

# Team Around the Child (TAC) in Lincolnshire

Annual Report 2022

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## **A message from Councillor Patricia Bradwell OBE, Executive Councillor for Children’s Services**

I am really pleased to introduce this report on Team Around the Child (TAC) work in Lincolnshire. Every week, colleagues and I see evidence that the co-ordinated support that TAC provides really makes a difference for children and families. Even in the most challenging of circumstances, TAC creates a space for families where they feel people are trying to help; and at its very best TAC changes lives for the better, and for the long term.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Lincolnshire TAC Team, made up of Early Help Consultants and TAC Administrators, who work hard to support and challenge everyone who works with families in Lincolnshire to offer joined up support at the earliest opportunity.

I am also grateful to all of the wonderful Lead Professionals in Lincolnshire, from whatever agency they come from, for making change happen for our children. In particular, a big thank you to our schools who see children nearly every day, build relationships with them and their families, and continue to be the largest contributors to TAC in Lincolnshire. I hope everyone finds something interesting in this report; and please let the TAC Team know if they can do anything to support you in your work.

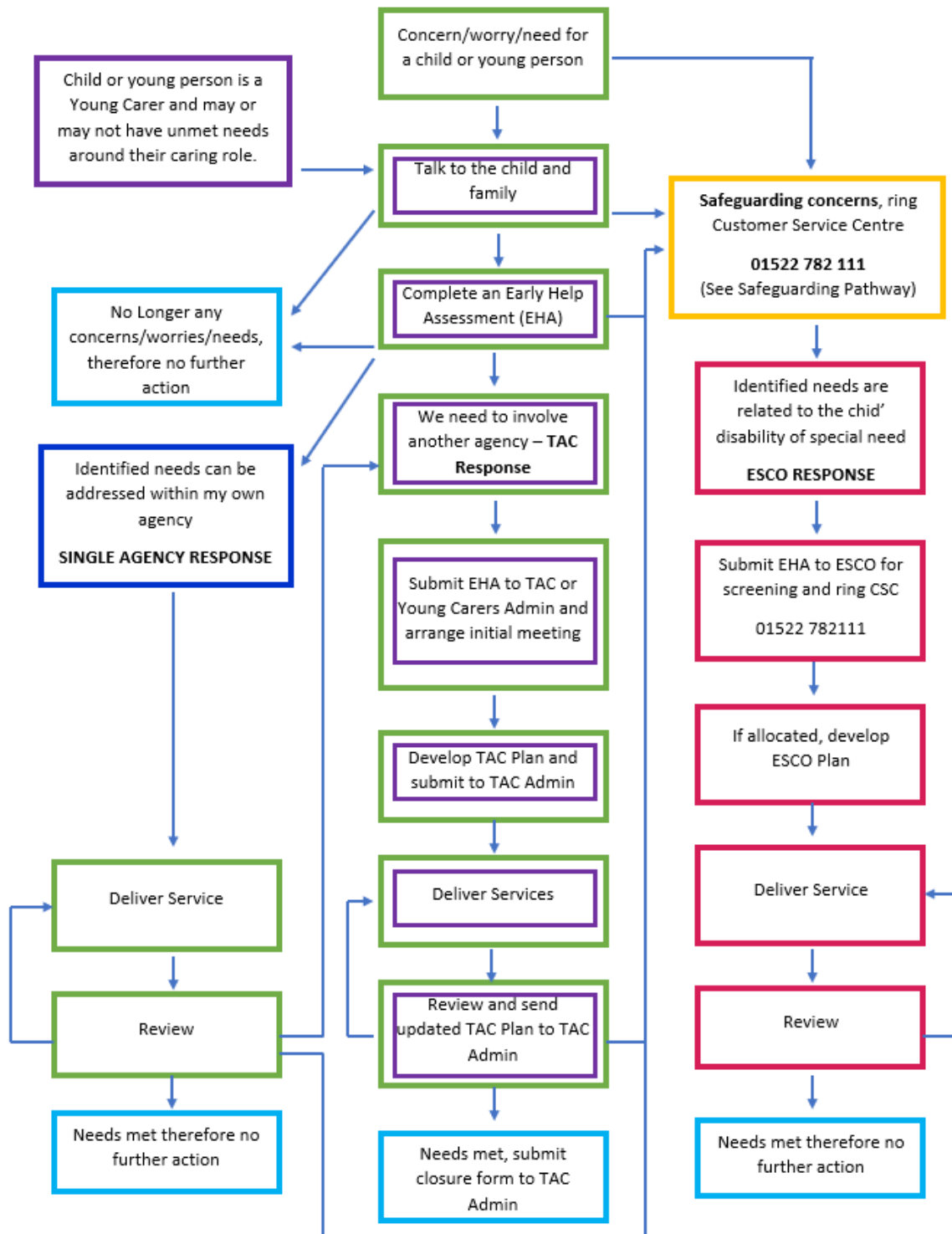
# What is Team Around the Child (TAC)

