

Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset - Thresholds for Assessment and Services - Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Assessment and Referral Process	
<p>What feedback can I expect once I have made a referral to getset?</p>	<p>As a professional you can expect a standard acknowledgment of your referral within 10 working days. A letter is sent to the family which will either state the family have been allocated to a Family Support Worker (FSW) or have been placed on the waiting list. The referrer will also receive a copy of this letter.</p> <p>Once allocated the FSW will make contact with you.</p> <p>You will also receive a written acknowledgement when getset's involvement ends.</p>
<p>Why can't I just phone Somerset Direct?</p>	<p>The consultation line has been put in place to give Organisation Safeguarding Leads (OSLs) the opportunity to discuss concerns with a qualified Social Worker when they are unsure if a child should be referred to Children's Social Care. Somerset Direct does not provide this service. The consultation line should therefore reduce the number of unnecessary referrals made to Children's Social Care.</p>
<p>How do you approach a child in need of intervention?</p>	<p>All practitioners are expected to have worked together to meet the needs of the child and their family. If practitioners identify that a child and their family would benefit from a more intensive, multi-disciplinary response than they can provide, they should discuss this with the family and complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA).</p>
<p>If an Early Help Assessment (EHA) has been closed and another need is identified do I have to complete another EHA?</p>	<p>If the EHA has been closed for more than 6 months or the needs or make up of the family has significantly changed it would be necessary to complete a new EHA.</p> <p>If the closed EHA is less than six months old it can be clearly updated by holding a Team around the Child (TAC) meeting and resubmitted as the new EHA for that child/family.</p>

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Do I have to complete an Early Help Assessment at level 2?	<p>If professionals identify that a child and their family would benefit from a more intensive, multi-disciplinary response than they can provide, they should discuss this with the family and complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA). This may identify a need for the family to 'step up' to the level 3 'Complex' service.</p> <p>The EHA will also evidence interventions that have already been implemented which have either been successful or unsuccessful. This provides an outline of previous support offered and the impact this has had.</p>
What if you identify a level 2 need that is met by a single agency? Do you need to complete an EHA?	No, but the single agency would need to liaise with the referring agency and the school or nursery setting where appropriate to encourage multi-agency working on a general level.
If a family needs intervention from a single agency, do we need to have a Team Around the Child meeting?	No, but the single agency would need to liaise with the referring agency and the school or nursery setting where appropriate to encourage multi-agency working on a general level.
What is the purpose of a Team Around the Child Meeting? Is it to agree the level of need and the Lead Professional?	<p>A Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting is a group of professionals who support the family and their child, regularly meeting with them to agree and review the action plan and identify other agencies/services that could also help support the child/family. The meetings should be at a time and place that the family and child feel happy with and are held approximately every 6-8 weeks.</p> <p>If a Lead Professional has not already been identified, this would be agreed at the initial TAC meeting.</p>
What if you identify Universal (Level 1) needs in 3 different agencies? How is this managed?	The professional needs to signpost to the appropriate agencies.
Roles and Responsibilities	
What is a Lead Professional?	The Lead Professional acts as the single point of contact for the family and the services involved with that child/young person and carer/family. The Lead Professional is not a job title or a new role, but ensures delivery of effective integrated support.

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Who should be the lead professional?	The family will have a key input into who the Lead Professional should be. This will be agreed at the first TAC meeting. They should be the person with the closest working relationship with the family. This person will keep them informed, listen to their views and support them. They will ensure that the action plan is being reviewed properly. The Early Help Assessment Co-ordinator can provide guidance for professionals.
Are there any Social Workers in getset?	getset is a non-statutory service. There are staff within getset who have a range of professional backgrounds and skill sets.
Advice	
Who do I contact regarding advice on children with needs at levels 1 and 2?	<p>0-5 years - Midwife, Health Visitor, Early Years Providers, Children's Centres (getset level 1 and 2).</p> <p>5-19 (up to 25 for children with SEND) years - Head teacher, Head of Year, Tutor, SENCo, PFSA, School Nurse, Home School Liaison Officer</p>
General	
What is the role of getset?	<p>getset Universal (Level 1) and Additional (Level 2) Service (0-5) years. getset will continue to deliver the Children's Centre core offer. Children's Centres will continue to provide universal services and support for families with a child under 5 where the level of need is at 1 or 2 as set out in the Thresholds Guidance. Schools will continue to deliver support for families with school aged children at levels 1 and 2.</p> <p>getset Complex (Level 3) Service (0-19) (up to 25 for children with SEND) years Where professionals believe that the needs of children, young people and their families are complex and meet the Level 3 threshold, require targeted support and meet the Troubled Families criteria, they can refer to the 'getset' Complex Service.</p> <p>Professionals can refer to this service by using the Common Request for Involvement Form (CRIF) which can be found on the 'getset' website as well as the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) website. An EHA completed with the family must also be submitted.</p> <p>Where there is doubt about the most appropriate service pathway to take, anyone concerned about the welfare of a child should consult with their manager or safeguarding lead in their own agency in the first instance.</p>

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Have the thresholds for Children's Social Care been raised?	No - the thresholds remain the same.
Why aren't there any weightings on the Indicators of Need tables?	This comes down to professional judgement. If you are in doubt about whether a child is level 3 or 4, you can speak to your Safeguarding Lead who can ring the consultation line for advice.
What happens if I have a disagreement about the level of need?	<p>Refer to the thresholds guidance and use the indicators of need tables to provide rationale as to your decision making.</p> <p>The thresholds guidance clearly sets out statements under each criteria. Practitioners need to hold a TAC meeting with others to determine the level of need.</p> <p>If the disagreement still cannot be resolved, the escalation policy and process can be found here</p>
How do I find services that are available?	Available services for children and families are shown on the Somerset Choices website .
Consent	
What do I do if a family refuse to give consent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refusal to give consent to share information does not preclude anyone from the help they are entitled to. However a discussion with the family may dispel their fears. It needs to be noted that sharing information may ensure that support is received faster. • You should note why the family have refused consent as the family may have a history of refusing to engage with agencies. • You should ensure the family understand they can choose who to share the Early Help Assessment with.
What about situations where it may not be in the child's best interest to ask for consent?	If the request for involvement is considered to be at level 4, seeking parental consent may not be required. If you are concerned that the child may be at risk of or suffering significant harm, contact Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.