

## SEE, HEAR, RESPOND



## SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

### See, Hear, Respond

A new service provided across England for children, young people, parents and carers who are experiencing crisis due to Covid-19.

A new support hub and referral link is now available.

If you are worried about a child or young person experiencing harm and increased adversity or are looking for advice and help, visit [www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond)

Or call **0800 157 7015** to speak to one of our Barnardo's project workers.

We operate between:  
Monday – Friday 9am – 9pm and  
Saturday and Sunday 10am – 6pm



Coronavirus has turned life upside down, for all of us. But for thousands of children, already or newly vulnerable, a new reality is emerging which is starker than we could ever have imagined. As lockdown lifts and we look past the immediate crisis, we're beginning to see more clearly how deep-rooted the impact of COVID-19 will be on children and young people, now and in the future.

### **What's the need?**

Out of school, feeling stuck at home or locked out of their usual support systems, it's been harder than ever for children and young people to get the help they need. In many cases, hidden harms like online grooming, inequalities amongst BAME communities, criminal and sexual exploitation and domestic abuse are still impacting on children but with fewer support agencies seeing children they can feel isolated and alone.

We know these harms are increasing, but with Local Authorities under more pressure than ever, we know that there are many children who would benefit from support who are do not meet the threshold for statutory support.

Parents are also stretched further than ever, many families have been hit hard financially, have additional home schooling responsibilities, may be caring for other family members who are shielding and this can all put additional strain on family relationships and physical and mental health.

The mental health and physical health of children is being adversely affected and See Hear Respond wants to work alongside health colleagues to help plug the gaps.

Health colleagues may be working with families where it is clear parents need additional help and/or children are in need of support. With a long out of school summer ahead it is also likely that health colleagues are coming across children who may be disengaged from their usual support network, struggling with anxiety and poor mental health, being relied on for support by adults they help care for. Equally health colleagues may be working with new parents who need extra support and reassurance at this frightening time, or parents who because of their own adverse experiences are struggling to provide their usual levels of care or support for their children.

### **How can See Hear Respond help?**

See Hear Respond is a new service developed to fill the widening gap for children and young people during COVID-19. From June to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 it will work with schools and other agencies to find those children who are hidden from view; who are not receiving support currently from statutory organisations and those who are at risk and/or experiencing adverse impact to their health and wellbeing.

The service is open **to any child** who does not have other support networks at this time who you are concerned about. There is no threshold of need or harm that has

to be reached to receive a service. However, we are especially committed to finding those we believe may be at most harm including those children who are:

- At risk of within any form of abuse, criminal and sexual exploitation (working in homes and outreach detached settings)
- Disabled or who have special educational needs and may have other associated harms such as adverse home-life or online harms
- Under 5 years old
- From black or minority ethnic communities (who are not being seen or reached)
- Young carers

### **What can children and families expect?**

Firstly it is important to note that this service is not a substitute for existing statutory support. **If you are concerned that a child is at risk of significant harm then a referral should be made to your usual Children's Services safeguarding front door.** If you feel a child is likely to need long term child in need support then a referral into your early help hub or child in need process is likely to be a more effective option.

