



# Team Around the Family – Frequently Asked Questions

## The TAF

### What is a TAF?

A TAF, or Team Around the Family, is a way of organising support for a child or family with additional or emerging needs. It is a multi-agency, "Think Family" approach that brings together different services, such as a school, health services, and family support workers. TAF is a voluntary process that requires the family's consent and keeps the family's voice at the centre of all discussions.

### What is the purpose of a TAF?

The needs of the family are identified at the earliest point of intervention to place a network of agencies and family network around the family to create a coordinated focus plan to meet to family needs. The meeting is a coordinated effort to create a solution-focused plan to empower families to identify their own needs and address them through the TAF in a Team Around the Family (TAF) Assessment. It focuses on the family's strengths while addressing concerns and enables everyone to work toward the same agreed-upon goals. This approach will address the needs of family at the earliest point as a preventative to accessing more specialist services.

Link: [TAF Leaflet for Families](#)

### Who is involved in a TAF?

The team typically includes: The child or young person and their family members. A Lead Professional, who is the main point of contact for the family and coordinates the support plan. Professionals from any agencies already working with the family, such as teachers, health visitors, or youth workers. Extended family members or friends, if the family wishes to include them. Throughout the process, additional agencies/services may be identified and invited to be included in the meetings and the support plan to strengthen the support for families.

Link: [TAF Leaflet for Professionals](#)

### What is the role of the TAF Advisor?

TAF Advisors provide guidance and oversight to the Lead Professional to support effective TAF practice.

The TAF Advisor role includes:

- Offering consultation and advice to professionals considering or initiating a TAF
- Supporting quality and consistency of TAF assessments and plans
- Advising on appropriate next steps and thresholds
- Supporting Lead Professionals with problem-solving and multi-agency coordination
- Promoting best practice and a strengths-based approach

TAF Advisors do not replace the Lead Professional or directly work with the family but provide professional support to ensure the process is effective and child- and family-centred.





### **How do I know who my allocated TAF Advisor is?**

Contact the TAF Team at [askTAF@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:askTAF@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) and they will advise you of your allocated team/service Advisor.

### **Where can I find more information about the TAF?**

All TAF information is available on the Team around the Family Notts Directory page, (Link to the Notts directory page). Please access this site for more information around resources to support the TAF process and the most up to date frequently asked questions.

### **What is the aim of the TAF Model?**

A Team Around the Family (TAF) is a coordinated support plan involving a family, professionals from various agencies, family network and other support services to address a family's specific needs and strengths. The core purpose of a TAF is early intervention, offering a collaborative, strength-based approach to create a joint action plan and provide consistent support to help families achieve their goals.

### **What is a family network and why is it important for the TAF?**

A family network is a group of people close to a child and family, including relatives, friends, neighbours, and community members, who can provide ongoing practical and emotional support. It is important for the TAF process because involving this network is central to building sustainable, family-led solutions and ensuring a child's safety and well-being. The TAF is a multi-agency process where professionals and family members collaborate to create a coordinated support plan to meet the family's needs. The family network is a core component of this process for several reasons - sustainable support, empowerment and ownership, stability and belonging, practical assistance, early intervention and prevention, kinship care options.

### **Where does TAF fit in within the Interim Continuum of need document?**

Team Around the Family is an overarching framework which falls into multiple services. However external services are being asked to support families at a very early level of intervention, before families are requiring a Family Help worker or a Social Worker.

Link: [The Interim Continuum of Need Framework](#)

## **The TAF Process**

### **How does the TAF process work?**

Please see the attached link showing the order of steps within the TAF process.

Link: [TAF Partner Agency Process](#)





### **Do families need to consent to the TAF?**

Yes, full consent and active engagement from the parents and child are necessary for the process to proceed. The TAF is the family's meeting and the family's plan that is facilitated by partners.

[Link: TAF Consent Leaflet](#)

### **What if a family does not agree with the plan?**

It is the role of the professional to work with the family to identify and overcome any barriers in place to support engagement in the process. The TAF process is voluntary, and the family's voice is central to the decisions made. They have the right to: see all information held about them, ask questions and raise concerns, have views heard and considered and/or stop the process at any time. Without the family's consent, a TAF cannot be initiated or proceeded with.

### **Our families are concerned that TAF will lead to social care involvement, is this the case?**

The TAF is a transparent process led by the family with the support of relevant agencies that the family have consented to. The Lead Professional will be someone who the family already has a relationship with. The TAF is held at a partnership level, and the aim of the TAF is to empower the family and to create and sustain positive change with the support of the family network when professionals are no longer involved. Escalation to social care **will only** take place if safeguarding concerns are identified.

### **Who is the Lead Professional?**

The person who takes on the Lead Professional role is someone who has a trusting relationship with the family and is chosen during the first TAF meeting. This can be the person who has initiated the TAF to begin with and who supports the family to complete the assessment. They act as a single point of contact for the family and co-ordinate the TAF process. During a TAF meeting where actions are identified, all partners and family network hold accountability for completion of these; the plan does not fall solely on the Lead Professional.