Team Around the Child (TAC) offers Early Help and support for children as soon as we have a worry about them. TAC is how different people and services work together to help children and their families at any point in their lives to prevent or reduce difficulties before they become too difficult.

## The TAC Journey



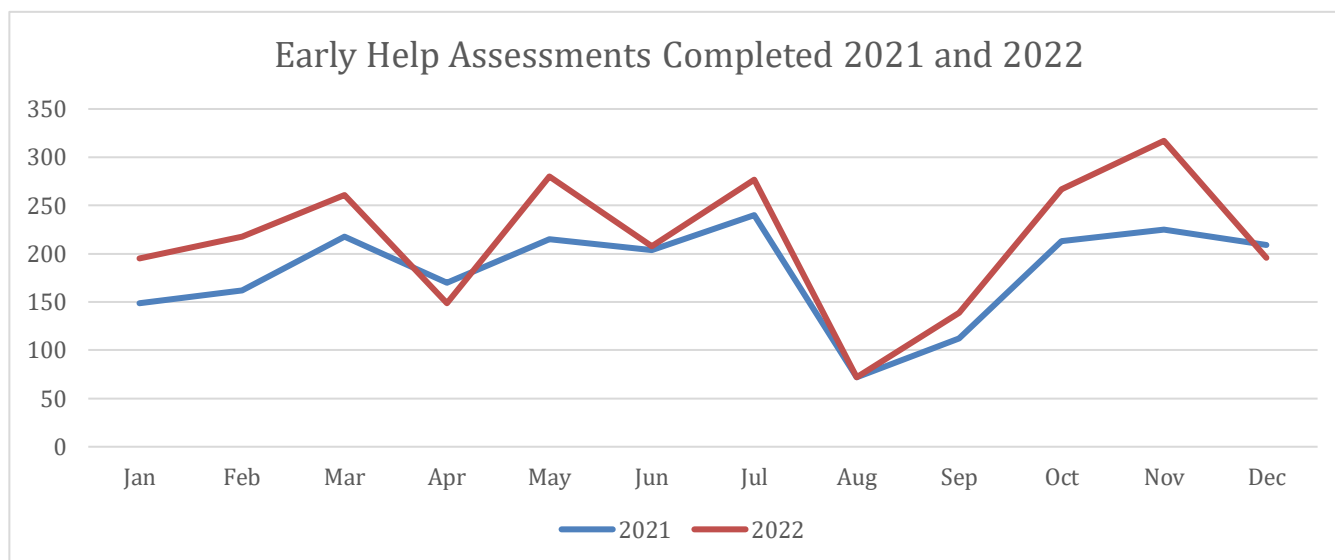
# Early Help Pathway



# A TAC starts with a conversation...

...we record this on an Early Help Assessment

The numbers of children, young people and families who have had a conversation with a trusted professional who has then submitted an EHA are shown below for 2021 and 2022.

