



Buckinghamshire Interagency Protocol
Working With Parents With Learning Disabilities
(Easy Read Version)



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Introduction

This is about how services work together to support people with a learning disability to be parents.

When we are talking about learning disability we mean the Valuing People definition (Dept of Health 2001).

In the work we are doing we think:

- Parents with a learning disability should get the support they need to be parents.
- Children need to be able to grow up in a safe family environment
- Every child should
 - Be healthy
 - Stay safe
 - Enjoy and achieve
 - Play their part in the world
 - Have enough money to live
- Every parent with a learning disability should
 - Have rights
 - Make choices
 - Be as independent as they can
 - Play their part in the world.

How we are working together and improving?

Performing assessments together

Holding family group conferences

Sharing confidential information in better ways

Training staff to better understand learning disability and children's issues

What may happen if a parent needs support?

- Referral of parent to Community Learning Disability Teams
- Assessments to take place

- Multi-agency and planning meeting by 26th week of pregnancy

The aim of the planning meeting is to consider the following:

- Are the child's needs being met?
- Does the family need extra help?
- Are there any risks to the child?

It will also produce a plan that will help to coordinate ante-natal care, to plan care at the time of birth, to consider childcare training, consent issues and to coordinate any protection plan if necessary. It may also refer on to other people that could help.

- Feed back from this meeting to the parents, who may need some additional help, perhaps with advocacy support.

Multi-agency Assessments

These should look at the child's development needs, the skills of the parent and family influences.

Providing Support

Support should be offered to the whole family and aimed at helping the parents to care for their children.

It should be remembered that having children may put more stress on the parent and so they may need more help than before.

Parents should be involved with decisions.

Support can include family, friends and relevant professionals.

Agencies that may be involved:

- Health visitors
- Midwifery
- Peer support
- Social Care professionals
- Family Centres
- Children's Centres
- School Nurses
- Home Start
- Parents as First Teachers
- Extended schools
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- General Practitioners
- Advocacy Services
- Housing Services
- Young Carers

Funding of support

Clear guidelines need to be set up to share costs. Support for parents with learning disabilities is long term and should not be taken away too soon.

Ongoing work

There should be a multi-agency review every three to six months.

If there is a protection plan in place they should be every four weeks.