

Early Help

Early Help Assessment and Early Help Services



Oldham
Council

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What is Early Help?

- **Self Help**
- **Guided Help**
- **Supported Help** and in some cases it can be **Intensive Help**
- Help and support which occurs early in the timescale of the problem, issue or need
- Help and support that is provided in such a way as to promote self help and independence from services

Why are we changing from the Family CAF to the Early Help Assessment?

The Early Help Assessment is replacing the Family CAF.

It works very much like the Family CAF but is designed to help people to develop self-help and self-management skills in order to better meet their long term needs and to reduce their reliance on public services.

For many families and individuals, services have tended to come into their lives and 'fix' things for them. Intervened to correct problems or directly meet needs. This has resulted in some families and individuals becoming over reliant on services leading to an expectation that things will be done for them or to them. For some they have never needed to learn to become self reliant.

Experience with CAF, Family CAF and intensive work with families has helped us develop a new, simpler and more intuitive, way for families, adults and young people to assess their own needs and for professionals to work out ways to support them to take both ownership and control over those needs.

The Early Help Assessment is different from the Family CAF because it:

- Focuses on the parent, young person or single adult becoming in control of their own issues.
- It has a visual diagram which has proved to be a very successful starting point to engage parents and young people in the process and it helps them to explore the issues in a meaningful way with professionals.

Who will undertake the Early Help Assessment?

Everyone previously trained to undertake Family CAF's should, with a short training input, be easily able to undertake an Early Help Assessment

All services that have direct contact with adults, children and young people and who are likely to identify that there are problems or issues that are negatively affecting the adult, family or household need to be aware of the early help assessment and, where appropriate, be able to undertake one

This is particularly relevant for frontline staff working for universal services such as schools, children's centres, early years settings. Health professionals such as health visitors, midwives, GPs etc must be aware of the early help assessment process and, where appropriate, be able to undertake one.

How will they be trained to undertake assessments?

- A rolling training program is underway to deliver multi-agency training, this will continue through into 2016
- An eLearning course is being developed to further support staff to undertake early help assessments and support the process

How does the Early Help Assessment work?

There are six distinct stages of the Early Help Assessment process

The assessment stage

- An assessment is undertaken, which identifies needs and support areas with the parent, young person or adult
- Initial actions are agreed

The recording stage

- The assessment information and initial actions are recorded on the web based electronic system

The multi-agency meeting stage

- A multi-agency meeting is organised, inviting all agencies currently working with the family, young person or adult to come together, with the subjects of the referral, to agree and initiate a co-ordinated action plan

The support/intervention stage

- Actions agreed in the multi-agency plan are undertaken

The plan review stage

- A meeting is held with all parties to review actions agreed in the plan and to decide on future work
- This stage will be repeated until all needs have been fully met

The close or escalate stage

- If all needs have been satisfactorily met, the Early Help case will be closed down on the system
- If needs have not been met then a decision to escalate to the early help service could be made

At any point, escalation to Child or Adult Protection services may occur should circumstances dictate

Stage 1: Assessment

The Early Help Assessment has been designed to be more user friendly.

