

Key messages from Afternoon Workshop A: Working alongside midwives and the Healthy Child Programme

1. Start early (before volunteers start) and be persistent...relationship building with professionals takes a really long time
2. Position yourself as a resource for their service as well as for the families, and feedback to professionals about their clients (with consent) so they can see your impact repeatedly
3. Make it simple...to understand the offer and to refer (e.g.by phone)
4. Identify your "natural allies" in the system (e.g. specialist midwives) and work closely with them
5. Have compassion for the professionals - most likely they wish they could work with families in the way you can. Reflect this in careful and respectful language (i.e. don't be deficit-focused about the professionals' work)
6. Hold your nerve about what you offer, be confident and stick to your principles even if a funder is offering money that would involve unacceptable compromise
7. High quality service based on good training, supervision and good impact will build trust over time