help we are here to support you (our partners) with your work with families. We can offer case discussions and we have well established links with many services to draw upon and to signpost to for more specialist support if necessary. We offer a friendly tailored service to meet your individual needs or that of your service.



Senior  
Early Help Advisor

sheena.wyness@durham.gov.uk

03000 266 467 or 07584 262 638



Early Help Advisor

susan.barker@durham.gov.uk

03000 261280 or 07584 262 639 (North)



Early Help Advisor

karen.prior@durham.gov.uk

03000 264 133 or 07867 462 155 (South)



Early Help Advisor

danielle.martin@durham.gov.uk

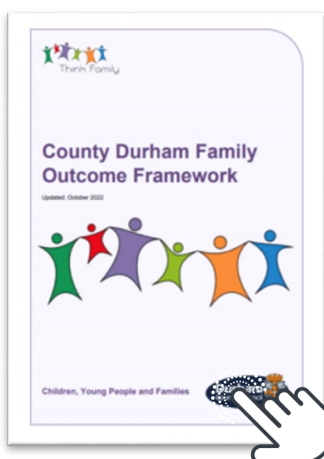
03000 264 437 or 07787110 152 (East)



Early Help Advisor

jilly.hunter@durham.gov.uk

03000 263 713/07884 436 320 (Durham West & Central)



We will help you work to achieve the best outcomes for the family using the County Durham Family Outcome Framework and whole family approach. Some of the support we can offer includes completion of the new Early Help Assessment and developing a robust multi-agency Child & Family Plan that considers all family members needs.

We will offer support and mentoring to you to be lead worker when you're likely to be involved in a "Team Around the Family" (TAF). We assist workers to undertake the role of the lead worker by providing support, coaching, and mentoring as required by the individual. We will support and directly assist the lead worker in TAFs and TAF members to identify solutions where there is a lack of change in the family or outcomes are not being achieved; this may include times where families are resistant to support or difficult to

engage. We will support you to have an awareness of Signs of Safety/Wellbeing approach and help identify important people to the family who can also support the child/ren and adults.

For further information telephone as above or email:

[Earlyhelpadvisorsupport@durham.gov.uk](mailto:Earlyhelpadvisorsupport@durham.gov.uk)



## Knowing your Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)

Don't forget to keep up to date with your local NPT go to [Know your Neighbourhood Policing Team](#) and choose your area. Why don't you invite them along to a team meeting or an informal cuppa to meet the team!

Supporting a family where there is risk of Anti-Social Behaviour and/or Crime?

As a professional just want some quick advice or guidance to help you support a family?

Not sure what to do if a family disclose a potential allegation of a criminal offence?

You also have access to PCSO's who may be appropriate to support a family you are working with. A PCSO Pathway has been developed to help partners across Durham who are working with families where they are involved in ASB/Crime or are at risk. See Flowchart below.



Sergeant Ralph Thompson is Durham's named single point of contact for the Stronger Families Programme. Ralph is keen to strengthen links with partners to help support families. If you have a Police question or query and you're not sure where to go for advice and don't want to contact 101, then Ralph is happy to act as a trouble shooter/consultant for you. If, however, it is a Police emergency you must not hesitate

to call 999. Ralph will not always be on duty but will return your call, reply to your email as soon as he is available (see contact details).

SGT. 2386 RALPH THOMPSON

Missing From Home & Stronger Families Co-ordinator  
Child Exploitation Team  
Durham Constabulary

📞 101 ext. 752820 or 07890 048 587

✉️ [ralph.thompson@durham.police.uk](mailto:ralph.thompson@durham.police.uk)

🌐 [www.durham.police.uk](http://www.durham.police.uk)



### Flowchart to Request Support for a PCSO

Are you working with a Young Person or family who you think would benefit from contact from a Police Community Support Officer?



Email the Safeguarding Coordinator [Ralph.Thompson@durham.police.uk](mailto:Ralph.Thompson@durham.police.uk)  
Include the name of the young person, date of birth, address, parent's details and a short summary of why you are involved and what you would like to achieve from PCSO Intervention.



Your request will be assessed, and an email will be sent to advise you regarding the next step.



Sgt. Ralph Thompson will task local officers to contact you to identify a plan to support a positive outcome for the family or young person.