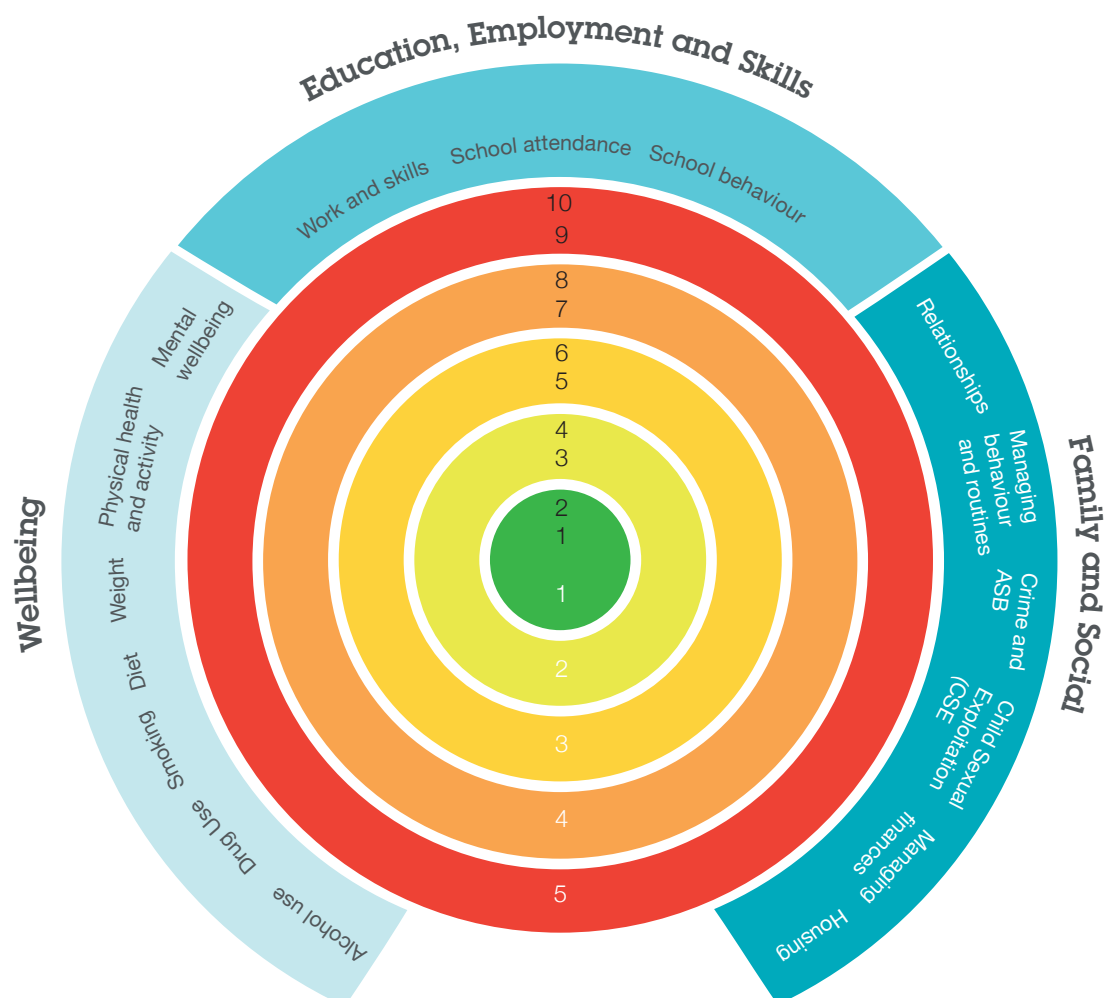
The higher the score the more support they may need to take control of their issue. Examples of levels of support by colour zone.

Support	Example
It's Self Help	I can usually find a solution myself or with a little direction I can
It's Guided Help	I need some guidance or some practical support to help me solve this problem for myself
It's Supported Help	I need a lot of practical support to help me solve this problem for myself or I need someone to help me understand why I might feel I can't do this for myself
It's Intensive Help	I need someone to show me how I can change some things, in order to enable me to do things for myself and to work with me intensively to ensure I can resolve my own problems

Using the In Control diagram the person being assessed is asked to consider how in control they are with their lives and those of their family.

They are then asked to pick out areas which they feel they want support or help with. They will be asked to decide how much support they feel they need.

In control	Some support needed	More support needed	A lot more support needed	Not in control
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Stage 1: Assessment continued

There are fewer paper forms to complete in the Early Help Assessment than the current Family CAF

Here are some examples of the forms

Early Help Assessment

Forename: _____ Surname: _____ Sex: _____
 Date of Birth: _____ Address: _____
 Person completing assessment: _____ Agency: _____ Date: _____

Topic	Initial Score	Review Score	Issue	Action to Address Issue	Action Owner
In Control					
Mental Wellbeing How are you feeling?					
Physical Health and Activity How does your physical health impact on your physical activity?					
Diet Do you feel your diet is healthy? Could it be improved?					
Smoking Is smoking affecting your health?					
Drug Use / Substance Use If you use recreational drugs or substances, are they negatively affecting your life and routines?					
Alcohol use Is your alcohol consumption negatively affecting your life and routines?					

