

Explaining Assessment to Family Members – An Example

What is an assessment?

- Either you, or someone else on your behalf, has asked for help with some difficulty you are having which affects your child (or children).
- Before we can decide what help you may need, we need to know more about you and your family. This will involve collecting information, talking this through with you and agreeing what might be done. We call this an assessment.

Why is an assessment being carried out?

- Through making an assessment of your situation, it should be possible to see what help and support you and your family might need, and who could best give that help.
- Information will be gathered and written down. Although social workers and other professionals will normally take the lead in completing the assessment, this should always be done in a way which helps you to have your say, and encourages you to take part.

What will happen?

- Completing an assessment usually means the social worker will meet with you and members of your family a number of times.
- When children are old enough to take part in the assessment, the social worker will encourage and help them to do so.
- The assessment will take into consideration your ethnic and cultural background, and any other issues in relation to communication. If required, help will be provided in your first language or with your preferred method of communication.
- If you do not agree with what the social worker says in the assessment, there will be an opportunity for you to record your point of view on the assessment record.

- The purpose of assessment is to draw up a Care Plan to address the needs of your child(ren) and family. You will be given a copy of the plan.

What will be expected of you?

- We know that almost all parents want to do their best for their children, and completing the assessment will help the practitioner to recognise the strengths you and your family have, as well as your difficulties.
- We can help you best if you tell us about what you do well in your family and your difficulties. We will keep you informed about what we are doing and thinking.
- As assessment is an important part of our working with you. In a small number of cases, there are serious concerns about a child's safety. Making sure the child is safe will be our first concern. Please ask the social worker to explain this to you. You have a right to know.

What can you expect of us?

- We will listen carefully to what you have to say, offer advice and, if necessary, support to help you bring up your children and resolve your difficulties.
- We know that with a little help most families can sort out their own problems, and our aim is to help you do that.
- We will try our best to offer you any services you need as soon as possible.