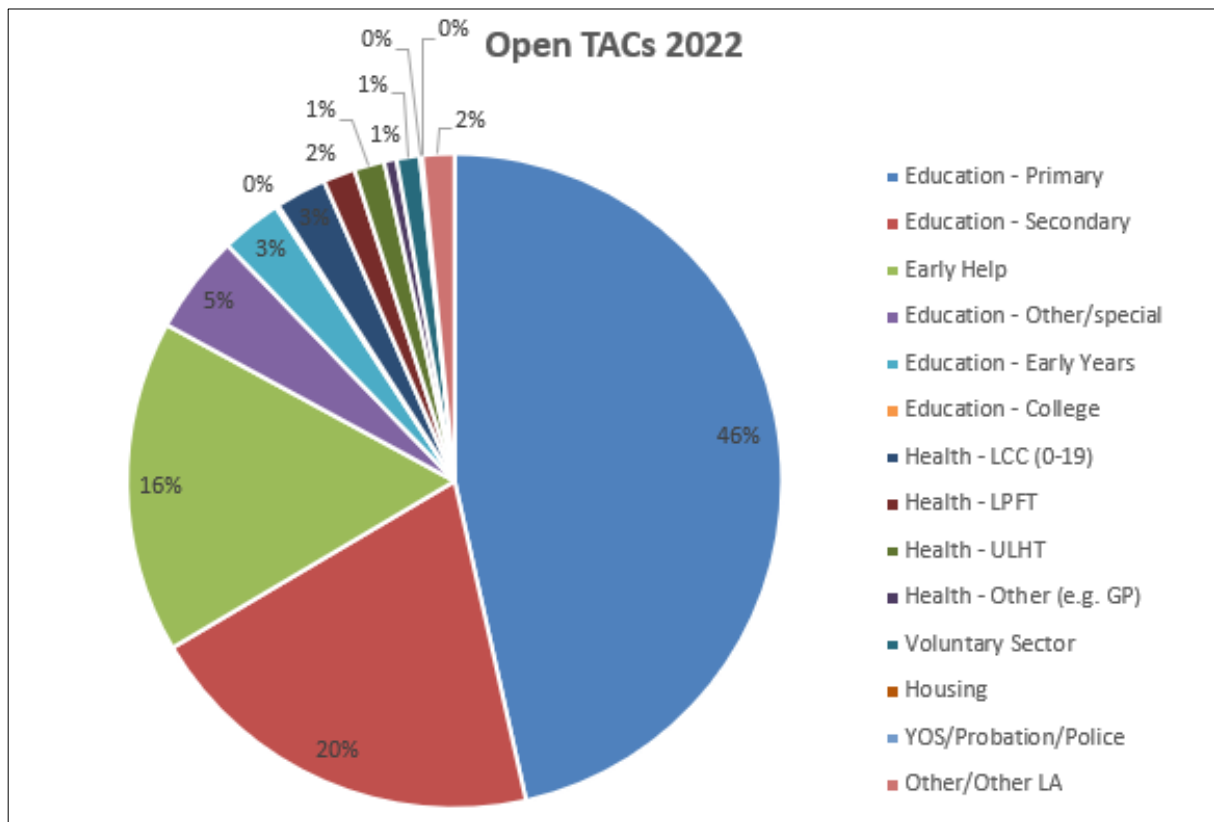
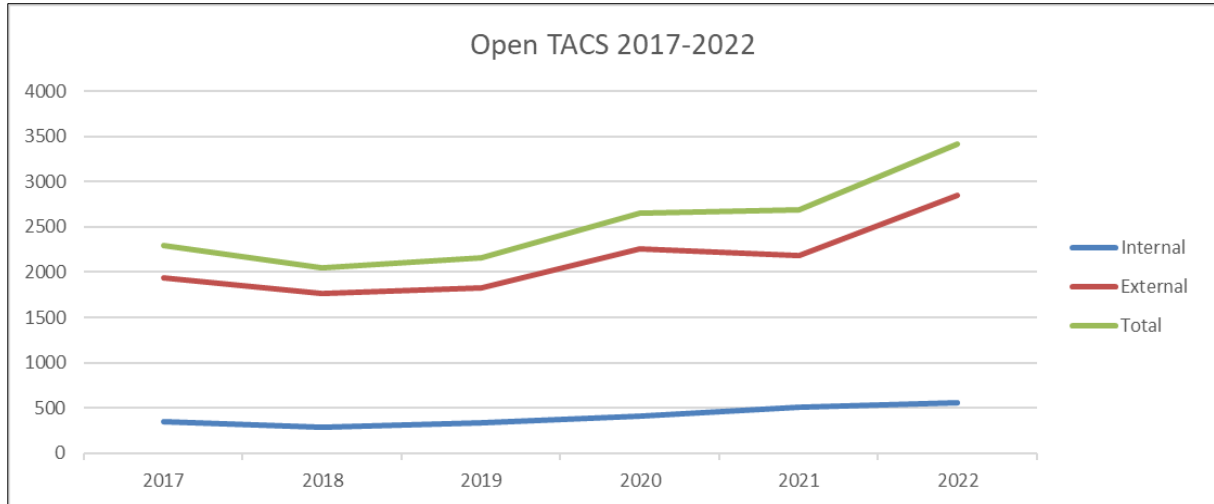


