

Safe Baby Project Toolkit

Guidance Notes

Practitioners can use this tool to advise, assess and monitor the family's home arrangement with regards to the safety of the baby, as well as help you to identify those that are most at risk.

Safe sleep advice is shared with all new parents in pregnancy and the first few days and weeks of a baby's life by universal maternity and health visiting services. To reduce avoidable deaths, we need **everyone** working with families in the RBWM to help ensure safety advice and consistent, evidence-based messages are followed.

This toolkit will enable non-health professionals to identify, and therefore support, families who may be vulnerable to preventable accidents. The expectation is that all workers who come into contact with families with infants up to 12 months of age (18 months if born premature or with health issues) to use this tool in order to assess the sleeping and living environment and as a basis for discussion to reinforce safety messages.

Any child can suffer a serious accident, but the poorest children are most at risk. Children living in poverty are:

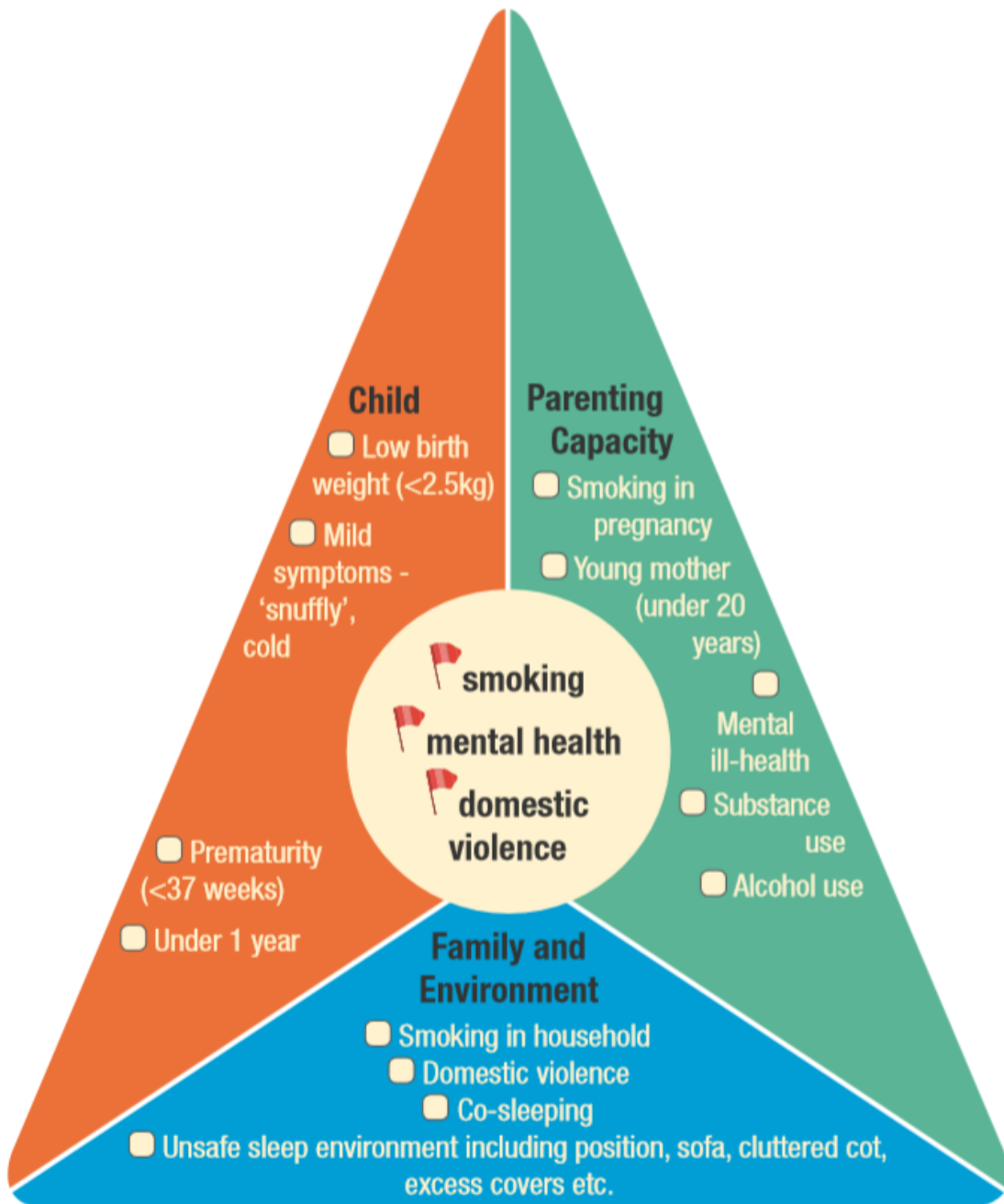
- 13 times more likely to die in preventable accidents
- 3 times more likely to be admitted to hospital with serious injuries.

