

# First Steps Team

Assessment and support for expectant  
parents, new parents and infants



**ChildProtection**  
Perth & Kinross



**see beyond**

**Getting it Right  
in Perth and Kinross**

*Helping children be the best they can be*





The First Steps Team used to be known as the Change is a Must Team. The Team changed its name in 2023 in consultation with people who have used the service to better reflect the work of the Team. The First Steps Team undertakes assessment and provides support to expectant parents where there are concerns for the wellbeing and safety of their unborn child. The First Steps Team works with a range of complex issues with expectant and new parents once their babies are born which may include:

- problematic substance use;
- mental health issues;
- domestic abuse and coercive control;
- learning disabilities or difficulties;
- a current or previous history of offending behaviour.

To provide the best support possible, the First Steps Team is multi-agency and includes a Mental Health Practitioner and a Drug and Alcohol worker. These workers work closely with the Social Workers and Senior Social Care Officers within the Team to provide assessment and support tailored to each expectant parent's needs.

## Criteria

Referrals to the First Steps Team are made by professionals in accordance with the **Tayside Multi-Agency Practitioner's Guidance: Concern for Unborn Babies**. Where there are wellbeing concerns for the Unborn Baby, consent should always be sought from the pregnant woman or pregnant person. If there are Child Protection Concerns, consent is not required but the pregnant woman or pregnant person and the father or other parents should be made aware of the referral wherever possible.





The First Steps Team only works with first-time parents or parents whose older children are not in their care. The expectant parents must live within the Perth and Kinross local authority area on a permanent basis.

The First Steps Team provide a service from Monday to Friday within office hours, which are between 8.45 am and 5.00 pm. The Team is based at Almondbank House in North Muirton, Perth. The office has a range of facilities for working with expectant and new parents and their infants.

## Assessment and Support

The First Steps Team will work with the expectant parents to assess their needs and those of their unborn child. The allocated Social Worker undertakes an assessment through gathering information from the expectant parents and from other professionals who may already know them. The Social Worker's assessment will determine whether:

- an Unborn Baby's Planning Meeting will be held. This is where concerns are at a low to medium level for the Unborn Baby and a Child's Plan is believed to be sufficient to meet the needs of the Unborn Baby;
- a Child Protection Planning Meeting will be convened. This is where concerns are at a high level for the Unborn Baby and a Child Protection Plan is deemed necessary to protect the Unborn Baby.

In either case, the most important part of these meetings is creating a Plan to support the care and wellbeing of the infant once born through ensuring that the expectant parents are given the support they need.





The First Steps Team believe that infants should always be with their parents wherever it is safe and possible for them to do so. To ensure that the needs of the parents are addressed, mental health and substance use support will be provided, alongside parenting support and education.

The First Steps Team offers expectant parents the opportunity to work with the CREST Team who can support them to have Family Group Decision-Making Meetings. This is a parent-led process which seeks to bring wider family members together to help plan how they can support the parents care for their infant once born.

The First Steps Team work with families until their baby is about 6 months of age when it may be appropriate for their involvement to end. If further support and help is needed after this time, the Fieldwork Team for the area in which the parent or parents reside will provide it. All transitions are carefully planned to make sure that support continues as seamlessly as possible.





## Further help and support

**The name of your social worker/lead professional is:**

**Their telephone number is:**

### **For further information, please contact:**

First Steps  
Education and Children's Services  
Perth and Kinross Council  
Almondbank House  
Lewis Place  
Perth  
PH1 3BD

Tel 01738 472260  
Email [FirstSteps@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:FirstSteps@pkc.gov.uk)



## Support agencies

- **Perth and Kinross Child Protection Duty Team**  
Email [ChildProtection@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:ChildProtection@pkc.gov.uk)  
Tel 01738 476768  
[www.pkc.gov.uk/childprotection](http://www.pkc.gov.uk/childprotection)
- **Home-Start Perth and Kinross**  
Tel 01738 638847  
Email [info@homestartpk.org.uk](mailto:info@homestartpk.org.uk)
- **Parent to Parent**  
Tel 01382 817558  
Email [admin@parent-to-parent.org](mailto:admin@parent-to-parent.org)  
Email [trudy.doidge@parent-to-parent.org](mailto:trudy.doidge@parent-to-parent.org)  
Or contact via website at <https://parent-to-parent.org>
- **IAPK (Independent Advocacy Perth and Kinross)**  
Tel 01738 587887  
Email [info@iapk.org.uk](mailto:info@iapk.org.uk)  
[www.iapk.org.uk](http://www.iapk.org.uk)

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