Early Help Assessment Form

Person completing the paperwork: _____ Date of assessment: _____
 Job title: _____
 Tel and email address: _____

Who the assessment is about

First name(s)	Surname	D.O.B	M/F	Needs identified? Yes / No	Ethnicity number

Post code: _____
 Neighbourhood / locality: _____

Ethnicity data

1 White British	4 Caribbean	7 Indian	10 White & Black Caribbean	13 Chinese	16 Any other ethnic group
2 White Irish	5 African	8 Pakistani	11 White & Black African	14 Any other Asian background	17 Not given
3 Any other White background	6 Any other Black background	9 Bangladeshi	12 White & Asian	15 Any other mixed background	

Details of any special requirements, e.g. signing, interpretation or access needs: _____

Other Household Members - Children and other adults living at the address

Person number	First name(s)	Surname	D.O.B	M/F	Needs identified? Yes / No	Ethnicity number
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Stage 2: Recording on Holistix

- Holistix is the web based electronic system which will hold the assessment information
- Once the basic assessment information is entered into Holistix it will generate initial action plans to use at the first multi-agency planning meeting
- It will record the scores from the assessment to help track improvements
- Information from the initial planning meeting, such as new needs identified and actions agreed will be entered into Holistix which will be used to generate review plans for the next multi-agency meeting
- Should a decision to escalate to an Early Help Service referral, data within Holistix can be used as part of the referral to inform decision making about possible allocation of intervention services.

Stage 3: Multi-agency meeting

- A multi-agency meeting should be called when 3 or more services are already actively engaged with the family, young person or adult being assessed.
 - » Why 3 or more? Well if only 2 agencies are involved it's reasonable to assume they can speak together and work out how to progress.
 - » With more than 2 it starts to get difficult to ensure that everyone has the same understanding of what the needs and subsequent plan should be. Getting together with the parent, young person or adult helps to ensure that everyone knows who should be doing what and why.
- The meeting:

Should

- Share relevant information
- Identify additional needs that haven't been addressed
- Enable an understanding of the ability or constraints of other agencies in trying to meet those needs
- Be **action** focused and devise realistic action plans which detail **what** will be done, **who** will do it and by **when**
- Be a forum where individuals and agencies can support each other to achieve common objectives

Should not

- Become a forum in which individuals or agencies blame each other for actions or inactions
- Become talking shops
- Lose sight of the purpose of the meeting
- Become dumping ground for unresolved issues

All attendees should be responsible

- For their own actions
- For ensuring that relevant information is shared in an appropriate and timely way
- For respecting other attendees

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Share appropriate information between the family, young person or adult and agencies.
- Use shared information to get a better, more contextual understanding of identified needs from the assessment
- Possibly identify further needs from the emerging information
- Formulate outcome focused actions which support the family, young person or adult to take steps to take control of the issues and eventually to address those needs
- Jointly agree those outcomes and associated actions
- Determine who is best placed to undertake them
- Establish realistic and achievable timescales for the actions
- Identify one person to help co-ordinate the plan and liaise with the family, young person or adult
- Set a date for the review meeting based on the timescales for completing the actions.

Stage 4: Support and intervention

- This is the period where actions agreed in the planning stage are undertaken.
- During this time the designated Lead Professional or case co-ordinator will liaise closely with the family, young person or adult to ensure that they are supported to undertake the actions they have agreed to in the plan.
- The Lead Professional or Case Co-ordinator will also liaise, where appropriate with professionals to facilitate access to the family, young person or adult to maximise the effectiveness of planned interventions or support.