The range of different agencies that families choose to talk to us in 2021 and 2022

Agency	2021	2022
Education - Primary	946	1265
Education - Secondary	484	602
Education - Other/Special	119	121
Education - Nursery/Preschool	69	89
Education - College	10	4
Health - LCC (0-19)	156	96
Health - LPFT	126	127
Health - ULHT	71	77
Health - Other	33	31
Voluntary	49	65
Housing	14	14
YOS/Probation/Police	9	1
Other/Other LA	103	87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2189</b>	<b>2579</b>

# Number of TACs in Lincolnshire

We are proud that the numbers of children, young people and families benefitting from TAC support in Lincolnshire continues to grow; and that our partners continue to lead the majority of TACs.



Partnership commitment to TAC is strong, particularly from our education providers, as shown in this chart above.

# What difference does TAC make to families?

We know that **63%** (1004/1586) of TACs closed because goals have been achieved and outcomes for children and young people have improved.

We also know that only **10%** (162/1586) of children who had a TAC had concerns escalate to the point that they needed intervention from Children's Social Care.

Below are a range of comments from children and families about their TAC.

***“Team around the child has been a life saver. All the tools we have been shown and given have helped immensely. Obviously, there are limitations as to what can be done but there is nothing that seemed too much trouble. We are very grateful for all of the help and support we have been given.”***

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***“I find that the children listen to me more now, and they can sometimes play with Chloe if I need a break. They can do things together without it ending up in a fight or shouting. The children are not getting into trouble at school either. Nothing else that could have helped or improved working with the TAC.”***

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***“It has been useful and I would definitely recommend TAC to others. Its's been great to get advice and tips for Jason to have opportunities to talk to other people because he doesn't always tell me. There isn't anything that we would improve. Things are so much calmer and positive in the house. Its less stressful.”***

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***“The one thing that made the biggest impact was the support in general that the TAC team gave us. Nursery were also very supportive in the support they offered Joe within Nursery and the communication between us all. The TAC journey has been very positive for us all. We will take forward what we have learnt, it is our new habit as a family. We know the support will always be there if ever need it again. Yes, I'd recommend the TAC process to anyone requiring support and we are very grateful for the help and support we have received.”***

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# How to we support TACs in Lincolnshire?

The TAC Team in Lincolnshire consist of Early Help Consultants and TAC Administrators (pictured below)



We offer support to all professionals around their responsibilities in supporting children and young people through joined up early help. The team promote the importance of undertaking an assessment as soon as worries emerge for a child or young person; and support with the initiation of Team Around the Child (TAC). We highlight the benefits of working in this way, so that the child or young person is supported by having a coordinated plan and a team of people that are committed to helping them. Consultants follow up with all new Lead Professionals to support them with undertaking the role and answering any queries they may have.

Case discussions are offered to support professionals' knowledge and confidence whilst offering advice and guidance.