The reasons can include:

- unaffordable safety equipment
- buying cheaper products that don't comply with safety standards
- literacy
- bringing up children alone
- maternal depression
- risk-taking behaviour by young people
- families who are homeless or living in overcrowded homes
- lack of car ownership
- living accommodation close to busy roads

Ref: Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) www.capt.org.uk

Child at risk of sudden unexpected death in infancy



Ref: Nottingham Safeguarding Children Partnership (2015)
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/1494648/safer-sleeping-risk-assessment-tool.pdf> and
 Lullaby Trust <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/>

Safe Baby Project Assessment Tool for Babies Under 12 Months of Age¹

Child's name: Date of Birth: Paris ID (if known):

Date of Assessment:

Completed by:

Section A – Sleeping Arrangement			
Advice	Y/N	Further remarks?	
1	Always place your baby on their back to sleep.		
2	No hats on babies indoors		
3	Keep your baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth.		
4	Place your baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as you for the first 6 months.		
5	Breastfeed your baby, if you can. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) risk is halved if breastfed for first 2 months of life ² .		
6	Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in good condition.		
7	Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby.		
8	Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoke • Have drunk alcohol • Have taken drugs • Are extremely tired • Your baby was born prematurely • Your baby was of low birthweight 		
9	Avoid letting your baby get too hot (the room temperature should ideally be about 16C – 20C)		
10	Don't cover your baby's face or head while sleeping or use loose bedding.		
11	To avoid accidents, remove all pillows, soft bedding, cot bumpers and soft toys from the cot.		
12	Nappy bag safety: Ensure they are away from the cot and cannot blow into the face of a sleeping baby or be accessible to an independently mobile infant.		
13	Swaddling:		

¹ Under 18 months if premature or pre-existing health conditions.

² Please note that formula feeding is not a risk. Breastfeeding is a protective factor.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use thin materials • Do not swaddle above the shoulders • Never put a swaddled baby to sleep on their front • Do not swaddle too tight • Check the baby's temperature to ensure they do not get too hot 		
14	<p>When wearing a sling or baby carrier, keep in mind the acronym TICKS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight • In view at all times (baby) • Close enough to kiss • Keep chin off the chest • Supported back 		
15	<p>Car Seats: Babies should only remain in car seats for the journey and taken out and placed on a firm, flat surface to sleep on reaching your destination.</p>		
Notes:			

Section B – Physical Environment			
Advice		Y/N	Further remarks?
1	Formula milk to be made up fresh and not heated up in a microwave. Microwaves have hotspots and will result in serious internal burns.		
2	It's dangerous to prop a baby up to feed. If they choke, they won't be able to push the bottle away.		
3	Infants can choke on food you think is quite soft and small, like a whole grape, a cube of jelly, marshmallows or a piece of hot dog. Cut them up into smaller pieces.		
4	Toys and small objects: Small babies and infants can grab and reach for things such as coins, buttons, small batteries, small parts from toys, and these could end up in their mouth. It's always best to keep small objects out of reach.		
5	If a lithium coin cell battery gets stuck in a child's food pipe, it can cause catastrophic internal bleeding and death within hours of being swallowed.		
6	Window blind safety: Risk of strangulation if window blind cords are accessible. Please use hook to tie them out of reach.		

7	Dummy cords or strings can also be a strangulation risk. No cord is preferable, but if using, then it should be no longer than 6 inches long.		
8	Hot drinks, irons, heaters and gas/electric fire safety to be observed at all times. Use fireguards. Infants are curious and will explore their environment.		
9	Bath time: Run cold before hot water into bath to prevent the base getting hot, which could easily scald a baby's fragile skin.		
10	Brightly coloured cleaning and laundry products can be appealing to infants who explore by putting things in their mouths. Store safely and out of reach.		
11	Swallowing everyday medicines is the commonest way for infants to be poisoned. Store medicines safely (high up cupboard and out of reach).		
12	E-Cigarettes: There is a risk of poisoning from swallowing e-cigarette liquid. Keep e-cigarettes and refills out of reach.		
13	Independently mobile infants are particularly susceptible to falls from a height: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curious and have no real understanding of danger. • Take parents by surprise by a sudden breakthrough in their development. Before you know it, they can clamber up on furniture, etc. • Heads of infants are proportionally much bigger than adults, so they have a different centre of gravity. If they lean out of a window, they may topple out and their heads take most of the impact. • Fit a stair safety gate. • Safety catches or window locks can be applied. • Keep window keys in a safe place in the event of a fire. • Fit smoke alarms. 		
14	Electrical socket safety and electrical equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove mobile phone chargers from live sockets after use. • Hair straighteners and curling tongs should be disconnected and kept out of reach after use. • Hair dryers should be disconnected after use. 		
Notes:			

Section C – Water and Garden Safety			
Advice		Y/N	Further remarks?
1	<p>Babies and infants can easily drown at home in the bath in just a few centimetres of water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get everything you need ready before bath time because you'll need to stay with your baby all the time they are in the bath. • Bath seats are useful for supporting your baby in the bath, but they are not safety aids as babies can slip out. 		
2	<p>Babies and infants can easily drown in the garden in just a few centimetres of water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty the paddling pool out after you've used it. • Turn a pond into a sandpit or fence it in or cover it. • Make sure your child cannot get to the neighbour's pond. • Be alert to ponds or pools when visiting other people's homes. 		
3	<p>Garden plants and berries can be poisonous to babies and infants. Refer to https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=524 for poisonous plant advice.</p>		
4	<p>Garden tools can be a hazard, particularly electric tools. Never leave tools plugged in when not in use.</p>		
5	<p>Weed killers and fertilisers are highly poisonous. Store these out of reach.</p>		
6	<p>Barbecues can stay hot enough to cause a serious contact burn for a long time after they've been used.</p>		
7	<p>All barbecues produce carbon monoxide which is fine outdoors but is a deadly poisonous gas in an enclosed space. Never take a lit or smouldering one inside a house, tent, caravan or boat.</p>		
8	<p>Car owners who may store antifreeze and screen wash in the garden shed need to ensure that they are kept out of reach.</p>		
Notes:			

Further Information from the project authors:

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