Healthy Families
- County Durham



Supporting children, young people and families to build healthier, happier futures.

Durham County Council

NHS

Morelife

A free family healthy lifestyle service delivered by Morelife on behalf of Durham County Council.

Welcome to Healthy Families County Durham

Supporting healthier futures for children, young people and families

Healthy Families at a glance

- Free for eligible families across County Durham
- Whole-family approach
- 12-month programme
- Initial 10-week structured programme
- Follow-up support through monthly sessions
- Face-to-face delivery with digital support
- Experienced, compassionate practitioners
- Evidence-based behaviour change
- Practical and family-friendly support

What can families work on?

- Healthy eating & nutrition
- Physical activity
- Sleep & daily routines
- Reducing sedentary behaviour & screen time
- Practical family activities
- Emotional wellbeing & confidence
- Goal setting & behaviour change

Did you know?

Healthy Families works with the whole family. Because healthier habits are more likely to last when the whole family makes changes together.

How it works

Supporting children, young people and families to build healthier, happier futures.

Why Schools Matter

You know your pupils.
You see families regularly.
You can help open the door to support.

Schools and education settings are an important part of the Healthy Families partnership.

You may be the first professional to notice that a child or family could benefit from some additional support.

That might be through:

- A conversation with a parent or carer
- A change in a child's confidence or wellbeing
- Concerns around eating or physical activity
- Sleep or daily routines
- Increased sedentary behaviour or screen time
- Feedback from the child or family
- An NCMP outcome
- A wider conversation about healthy lifestyles

Your role

NOTICE

Recognise when a family might benefit from additional support.

TALK

Have a sensitive, positive conversation.

REFER

With consent, connect the family with Healthy Families.

SUPPORT

Continue to encourage the family as part of their everyday school life.

KEY MESSAGE

You don't have to diagnose, solve or manage the issue alone.

A referral means bringing in a team whose role is to provide specialist healthy lifestyle support.

Schools are one of the recognised referral pathways for Healthy Families County Durham along with GP's, community associations, family hubs, social prescribers and many more in our whole systems approach we are committed to working collaboratively to promote change in communities helping them thrive.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q Can schools refer?

A **Yes.**
Schools and education settings are recognised referral partners for Healthy Families County Durham.

Q Is the programme only about weight?

A **No.**
Healthy Families supports:

- Healthy eating
- Emotional wellbeing
- Goal setting
- Physical activity
- Screen time and sedentary behaviour
- Sustainable behaviour change
- Sleep

Q What happens after we refer?

A A Healthy Families practitioner contacts the family, completes an initial assessment and discusses the most appropriate support.

Q What if the family doesn't attend?

A The team works with families to understand barriers and encourage re-engagement.

Q Will the school receive an update?

A Where appropriate, and in line with information governance requirements, communication can be maintained with referring professionals.

Q Can children with SEND or additional needs take part?

A **Yes**.
Wherever possible, delivery is adapted to meet individual family needs.

Q Where does the programme take place?

A Support is delivered through community venues across County Durham, alongside digital resources and flexible delivery options.

Q What happens after the programme?

A Families receive ongoing follow-up support for up to **12 months** to help maintain healthier habits and build confidence.



Referral: Keep It Simple

You don’t need to know everything.

When making a referral, provide the information you have and make sure the family understands what will happen.

THE 60-SECOND CHECKLIST

HAVE I SPOKEN TO THE PARENT/CARER?

Make sure they understand why you are suggesting support.

ARE THEY HAPPY TO BE CONTACTED?

Consent should be obtained where required.

WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON FOR REFERRAL?

Briefly explain what has prompted the referral.

WHAT DO I ALREADY KNOW?

Useful information can include:

- NCMP outcome, if known
- Relevant health or wellbeing information
- Lifestyle information
- Previous or current support
- Preferred delivery option

ARE THERE ANY BARRIERS OR ADDITIONAL NEEDS?

Tell the service about relevant:

- SEND/neurodiversity
- Communication or language needs
- Cultural/dietary considerations
- Transport or rural access
- Digital access
- Work or caring responsibilities
- Other barriers to engagement

IMPORTANT

You do not need to have every answer before making a referral.

The referral form allows information such as height, weight and BMI centile/clinical information to be included **if known**.

SAFEGUARDING

If there is an **immediate safeguarding concern**, follow your school's safeguarding procedure and contact the appropriate statutory service.

Healthy Families will triage referrals and agree the most suitable support pathway.

KEEP INFORMATION SECURE

Use the **agreed secure referral pathway: morelife.countydurham@nhs.net**

Do not send personal or sensitive information by unsecured email.



Let's Work Together

One conversation can make a difference.

Healthy Families County Durham works alongside schools, Family Hubs, primary care, NCMP, health visiting, children's services, VCSE organisations, community groups and Durham County Council Public Health.

Together we can:

- Identify families earlier
- Make referrals easier
- Reduce barriers to support
- Encourage healthier habits
- Support children's wellbeing
- Help families make changes that last

TRAINING FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Not sure how to start the conversation?

Healthy Families County Durham offers training and awareness sessions to help professionals feel more confident talking about healthy lifestyles.

Training can include:

- **CPD-accredited Raising Weight Conversations with Families**
- **CPD-accredited Making Every Contact Count (MECC)**
- **Referral Guidance**
- **Partnership Awareness Sessions**

Training can be delivered **face-to-face or online** and tailored for partner organisations.

DISCUSS THE SERVICE

Nicola Lyons

Healthy Families Partnership and Engagement officer

nicola.lyons@more-life.co.uk

Follow Us On Social Media

Facebook

Instagram

@HEALTHYFAMILIESCOUNTYDURHAM

NEED HELP WITH THE REFERRAL?

Healthy Families County Durham

morelife.countydurham@nhs.net

0191 380 1144

www.healthyfamiliescountydurham.co.uk/contact-us

Durham County Council

NHS

Morelife