Early Help a Behavioural Approach to New Ways of Working for Practitioners
April 2016

Why this Why Now?
Public sector reform is about new ways of working that can unlock and unleash the potential and capacity of people. It is about increasing independence, having more access to economic opportunity, being connected and having better health and wellbeing.

Early Help means identifying and engaging early enough so that families can access support they need to get things going well again

This means practice that focuses on single service solutions has to change to be more integrated in true partnership working.

This is an opportunity to;
● Build on what we know by practising and embedding the behaviours that are effective
● Challenge what we think we know, analyse what is not working well and could be better
● Reflect and reframe our thinking and our behaviours to help teams of EH practitioners and families to get things going well again.

*By creating understanding of our own behaviours we can influence others effectively*

What is different?
This is a new behavioural approach in Early Help which encourages engagement and resourcefulness, resilience and independence within families

“It is about being person led rather than process or system led.”

How do we influence behaviour change in families, partners, teams?
We can influence behaviour by better understanding our own behaviour.

*It starts with ‘us’*

To work with each other in multi agency teams and with families, we need to find ways to behave that means we are

● Family Focused
● Outcome Focused
● Practice Focused
● Partnership focused
● And Community Focused

Influencing behaviours within families by developing workforce behaviours

Key Themes for Behaviours

● Holistic Whole Person, whole family
● Strength based
● Person Centred
● Empathy & Rapport
● Self Efficacy
It is not just about skills and knowledge
It includes what you say, do and don’t do and how you do it. All of this is influenced by what you think and believe, what you are feeling and so in turn influences others to think, feel and act in a certain way.

Strengths Based
Start with ‘what’s strong’ not ‘what’s wrong’, positive psychology works to engage families. Ask “What’s working well? What could be better?” Focus on what’s strong not what’s wrong. “When we see strengths we unlock potential, when we see only deficits, we see limitations”

Holistic/ Whole Person
See the whole person/family
Not just history or presenting issue. Capture the parent and child voice
What are their skills, assets and knowledge (used or not used)?

See their whole situation
What are their goals and what barriers need to be overcome?
All aspects of life are linked and need to be understood for quality assessments and planning outcomes

See the steps towards change
Understand the family’s capacity, reasonable & fair expectations aligned to; what is important to and for the family. A multi agency approach, or all aspects approach not just a single agency view
What else can a family do for themselves? Universal/community services/information is available on www.manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester.gov.uk
Who do you need to link with? What else do you need to know and how can you find that out from www.manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester.gov.uk

**Person Centred**
Are practitioner behaviours Person Centred or Process Centred?
Is the system/paperwork leading the way of working with families? Is that getting in the way of building relationships and developing rapport?

Are we understanding person priorities or are we driven by service priorities?
Understand by asking families What matters to you? Not What’s the matter with you?

[Image: The What’s Working Well Wheel]

Behaviour change tools are expected to be used to help shift the power dynamic and enable open strength based conversations for assessment

**Empathy and Rapport**
Empathy is the ability to see things from someone else’s point of view and to relate to a person’s perceptions and beliefs, even if different to your own
Empathy helps to build trust, working in an equal partnership with families towards outcomes requires a rapport to be developed by;

Bonds- interpersonal connectedness between Whole Family Worker and family (member)
Goals- collaborative setting
Tasks- procedures jointly carried out by the Whole Family Worker and family (member) to achieve the agreed goals.
Shared views-common understanding of the issues and requirements. In order to achieve a productive partnership of trust and commitment

A family who develops their planned outcomes will have more chance of achieving them.
*It is hard to influence someone to take part, if the prize on offer is not something they are interested in achieving.*
An effective early help worker can build trust and rapport through:

- Having strength based approach to conversations
- Having interpersonal connectedness, adjusting style
- Collaborative setting of goals
- Stretching themselves beyond the comfort zone into the learning zone
- Identifying capacity in themselves and families and stimulating aspiration
- Demonstrating unconditional positive regard and equal partnership
- Being mindful of unconscious, bias adapting and self regulating,

The right behaviours for working not just directly with families but also with partners and teams, need to be finely tuned so they can positively influence each other and enable the right conditions for working in this way. Relationships are built on conversations. In particular the way collaborative, trust based communication actually flow between teams can be influenced by building empathy and rapport at allocation, supervision and appraisal, local clusters and partnership working.

Coaching and Enabling
Taking this approach means there is less inclination to rush to fix. It helps to think outside the service offer and more around what will make a difference to the family. Coaching helps to shift the power dynamic from practitioner for the family by enabling. It is different to empowering. Empowering suggests the family has lost their power or had it taken away and needs it to be given back. Enabling is about unlocking the true potential and power of families.

Intrinsic motivation (when someone really wants to do something for themselves not just to comply or because it is enforced) this can be achieved using coaching language and behaviours Coaching style questions, reframing and priming are part of the EH approach and feature in the assessment....“if you knew you wouldn’t fail what would you start doing”

Recognising and Influencing Readiness to Change
To know how to plan with the family requires an understanding of whether they are ready. Being ready to make steps to change might be the first indication of intention for wider commitment for change to the bigger issues. Visualising where families have adapted or made changes in the past helps to prime them for change again.

1. Ready for change
2. Not ready for change
3. Thinking about changes
4. Making good things happen
5. Keeping things going well
Being Outcome Oriented
  – Enabling family to own their outcomes, support to make plans, sustain changes
  – Capacity building
  – What will make a difference? What behaviours need to be influenced? How can they be sustained?
  – Influencing new behavioural norms, addressing habits

*Losses loom larger than gains.*

For example smoking cessation if described as ‘giving up smoking’ there is less tendency to commit. However with more focus on the gains than the loss by discussing what the extra money or better health will mean for the family there is evidence of more success as these are the outcomes that will can drive the new behaviour.

Believing in the resourcefulness of family’s helps to promote an equal partnership. Believing on Multi agency partnerships which, share information, communicate, collaborate engage better and achieve better outcomes with families. Having clarity on what are the outcomes for you as a practitioner will help focus. Practitioners can also learn from families who get things going well and the partners involved. This helps to develop practice if shared with others in a peer to peer network.

**Behaviour change starts at the edge of discomfort**

**Thoughts= Feelings= Behaviours**

- Ask yourself what is the internal dialogue influencing your feelings and behaviours?
  Try to understand this for your families too. Your behaviours influence theirs.
- If you give thought meaning by attaching feelings to it, it influences behaviour
- Choose thoughts wisely
- Be mindful of feelings
- Observe your own and other’s behaviours, observe, reflect adapt

---

![Charles Darwin Quote](image)

**Promoting Self Efficacy**

- Step back assume nothing imagine that everyone has the internal resources to start to get things going well again
- Help to visualise a time when things were going well
- Help to value a time when things were going well
- Help the family/ worker understand those conditions helping them to be created again
Connect to Community
• Community will be there long after we have finished our work with families
• Value community. -There are good things and good people can live in ‘bad places’.

“It’s so hard when you have grown up in a place that is deemed deprived, when all you see is what you know, you see a functioning community. You know who to go to, favours are easily exchanged, skills are shared. “

People who have less to give often give more to each other. Communities see and know what goes on and can help, practitioners need to be connected to the community
What do you need to know about what is available for families in the communities where they live? How can you enable families to access these resources?

Head heart and hands

• What do I care most about?
• What do I know most about?
• What can I do something about?
• Who can I connect with to help?

Community connection=better outcomes

Five ways to wellbeing