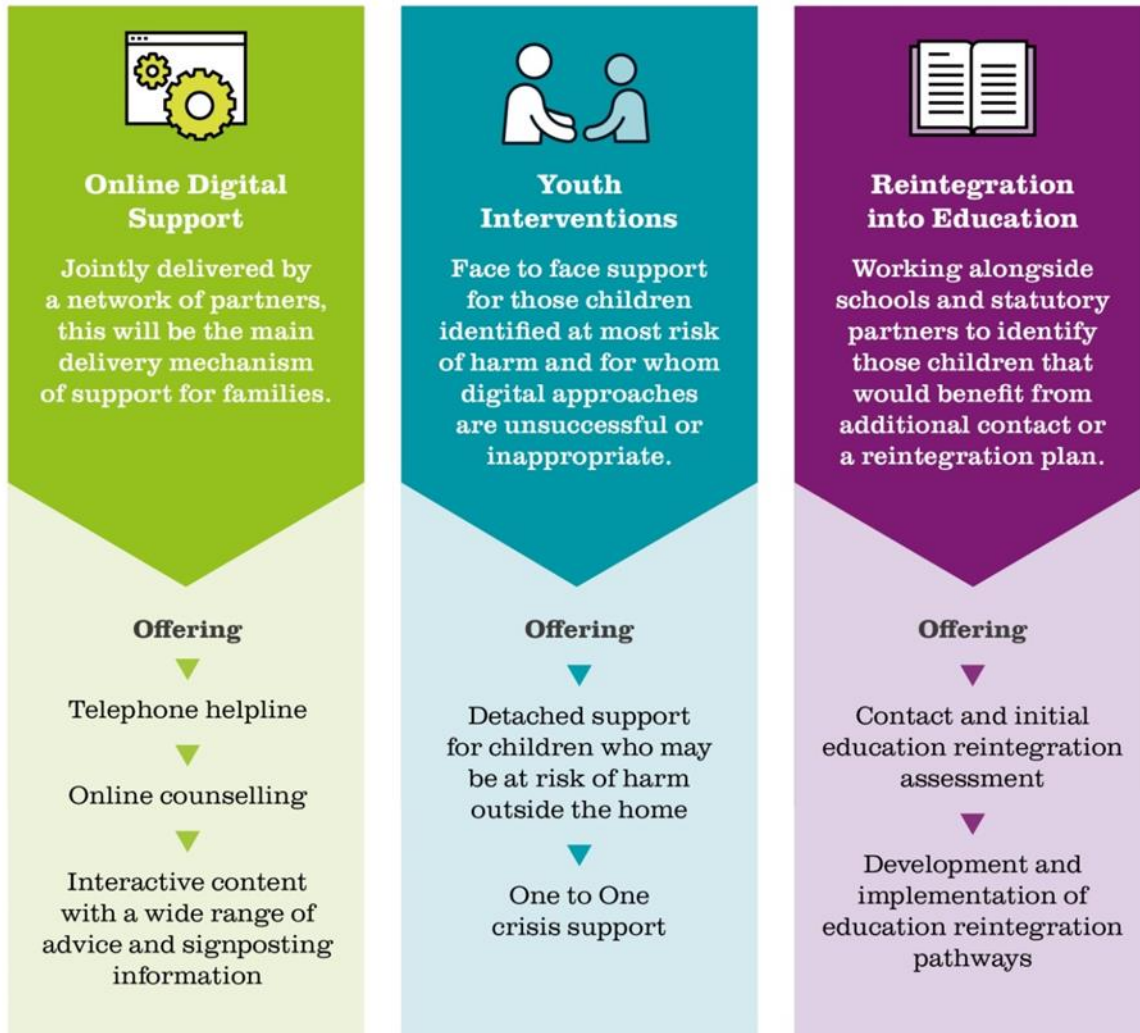
This service is aimed at those children who are not receiving support, or who have not met thresholds but because of COVID-19 and wider problems are struggling and them and their families would benefit from some immediate help in the short term.

We want to direct support where it is needed the most and to touch base with those families that have disengaged from education, support services or whose usual support has stopped during this period.

The aim is to provide short term wrap around support to help de-escalate issues and support children with re-integration to education and agencies where their support needs can be met in the longer term. It is aimed at helping our statutory service partners manage during these difficult periods and filling local gaps where possible. There is however, always the likelihood that we will come across families whose levels of need and potential risk of harm is such that referrals into statutory services are necessary. We will work together to support children until these families can be picked up by the relevant services safely.

The support will be delivered both by Barnardo's services and other national and local delivery partners who have been assessed in terms of suitability to provide support. These partners include large charities such as The Children's Society and Action for Children and smaller local charities who are well respected in communities.

There are three types of support on offer and children and families will be assessed in relation to what types of support would most effectively meet their needs. They can access support across all three strands if needed.



### How do I refer a family?

It is always preferable that you talk to a family and get consent to refer into the service where possible.

We have a Freephone number for children and families who wish to self-refer or they can fill out a self-referral online form:

**Free phone: 0800 157 7015**

**Online self-referral: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond>**

Professionals can also call the Freephone number if they want to find out more about the programme, but where possible if you are a professional we would ask that you complete the secure online referral form that can be accessed here: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond>

This enables us to keep telephone lines more available for children and families.

After making a referral families will be contacted directly by a specialist Barnardo's local intake hub worker, who will speak to the family identify the most appropriate support and then deploy help through a locally quality assured service to get help to them quickly.

### **Referring groups of children who may be at risk outside of the home**

In addition to taking referrals for individual children and families – we will also operate an outreach and detached service – where referrals can be made into the intake hubs for a place or space where children are potentially at risk of harm and would benefit from engagement. For example if children are hanging out in schools grounds, a local park or shopping centre and you are concerned about their safety or behaviours we can help get trained youth workers to engage in street based safeguarding conversations to create a safer environment for all.

To make a referral about a group of children please contact us on the Freephone number above.

**We want to work with you to make sure as many children and families access support at this critical time. Please talk to us if you need any further information at 0800 157 7015**