There may be times where it is appropriate to change who holds the role of Lead Professional throughout the TAF process, depending on the needs identified and how the plan progresses.

### **As a Lead Professional, does it mean I'm responsible for this family and everything that happens?**

The role of the Lead Professional is to facilitate the TAF meetings. You do not take responsibilities away from the other agencies working with the family, they still hold their respective responsibilities and are accountable for their actions in the plan.

### **Can more than 1 worry for a family be recorded/submitted?**

Yes, however, to avoid overwhelming the family we would advise that, from the assessment identifying the family's needs, you have no more than 3-4 worries that you agree to work together with the family to address. As those needs are met, the family/TAF members would





agree what next to focus on in the Action Plan. All worries must have a clear outcome identified – what would life look like if your outcomes were met? These with any accompanying scaling questions are a way to measure progress and form the basis of next steps.

### **How can a TAF be coordinated for a family where the children involved attend different provisions?**

The TAF would be initiated by the professional who identifies the needs. This person would gain consent from the family, complete the assessment and then make contact with relevant agencies to be involved which may include all provisions of which the children within the family attend.

### **How does this fit with the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process?**

The EHCP process is unchanged and separate to the TAF documents however best practice would be to try the TAF first before the EHCP process. If there are both TAF & EHCP processes running in parallel, then it would be best to combine EHCP reviews with Team Around the Family arrangements when they happen and reference the EHCP in the Child and Family Plan as more often than not the same professionals will be involved in supporting both processes. By doing this it avoids duplication, is more efficient use of time, is a more joined up/coordinated way of working and therefore a better and less confusing experience for the family.

### **What happens to the TAF if Social Care do become involved?**

Where TAF meetings have taken place and needs have escalated to include a referral to MASH, the TAF should remain open until the outcome decision of the referral. If the decision is to escalate to Social Care fieldwork teams, the TAF will be placed on hold and Social Care processes and meetings will take place.

## **Beyond the TAF process**

### **What if a family member doesn't attend a TAF meeting?**

The Lead Professional should contact them to understand why they missed the meeting. While a professionals-only meeting can be held to discuss progress, new actions cannot be set without the family's involvement due to the TAF being family-centred, and the full meeting needs to be rearranged to facilitate this.

### **What happens if the family choose not to engage with the TAF process?**

Encourage engagement over a given time and if necessary, via another trusted partner agency known to the family. Assess the impact of no improved levels of support for this child or young person and if you feel that their circumstances are or will deteriorate discuss with your line manager or designated safeguarding lead and consider a referral to the MASH. Please note, that the TAF process is completely voluntary, therefore we cannot compel families to engage with this.





**What happens if a family engages and the TAF process starts with a plan in place, and the family thereafter disengage and stop attending and participating in the Family Action Plan?**

Always communicate with the family to better understand if there has been a change in their circumstances, and query why the family no longer want to proceed with the TAF process. It may be helpful to gain constructive feedback from the family regarding changing the approach of the TAF, or to change the identified Lead Professional. It is important to recognise that the earlier we can identify the support needed for the family, the more we can support the prevention of escalation and need for specialist services. If concerns around parent/carer engagement persists, you can contact the TAF Advisor for further advice/guidance around this. As previously highlighted, if there are safeguarding concerns or the level of need has escalated beyond 'Threshold', please refer into the MASH using the MARF.

**What happens if the TAF members believe that the situation has not improved or that it has deteriorated to the stage where there are safeguarding concerns?**

Throughout the TAF process, practitioners should be aware of the Threshold Framework Indicators of Need. If the threshold is met to Step Up, inform the parents and the child/YP (if appropriate) that you have these specific concerns and that you are making a referral to the MASH. Refer to the MASH using the MARF and attach the relevant assessment. Keep the TAF meetings in place, meeting regularly until the MASH have determined the threshold of intervention.

**How is the TAF different?**

**How is a multi-agency meeting different to a TAF?**

A multi-agency meeting is already established across agencies and should already be in place within your provisions. The additional aspect within multi-agency working in the TAF model is the family network involvement and identification of the gaps within support needs, of additional services to meet the family needs at the initial stage of assessment.

**How is the TAF different to the CAF?**

The CAF was introduced as a child-centred, multi-agency approach to support for families. This has now progressed to the TAF as it has been recognised that a holistic family-centred approach.

**What is the difference between TAF and statutory intervention?**

TAF is a form of "early help" and is used when a family has emerging needs that require support from more than one agency but does not meet the threshold for statutory social care involvement. The TAF is a voluntary support offer for families and is there for the very early levels of intervention. If concerns escalate to significant harm, the lead professional will refer the case to the relevant children's safeguarding services.

