



Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus

Torfaen

Public Services Board



Torfaen Family Support Programme

Information for Practitioners

The Team Around the Family approach in Torfaen is designed to be used by anyone who works with children, young people and families across the workforce. It helps practitioners in different organisations to coordinate and plan their work and interventions to meet a family/child/young person's identified needs to bring about positive change.

The 'Team' includes the family, a lead worker and any support services who are likely to be able to provide additional support.

The family will be appointed a lead worker who will make sure that the additional support the Team agrees to, actually happens and that they are supported during this process.



The Family Support Assessment (FSA) is the primary tool used for holistically assessing need and accessing support in Torfaen.

The Family Support Process is a voluntary process. You will need to obtain consent from the family to make a referral; without consent the process cannot continue. Older children over the age of 12 may wish to make their own decision, which they have a right to do.

What are the benefits?

- The FSA creates a single record of the needs of a child/young person and allows the support to be put in place.
- The FSA enables us to tackle the underlying cause and not just the presenting need.
- Having a lead worker means that families have a main point of contact and avoids duplication, repetition and confusion.
- The FSA aims to holistically assess the family as a whole, providing family members with support to reduce the risk of the family's needs increasing.
- Family needs are considered from a broad range of different angles rather than being focused on any one agency, service or need.
- Creating a TAF makes it easier for practitioners to share appropriate information more efficiently to decide which services are needed, coordinate delivery and track progress.
- Information is stored and shared appropriately (i.e. with consent) and securely between agencies and practitioners.
- The Family Support process ensures that services are delivered efficiently and effectively and are proportionate to need.



- Progress is continually monitored and plans adjusted to meet changing needs through regular reviews.
- The Family Support Process helps with cross-border, multi-agency working.
- Better quality assessments assist services to target support to those with the greatest need and the process helps to identify unmet need.

What is the process?

Identify concern – A family member has needs that are either unclear or cannot be met by your own organisation alone.

Involve family and child/young person - Explain the process and how it can help them and ensure their explicit consent is gained before submitting a referral.

Contact the TAF Co-ordination Team who make checks with other Service areas. They will then allocate referrals to the most appropriate lead worker/ service. Referrals with more critical/complex needs (Step-up/ Step-down) will be discussed at the Families Support Multi-Agency Panel.

Assess needs – Have a face-to-face conversation with the family, to assess their strengths and needs and what can be

done to support them. Lead worker, liaises with the family to create and carry out a family plan with actions for the family.

Form the Team around the family (TAF) – Identify the appropriate services to help provide additional support required. The team could be just a single practitioner or several people from different services.

Provide support – The lead worker is the first point of contact for the family and co-ordinates services to provide support for the family.

Review and update – Support is reviewed at regular intervals until sufficient progress has been made to allow the FSA to be closed.

What does it mean to be a lead worker?

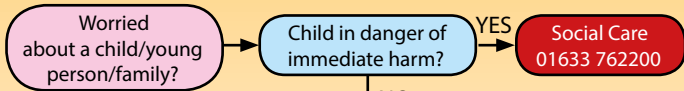
In a nutshell, it's just being an advocate for a family, co-ordinating services and making sure things don't "fall through the gap".

The lead worker completes the FSA and plan with the family and will review this in around 6 - 12 weeks time (depending on family circumstance).

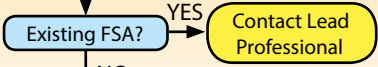
A 'lead worker' is someone that will provide support and encouragement to the family through their "peaks and troughs" in addressing their goals.

You will be the first point of contact for the family.

A lead worker is responsible for co-ordinating any of the family's support needs that the family may require. However, this does not mean that a lead worker needs to fulfil all of the support needs, it is a co-ordination approach to ensure the family is effective and that the family and individuals named on the plan are happy with the support being provided.



Call 01495 7642827(North) or 01495 742854 (South) to see whether a FSA already exists



Speak to family about referral and get consent

Req. for further information



Lead worker completes FSA and plan with family

Social Care contacted Step-down not agreed Professional

Review

Further support needs identified - new plan

Closure

Step-up to Social Care

Single Agency support

Universal Services



What do I need to remember?

- Family Support Assessment (FSA) is a **tool for assessing need and accessing support** for children/young people and families in Torfaen.
- The Family Support process can and should be used by **any organisation or practitioner working with children/young people**.
- Completing the FSA and forming a TAF should support the **early identification of need and preventative action**.
- The FSA should lead to effective integrated action through a **support plan for each child/young person/family member in place by either a single practitioner or an integrated team around the child**.
- The process should be **owned by children/young people and their families** and must operate with clear and explicit consent. Children/young people and families should participate actively in the assessment and be part of the team established to build on their existing strengths and meet the identified needs.
- **Information** about children/young people/families needs should be **shared easily and effectively** but also **appropriately and securely**.

However, the FSA is not:

- **Just a form** – It is about having a conversation with a child and their family, to identify needs and then putting support in place.
- **A referral process** – it is not about making ‘referrals’, it’s about working as a team.
- **A guarantee of service** – making a referral into the Family Support Programme is not a guarantee of service and should not be thought of or introduced to the family in this way.
- **A crisis intervention** – The Family Support programme is not intended as a last resort which is reserved for situations which have escalated or reached crisis point.
- **A rigid bureaucracy** – There is flexibility in the approach which allows you to use your professional judgement as to how to apply the TAF way of working to different situations.

Where do I go for help?

There is a programme of training for the Torfaen Family Support Programme and a guidance booklet available for practitioners. For more information and to find out about training sessions contact the TAF Co-ordinator.

If you have questions or need help during the TAF process, please contact:

North Torfaen – 01495 742827

South Torfaen – 01495 742854

TAF Co-ordinator – 01495 766972