Stage 5: Review actions, revise plan

- At the Multi-Agency review meeting all parties will report back on planned actions.
- Where actions have been completed and outcomes achieved these will be recorded with the revised score for each issue/need
- Where actions are incomplete but some activity has occurred, consideration should be given to a revision of the score for that issue to determine if some level of improvement has occurred. If so this should be recorded
- Similarly if the situation has got worse, the score should be revised to reflect this.
- Any new, emerging needs should also be recorded and given a score
- The date for next review meeting should be set
- In the event that all needs have been met and outcomes achieved, then a decision should be made to close the Early Help case and this recorded on the system with final agreed scores.

Stage 6: Escalation

Experience with the CAF and Family CAF has taught us that there are three main reasons why the plan may fail:

1. **Disengagement from the process by participants (this includes professionals).**
2. **Disguised compliance.** This is where the parent, young person or adult agrees to the plan and their part in it but fail to undertake the actions set for them. Consequently at each meeting it begins to feel that nothing is changing and everyone becomes more and more disengaged with the process.
3. **Planned actions fail to achieve positive outcomes.**

Should these occur, escalation to dedicated Early Help services should be considered.

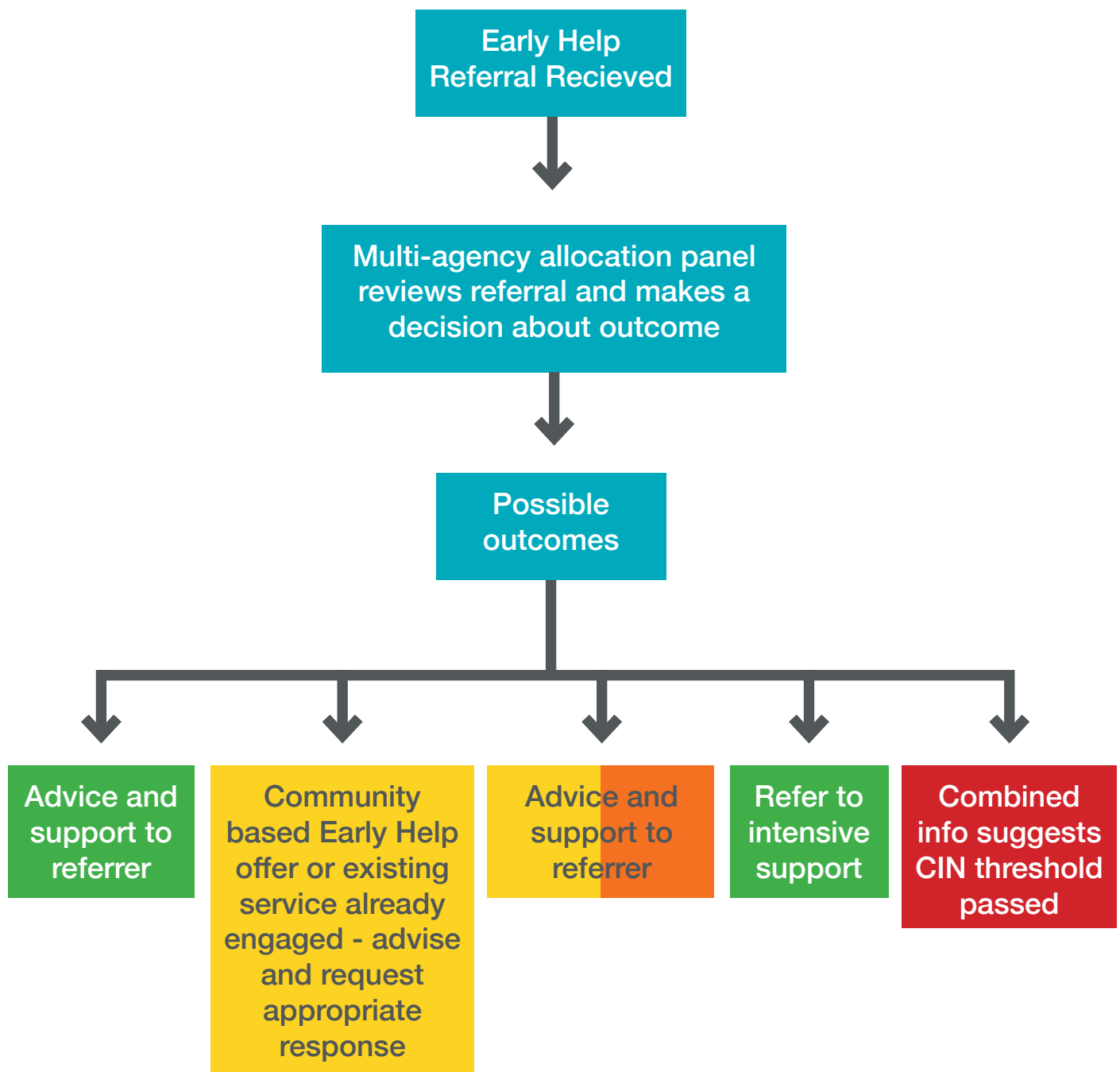
You should contact the Early Help development team on **T: 0161 770 6672** to seek advice and explore possible options.

