



# One-minute guide

## Team Around the Family (TAF)

“Providing early help is more effective than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as possible after a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.

Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Undertake an assessment of need for early help
- Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve outcomes for the child”.

*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*

### What is a Team Around the Family (TAF)?

A Team Around the Family (TAF) brings together practitioners from a wide range of different statutory and voluntary agencies to work with a family. The focus is on working with the family in a holistic way using a whole family approach.

All members of the TAF should respect each other’s roles and responsibilities and the child champion should make sure that all suitable agencies, including any voluntary organisations the child and family are engaged with, are included. A TAF meeting is an opportunity for families to be heard and listened to non-judgementally, their strengths acknowledged, and their needs or concerns discussed with a view to providing help and support. It is important to keep the voice of the child and family at the centre.

### Who attends a TAF?

A TAF consists of as many members of the family as appropriate and key practitioners from education, health, the police, social care and housing (as applicable). Surrey partner, statutory and voluntary organisations may also attend the TAF to give their input, advice or resources.

Every family will have an appointed child champion who should be someone who knows the family well and works closely with them. They will be the central point of contact for the family. Refer to ‘One Minute Guide – Being a Child Champion’ for more information on this role.

### What happens at a TAF?

- Information is shared by family members and practitioners
- Actions are identified to address needs and build on strengths and recorded on the Family Action Plan
- If appropriate, other services should be consulted and invited to the next TAF
- Members of the TAF are jointly responsible for developing and delivering the package of support
- Each member is responsible for completing their assigned actions
- Each member should support the child champion by keeping them informed and updated, and by attending meetings
- Progress is regularly reviewed

### What are the benefits of a TAF?

- Families feel listened to and contribute to a plan which includes the changes they want to make
- A plan is created which considers the needs of the child, the parents and the family as a whole
- Families access resources and services more easily
- Families provide consent for their information to be shared with the different agencies
- Communication between professionals is improved to reduce duplication of work
- Outcomes for families are more likely to be met
- Change is sustained within the family