The team operate a duty system where a professional can contact the consultant on duty and ask any questions they may have relating to any aspect of early help in Lincolnshire. This may range from advice regarding the paperwork, support with creating worry statements and goals or assisting the professional with any safeguarding queries they have.

Professionals are encouraged to access the workshops and forums the team offer and these are themed; for example, questioning and professional curiosity, worry statements and goals, support networks. The workshops allow for discussion and shared learning.

The forums are an opportunity for multi-agency networking and updating knowledge around specific agencies and the support that is available to both children and families. All of the workshops and forums can be found on the Enable booking system. <https://safeguardinglincolnshire.vc-enable.co.uk/Events>



Resources such as the TAC Handbook and guidance documents are available on the following website [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac). Any aspect of TAC consultant support can be accessed by emailing [earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

<b>Paula Whitehead – Team Manager</b>	
<b>Early Help Consultant Team</b>	<b>TAC Admin Team</b>
Jane Impey - Senior Project Officer	Hannah Sherman – Business Support Project Officer
Tracey Nicholson—Senior Ealy Help Consultant	Rachel Stokes – Young Carers
Michelle Conway— Senior Early Help Consultant	Katie Stokes – Lincoln
Kathie Robson—Reducing Parental Conflict	Katherine Rowson – Boston and West Lindsey
Sally Stanfield—Young Carers	Stephen Brewster – North Kesteven
Charlotte Britt—Lincoln and West Lindsey	Elizabeth Goodeve – South Kesteven
Faye White—Lincoln and West Lindsey	Debbie Smith – South Holland
Ann Wright—North and South Kesteven	Jason Liu – East Lindsey
Ruth Stephenson—North and South Kesteven	
Linda Munro—East Lindsey	
Hannah Randell—East Lindsey	
Eric Kasi—Boston and South Holland	
Amy Burchett—Boston and South Holland	

## What difference do we make?

This year we have:

- Identified and offered support to 411 new Lead Professionals
- Conducted 539 case discussions or supervisions
- Delivered 8 Forums, attended by 355 people
- Delivered 32 workshops to 282 people
- Had support conversations 389 with Lead Professionals
- Offered ad hoc support, advice and guidance on 1,328 occasions

## Comments from Professionals

*“Thank you for meeting with me this morning. I have found it very beneficial to get an idea of how to be a TAC Lead professional and really appreciate the time and detail you went through. I feel like I can now hold a TAC meeting without feeling like I am overwhelmed. You were clear with how to question*

***and write details within the TAC paperwork and also gave some key advice on what information to gather moving the TAC forwards. It feels more comfortable that we will have another meeting once I have had my first TAC meeting as a lead professional to discuss any further developments I need to make. Again thank you for your time and I will speak to you soon.”***

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***“Just wanted to say thank you for your support and reassurance yesterday. I genuinely appreciate the constructive and supportive feedback that you shared. I have reflected on our conversation and feel more confident and eager to support and challenge as a Lead Professional and be more curious and ask the appropriate questions to ensure that that the needs of the families are met. I have taken on board all the meaningful advice and look forward to speaking to you again soon.”***

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***“Thank you so much for all of your support yesterday and these extensive notes. I really appreciate your help with everything, it really helped to start the meeting fresh with some newly worded worry statements and it was definitely the most positive meeting we have had with the family.”***

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***“The support I received from the Early Help Consultant was very helpful. On a score of 1-10 ,I would give 9 with 10 being high. When I first spoke to Eric I had concerns and did not know what to do for the best. I was put at ease and given questions to ask mum and told what to do next. When having the conversation with Mum I felt more prepared because of the support I had been given. I now don’t feel worried and know I have done what I should. One of the best things I can take away from all this was the questions that I needed to ask.”***

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***“I also always find the advice of my early help consultant helpful and at times, thought provoking- in fact it was a conversation with her a couple of years ago on a different TAC that made me realise that whatever is going on for a family at TAC, it always has to come back to the impact on the children- so my success in leading this TAC is borne out of that advice from her.”***

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***“You’re always brilliant at asking me just the right question to lead me on to where I need to go next!”***

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***“Thank you for a really productive session. I found the exercise very useful as it helped me reflect on the positive impact a TAC can have on a family... The session was collaborative and informative and has given me some useful pointers”***

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***“Your help was amazing. I have also used your advice to start a further two EHAs with the confidence of knowing my paperwork is effective. Thank you!”***

## TAC Champions



In September 2022 we started our TAC Champion initiative. The aim is to celebrate examples of good practice from Lead Professionals supporting Lincolnshire children and families during the TAC process.

