

EARLY HELP ASSESSMENTS

The DDSCP conducted a review of Early Help Assessments in Universal services. Here are some top-tips on what to include when writing an Early Help Assessment (EHA). If you would like further information regarding the review, please email DDSCP@derby.gov.uk.

Remember an EHA should not be used in cases where abuse or neglect is suspected. Please refer to the [threshold](#) document for further guidance.

INFORMATION GATHERING

The best assessments used all parts of the form, and a wide range of **information** including:

- The views of all family members and most importantly the children.
- Chronologies, genograms and [culturagrams](#).
- Tools which focus on specific issues such as the Graded Care Profile or the CRE toolkit.
- Other professionals working with the family (especially where there are health needs).

Please remember to complete the key safety information, the sections around fire safety are relevant to all families and those relating to baby safety should be included wherever there is an infant in the home.

NEXT STEPS

Where actions depend on another process, include **contingencies** e.g.

- Where a children's services practitioner is specified against an action, how will this outcome be met if threshold is not?
- How will you support the family if there are long waits for a service they need?
- What needs to happen if progress isn't being made?

[Further information on Early Help](#) is available on the DDSCP website.



THINK FAMILY

Include **all children** in the home and those closely linked. It is essential that the **voice of the child** is clear throughout the assessment, and this should apply to all individual children in the household.

Both parents should input where possible, as should other important adults. An appreciation of **wider family relationships** helps to understand support networks and the parents' experiences of family life as a child.

ACTIONS

Actions should:

- Make sure all available support is in place (benefits, adult services, onward referrals).
- Be **SMART**, with an identified **lead** and clearly **sequenced** – for example sending parents to groups that don't currently feel able to leave the house may need prior support related to the **cause** of the observed issue.

OUTCOMES

The assessment should create a clear view of who the family are and what is important to them. What are the family's strengths? What are their difficulties?

Outcomes should be a clear statement of how we want things to improve, and should focus on the underlying issues.

What would success look like **for this family**?

CURIOUS CONVERSATIONS

Often we have to have difficult conversations and people may not always be open and honest about their struggles for lots of reasons. Be curious and courageous in your conversations and seek **supervision/guidance** where necessary. Consider what previous involvements looked like. Is there a need for support around historical issues? How might this impact on their engagement with the assessment or any further work?