



Croydon Partnership Early Help

Information for children and their parents/
carers and families



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WHO ARE WE?

Best Start Family Solutions is a service that has been set up to by Croydon Council, working together with a range of other agencies and organisations.

We currently have 3 teams based around the borough in the North, Central and South; however we offer a borough-wide service and are happy to travel to where you are in order to support you and your family. The 3 localities are:

- **North:** Winterbourne, 28 Winterbourne Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 7QT
Tel No.: 020 8760 5701
- **Central:** The Turnaround Centre, 51-55 South End, Croydon CR0 1BF
Tel No.: 020 8760 5750
- **South:** Birdhurst, 53 Birdhurst Road, South Croydon, CR2 7BB
Tel No.: 020 8667 8485

Our teams are made up of employees from a range of backgrounds with experience in health, education, probation service, mental health, substance misuse services and housing providers.

WHAT DO WE DO?

Our focus is to help you identify areas in your life that you would like to improve and support you to do this.

What we do will depend very much on the needs identified by you and your family. We are not here to judge you, to tell you what to do or pretend we can solve all the challenges that you face.

We will, however, work alongside you, support you and do whatever we can to help you and your family achieve the best possible outcomes.

WHY WOULD I NEED EARLY HELP?

There are lots of reasons why people look for early help:

- You may be worried about your child's health, development or behaviour
- You may be worried about how they are doing at school
- You may be worried about money or housing and how that is affecting your family
- Your child and family may be affected by domestic abuse, drugs, alcohol, mental ill health or crime

Early help can give you the tools to solve any challenges or problems you are experiencing with help from others where needed.

SO WHAT WILL ACTUALLY HAPPEN IF I ASK FOR HELP?

If you are referred or refer yourself to the Best Start Family Solutions service we will identify a family key worker who will be the main link for you and your family. We will arrange with you a time to come and meet with you and your family and get to know you. If you are happy for us to visit you we can come to your home, or you can come to one of our locality hubs.

The family key worker will listen to you and your family and work together to identify how we can support you to improve how things are going. They may just point you to the right services for your family. However, if it is a bit more complicated they may complete a Child and Family Wellbeing Assessment (CFWA).

This helps them to understand more about what your family needs and which professionals and services can work together to help and support you.

A CFWA is nothing to be worried about. It's just a conversation to work out how to help you stop small problems turning into big ones. You can talk about things that are going well and things that you are proud of as well as things that you're finding a challenge.

The person will also talk with your child or children in your family to make sure they understand how they are feeling and anything they think they might want some help with.

Together you'll agree what to write down so there is a record of what you talked about.

If the person talking to you believes you and your family need to be referred for more intensive early help support, they will need to refer you and your family to the relevant service.



I AM FED UP WITH PEOPLE INTERFERING IN MY FAMILY LIFE

We understand that having lots of agencies involved in your life can be frustrating.

What we hope to do is help you navigate 'the system' and ensure that your rights are met, but perhaps most importantly help you get to a position where you don't need us anymore.

The reality of working with Best Start Family Solutions is that we will be involved in your life, but we aim to have an approach which is about listening to you, working alongside you and supporting you. We guarantee that we will always listen, be fair and work in what we believe is the best interest of you and your family.



WHAT CAN I DO NEXT?

If you have been nominated to receive support from our service, your key worker will contact you and provide you with contact details for both themselves and the office.

If you would like to find out more about early help, please speak to a professional involved with your family or look at our website www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/families/ccfpartnership/early-help

If you feel you and your family might need support to solve some problems, you can ask a professional involved with your family about early help. This might be a teacher at your child's school, your GP, your health visitor, nursery practitioner or your housing support worker.

CONSENT

A referral must always be discussed with the child and their family and consent for the referral should always be sought from those with parental responsibility unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

You will be asked to sign a 'consent to share' information form. This is so that we can gather information to ensure that you get the most comprehensive and co-ordinated service that we can provide. However, you have the right at any time to withdraw consent and if you do this we will respect your wishes.

CAN I CHANGE MY MIND ABOUT WORKING WITH BEST START FAMILY SOLUTIONS?

Working with Best Start Family Solutions is your choice, at any point you can choose to end your contact with our service. We obviously hope that you won't and would ask that if at any time you are unhappy with the service that we are providing, you let us know.



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NAME OF EARLY HELP PRACTITIONER:

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CONTACT DETAILS

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