This can be through:

- A single piece of work that demonstrates that a positive and meaningful impact has been achieved
- Ongoing involvement in a TAC that is clearly supporting the child, young person and/or family to achieve their goals
- Professional development of a new or experienced Lead Professional

We know that many of our Lead Professionals understand the importance and benefits that a TAC can bring to families in need of early help or those stepping out from Social Care. We would like the ‘TAC Champions’ programme to identify, recognise, and celebrate the support given by our Lead Professionals to those families.

Below are some comments from letters sent to Lead Professionals explaining why they had been nominated:

***“What is clear throughout this TAC is that you used challenge and support to help parents make positive changes to benefit the children. You ensured that the children were central to the TAC, encouraged development of family network, captured the voice of the children and included this in TAC actions.”***

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*“What is clear throughout this TAC is that you took time to understand the needs of the family, and the pressures on them. You supported mum and dad to understand the benefit of TAC and led at the pace the family needed which has ensured positive outcomes for the children.”*

*“What is clear throughout this TAC is that you used challenge and support to help mum make positive changes to benefit the children. Working restoratively with mum you made appropriate adjustments to worry statements and goals which the children also understood. You ensured that the children were central to the TAC, encouraged development of a support network, and recognised the children as young carers.”*

## Lead Professional Surveys

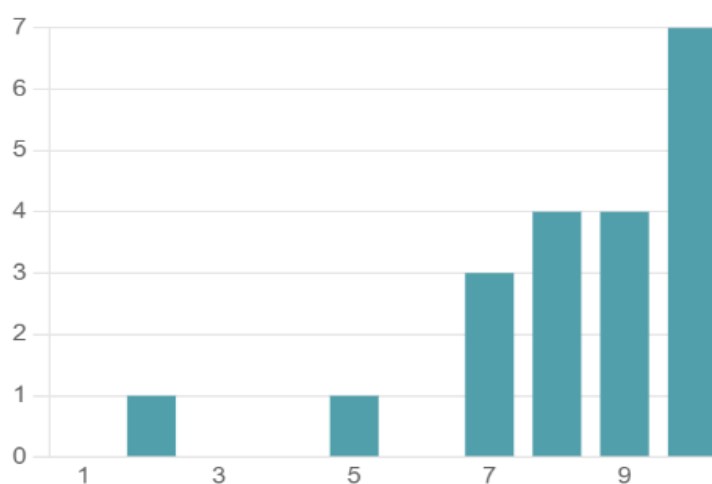
We conducted two surveys towards the end of 2022, the first designed to gain feedback from those professionals that had been selected for a **Support Conversation** and the second survey was targeted at ‘**New**’ lead professionals (those that had never been or had not been the LP for over 12 months)

Overall, the comments and scaling marks were positive and indicates the support offered is both needed and valued by our external partners.

The following are some examples of the questions and responses received from the **New Lead Professional Survey**:

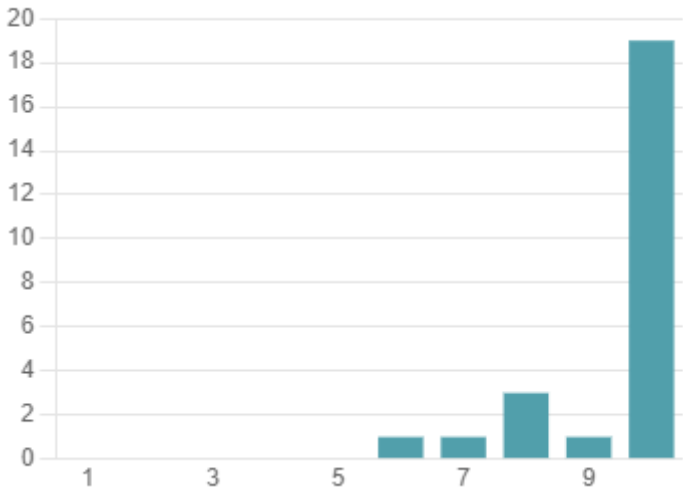
**Only 7 out of 20 respondents knew about the support available to LP’s prior to the conversation, we hope to change this going forward by promoting our services to all agencies working with families.**

**75% respondents scaled how useful they found the conversation between 8 & 10**



The following are some examples of the questions and responses received from the **Support Conversation** Survey:

We asked on a scale for colleagues to tell us how they felt during the Support Conversation (10 being very supported and 1 being not supported at all) **92%** rated between “8 - 10” for this question.



**73%** indicated their practice had changed since their Support Conversation

**88%** would recommend a Support Conversation to a colleague

## What professionals told us...

*“I have more professional curiosity and feel empowered to guide the conversations more”*

*“I think my practice has improved and my confidence has increased”*

*“It is a very supportive conversation, not a criticism which makes you feel better.”*

*“It’s a good idea to gain insight and support. I found the whole experience very positive and reassuring.”*

*“It was a really bespoke conversation and really helped me develop my knowledge of the role”*

***“I wasn't aware of the consultation and found it really helpful to understand more about the expectations of being LP for a TAC.”***

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***“It was very useful for me and gave me confidence to know what I could do as the Lead Professional at the next TAC I led”***

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***“I've had fantastic support from my consultant, they answer e mails promptly and a wealth of knowledge.”***

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***“The consultant was brilliant and gave me lots of information and advice on how meeting should run and all about scaling etc.”***

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***“I work with another safeguarding officer who has ran lots of TAC meetings and she has given me lots of support and guidance. Coupled with the information and advice from my consultant I felt well informed and comfortable with being the lead professional.”***

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***“The conversation was not to catch me out but to help me. I was in fact doing what I should be and the pointers I received enabled me to hold more purposeful conversations” with families as a result.”***

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***“Having this consultation lessened my anxiety in relation to being a LP for TAC also gave me more confidence that as LP you are fully supported. It was really nice to be praised and acknowledged for the work we do to support our families”***

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***“Thank you very much for your time this morning. The information and advice you gave me for this TAC was impeccable, I will certainly be using it moving forward to help support families. In the next TAC meeting for this family I will be asking the parent the questions we discussed in order for me to close this TAC. Moving forward I will be using more of ‘Best questions’ and when coming into TAC I will be exploring closures as this can help with***

*understanding what the families want from their TAC. Again, thank you for the valuable information.”*

## Where to find help?



Website for Professionals: [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac)

Where you will find professional resources and guidance documents.

TAC Admin: [tacadmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:tacadmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

TAC Admin receive EHAs, plans, closures and TAC updates, the team signpost and provide guidance on the TAC process

EHCs: [earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

Early Help Consultants support professionals who are working within Early Help and TAC.

TAC Admin Team: 01522 555828

**Think TAC**

# Team Around the Child

We recognise that children need their own support network of family and friends to help them feel safe, happy and loved. Sometimes families need extra support from professionals. In Lincolnshire we call this 'Team Around the Child' or 'TAC'.

When a worry has been identified for a child or young person, the best place to start is by having a conversation with them, their family and/or support network about what is going on. You can record this conversation using an Early Help Assessment.

**Team Around the Child is a group of people who care about a child or young person and who are willing to work together in an open and honest way to meet the needs of that child or young person.**

### How the TAC Team supports Professionals

**TAC Administrators**

- ★ Provide support, advice, and challenge to Lead Professionals on new and existing TAC cases, including pre-birth TACs. This also includes advice on best practice.