Stage 7: Closure

On achieving planned outcomes the Early Help case should be formally closed on the Holistix system.

Early Help Services: Referral and allocation process

- Referrals into the Early Help service can be made via this web link **www.oldham.gov.uk/early_help_referral**
- A simple electronic referral form will be received by the Early Help process team
- A daily multi-agency service panel will consider the referrals



Early Help: Self help and universal services

“I can usually find a solution myself or with a little direction I can”

- There are universal services, Schools, GP's, Children's Centres, Libraries etc. that can provide self-referral / self-access services
- There are self help resources online that can be easily accessed
- Local community based groups and voluntary services
- A comprehensive directory of services is being developed which will help to identify which services, agencies and groups across Oldham

Early Help: Community services and outreach

“I need some guidance to help me solve this problem for myself”

- Capacity building will be taking place at district and community level to develop local, self and community supported help:
 - » Support groups (these will be developed to reflect emerging local need)
 - » Developing peer to peer and life coaching support to promote self confidence and self management

Early Help: Low intensity one-to-one support

“I need some practical support to help me solve this problem for myself”

- Assisting with self-assessments and self planning to meet needs
- Providing light touch one to one support
- Identifying cases for escalation to more in-depth and possibly intensive support.

Early Help: Engagement case work

“I need someone to show me how I can change some things in order for me to do things for myself”

- Engagement workers providing short, time limited casework will :
 - » Work to positively engage individuals, families or households in the Early Help process
 - » Help them to better identify their own needs and the underlying issues which lead to them.
 - » Develop with them a practical and achievable, outcome focused, action plans to address their needs
 - » Support them to undertake planned actions to achieve identified outcomes and take back control of their own lives
 - » Positively challenge when appropriate

Early Help: Intensive case work

“I need someone to work with me intensively to ensure that I can eventually resolve my own problems”

- Support workers providing intensive casework will :
 - » Work to positively engage individuals, families or households in the Early Help process
 - » Help them to better identify their own needs and the underlying issues which lead to them.
 - » Develop with them a practical and achievable, outcome focused, action plans to address their needs
 - » Support them to undertake planned actions to achieve identified outcomes and take back control of their own lives
 - » Positively challenge when appropriate