**Early Help Consultants**

- ★ Provide support, advice and challenge on new and existing TAC cases, including pre-birth TACs.
- ★ Facilitate workshops, forums and other learning opportunities in partnership with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- ★ Provide additional support to new Lead Professionals taking on the role for the first time.

**You can contact us at**  
[tacadmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:tacadmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk)  
[earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpconsultants@lincolnshire.gov.uk)  
01522 555828  
[www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac)

**TAC helps families receive the right support at the right time from the right person**

If you are a parent, carer or young person and are worried about something please speak to a professional you trust about how an Early Help Assessment and TAC could help. For more information:

**The 'Think TAC' poster is available for all professionals to use in their settings.**



## Website for Parents and Families

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/keeping-children-safe/team-around-child>

Below are pictures of the TAC Leaflet available for families, the information can be accessed via the website above.



# Team Around the Child in Lincolnshire

## A guide for Parents and Families



### What is Team Around the Child?

Team Around the Child (TAC) offers Early Help and support for children as soon as we have a worry about them. TAC is how different people and services work together to help children and their families at any point in their lives to prevent or reduce difficulties before they become too difficult.

### Is my child the right age for TAC?

Yes, TAC supports children and young people before they are born until their 19th birthday. Young people with additional needs can continue to receive TAC support up to their 25th birthday.

### Who will do this work with my family?

You choose who you would like to be the Lead Professional, they will support you and your child through the TAC. The Lead Professional will be someone who works with children and knows your child. They may remain the same person or change if your situation changes. Together, you and the Lead Professional, invite other professionals you would like to support your family in TAC.

### What questions will be asked?

The Lead Professional will talk to you about what you and your child are worried about. They will also ask who is in your child's life that make things easier. Together you will talk about what needs to happen to lessen these worries and where to start. Your child will play an active part in this and will share their feelings to them and when things begin to feel better.

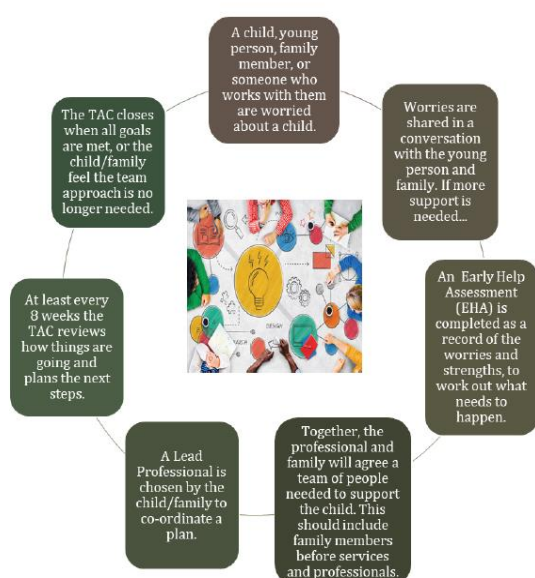
### How long will the TAC stay open?

The TAC will stay open while it is making a positive difference for your child. The TAC closes when all goals are met, or the child/family feel the team approach is no longer needed.

### Can I bring someone with me?

Absolutely, ideally someone who knows your child well. This may be family and friends.

## The TAC Journey



### Useful Information

**EHA** (Early Help Assessment) – this is a process used to discuss your child's need and what support you want for them.

**TAC** (Team Around the Child) – A group of people, including you and your child, who work together to support your child.

**LP** (Lead Professional) – The person who is your main contact, coordinating the support and offering further advice.

**Information about your family will not be shared without you agreeing to this unless there is a safeguarding concern.**

### Where can I find further information?

You can access all the information and paperwork within the TAC process via [lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac](http://lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac)

If you are worried and you feel a child is at risk of harm, please telephone our customer services centre, **01522 782 111**

For further safeguarding information please access the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Partnership via their website: [lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding](http://lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding)

For further information around services supporting families in Lincolnshire, please visit the [Family Services Directory Website](#)

"The TAC Process helped in getting the right support. It has helped us deal with things differently. I felt listened to" (parent)

\*remember to print me on the short edge