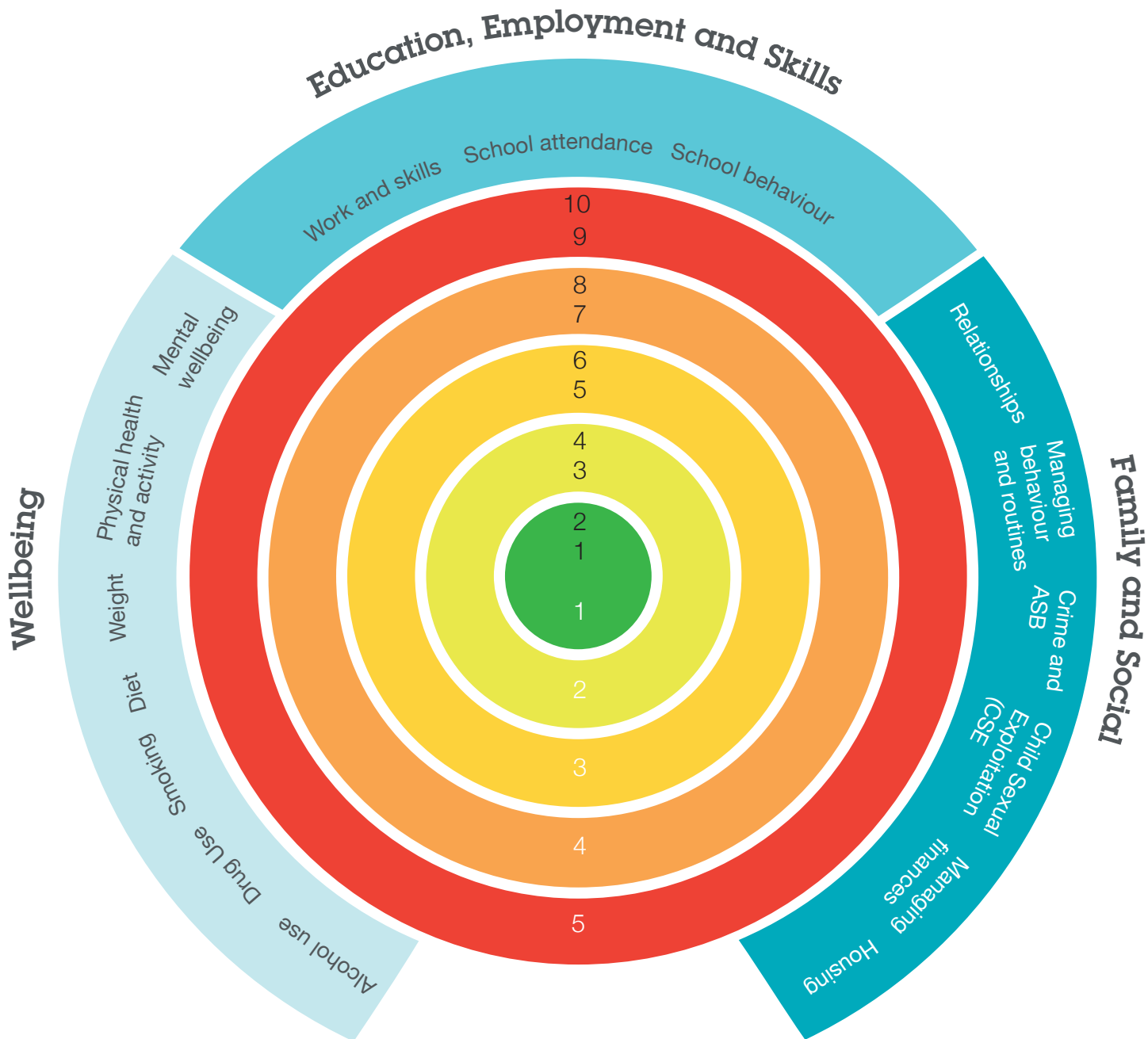
In control

Some support
needed

More support
needed

A lot more
support needed

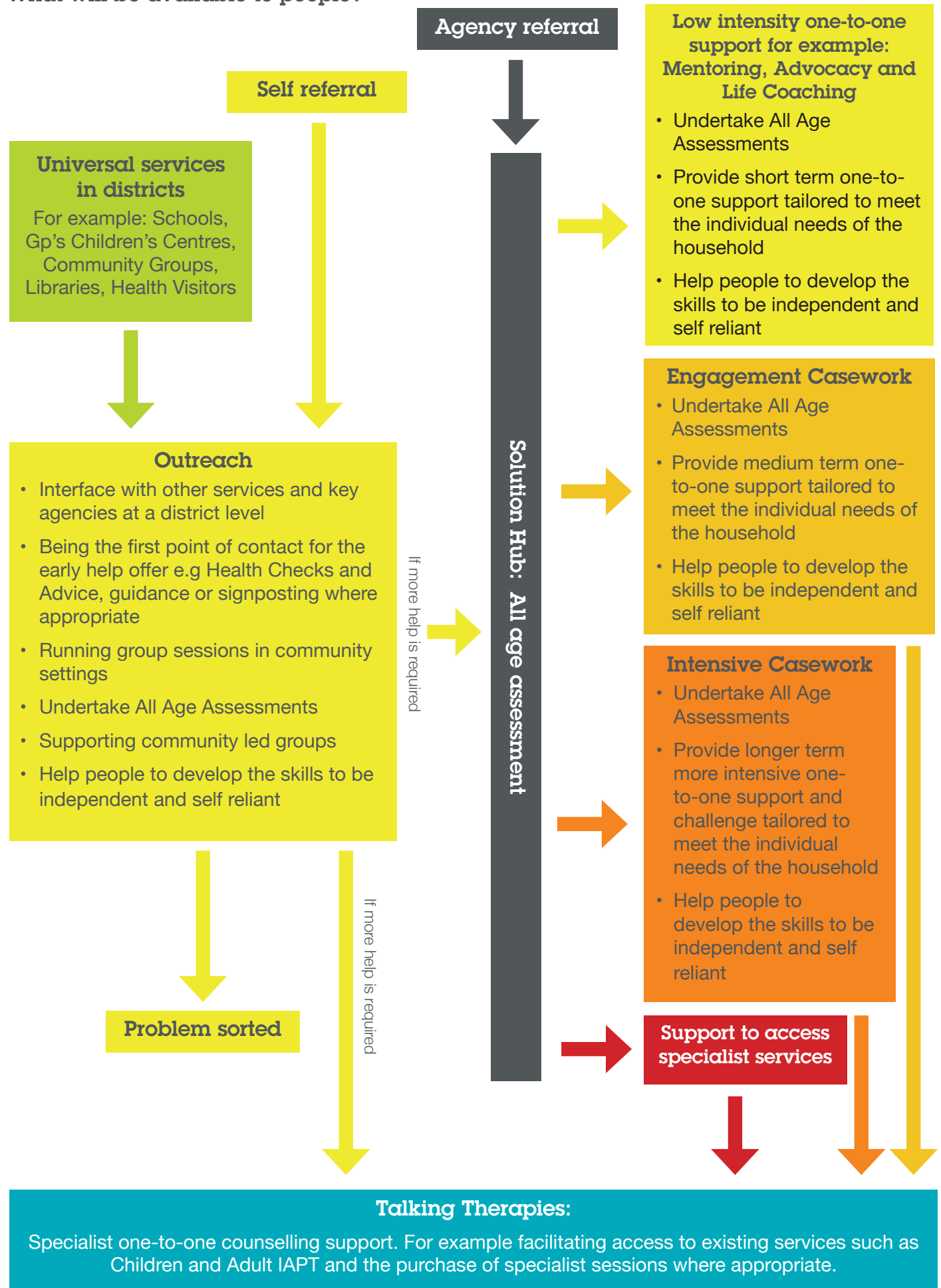
Not in control

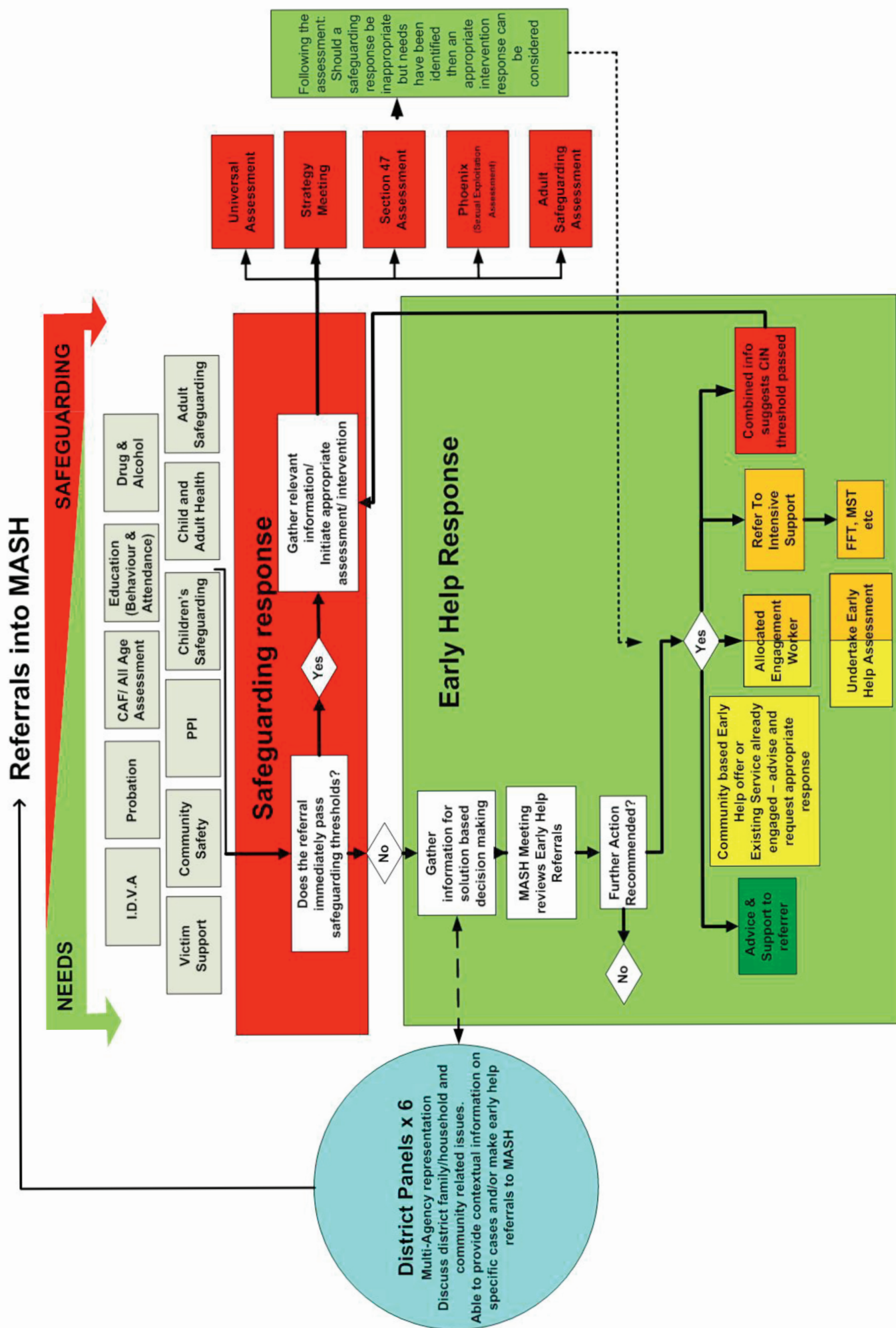


	Bullseye Score		Holistix Rating
I cannot resolve this situation	10	Specialised Support	5
I cannot resolve this situation unless someone does something for me	9		
I need someone to work with me intensively to ensure I can resolve my own problems	8	Intensive support	4
I need someone to show me how I can change some things, in order to enable me to do things for myself	7		
I need someone to help me understand why I might feel I can't do this for myself	6	Engagement Caseworkers	3
I need a lot of practical support to help me solve this problem for myself	5		
I need some practical support to help me solve it for myself	4	Outreach workers	2
I need some guidance to help me solve this problem for myself	3		
With a little direction I can find a solution for myself	2	Self Help & Universal Services	1
I can usually find a solution myself	1		

Early Help Services

What will be available to people?





Notes

This image shows a full page of a handwriting practice worksheet. It consists of multiple rows of horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is plain white, and there are no other markings or text present.

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