



# Identifying & Responding to neglect in the antenatal period

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# agenda

What is neglect?

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Risk factors/warning signs for  
neglect in pregnancy

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How neglect impacts on babies  
and young children

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The impact of parents'  
behaviours on an unborn

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What to do if neglect is a  
concern

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Introduction to GCP2

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# What is neglect?

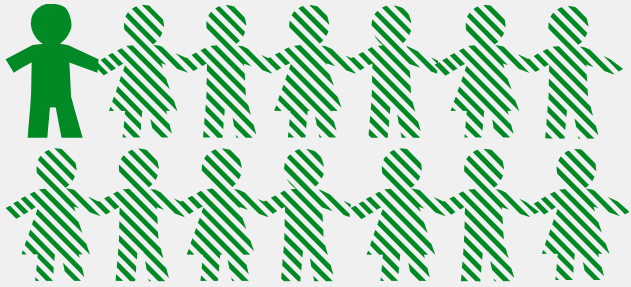
“The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development”.

(The Children’s Act 1989)  
(HM Government 2010, H11: Introduction to Definitions; p38)

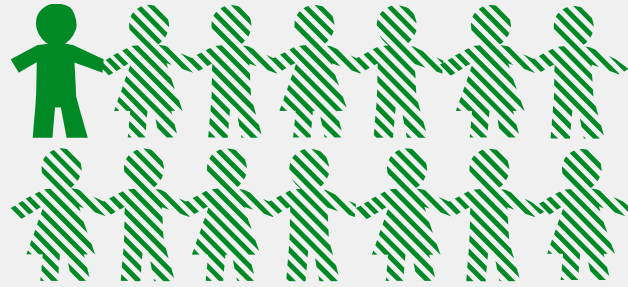


# What we know about child abuse and neglect in the UK

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1 in 14 children  
have been  
**physically abused.**



1 in 15 children  
have been  
**emotionally abused.**



1 in 20 children  
have been  
**sexually abused.**

\*Source: Radford et al (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today.

# What we know about child abuse and neglect in the UK

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**1 in 5 children**  
have **suffered abuse**.



**1 in 5 children**  
have been exposed to  
**domestic violence**.



**1 in 10 children**  
have been **neglected**.

\*Source: Radford et al (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today.

The background features a light grey base with several organic, overlapping shapes. A large, semi-circular shape in a muted olive green is positioned in the upper right. A larger, semi-circular shape in a dusty rose or terracotta hue is on the left. A white, wavy line meanders across the bottom right. In the top left, there is a faint, stylized pattern of thin, radiating lines resembling a plant or a starburst.

Risk factors/warning signs for  
neglect in pregnancy

No one thing means a child will definitely be neglected but there are signs to look for that could indicate parents will need some support or further assessment. Pre-birth assessment is about predicting the quality of care the child will receive.

Indicators of future neglect could be things like:

Self-neglect

Lack of preparation for baby

Care leavers

Unmanaged mental health difficulties

Neglect of previous children or in parents' own childhood

Missed appointments/late booking

Parent speaking negatively about baby/not bonding

Poor home conditions – dirty/cluttered/overcrowded/lack of basic facilities

Learning disability

Lack of understanding of baby's needs

Very young parents

Lack of support for parents

Drug/alcohol use during pregnancy

Domestic abuse

The background features a light grey base with large, overlapping organic shapes in muted green and brown. In the top left, there are stylized, layered patterns of foliage in shades of grey and brown. A thin white line curves across the bottom right of the image.

# The impact of Neglect ...



# The Impact on Children in Early Years

- [Childhood Trauma and the Brain | UK Trauma Council \(youtube.com\)](#)
- [Depression and Childhood Trauma: Leah's Story \(youtube.com\)](#)



# Hierarchy of effect on development

- Emotional development: insecure attachment, anxiety, inattention, poor self-confidence, mental health,
- Social development: precocious maturity, lack of trust, appeasing, dependency – relationship difficulty
- Speech & language: poor language especially in pragmatic aspect, hesitancy or elective mutism
- Cognitive & metacognitive: impaired cognitive ability & maladaptive learning behaviour

Dr. O. P. Srivastava

Consultant Community Paediatrician



## BOWLBY'S ATTACHMENT THEORY

“The central theme of attachment theory is that primary caregivers who are available and responsive to an infant's needs allow the child to develop a sense of security. The infant learns that the caregiver is dependable, which creates a secure base for the child to then explore the world”

The background features a light grey base with a faint, stylized leaf pattern in the upper left. Overlaid are several organic shapes: a large dark brown circle on the left, a muted green circle in the upper right, and a light grey shape on the right. A white wavy line curves across the bottom right.

The impact of parents'  
behaviours on an  
unborn - Triology of  
risk

# Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse or domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or financial. It is often a combination of these.
- Pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse, and existing abuse may get worse during pregnancy or after giving birth.
- Domestic abuse during pregnancy puts both the woman and unborn child in danger. It increases the risk of miscarriage, infection, premature birth, and injury or death to the baby.

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/support/domestic-abuse-in-pregnancy/>



# DA Prevention strategy



- Every child deserves the best start in life. Yet one in six pregnant women will experience domestic violence, and around 30% of domestic violence starts or worsens during pregnancy.
- Domestic abuse is a significant factor in the onset of pre-term labour, and maternal and perinatal mortality and morbidity.
- Growing up in an abusive environment and living in a constant state of control, abuse and terror can have profound consequences on a family's well-being, long into their future. The majority of victims and their children will live with their abuser between two and ten years.

- Domestic Abuse prevention strategy 2018-2023

# Perinatal Mental Health

- What is perinatal mental health?
- Barriers to accessing early intervention care and support
- Factors that are associated with adverse symptoms associated with perinatal mental health deterioration
- Initiatives to improve the quality of care to achieve improved health outcomes for women and families
- The association with perinatal mental health adversities and the risk of neglect



# Substance Misuse

Living in a household where a parent or carer misuses substances doesn't mean a child will experience abuse but it can be a risk.

Substance misuse can have negative effects on children at different stages in their lives.

During pregnancy, drinking and drug use can put babies at risk of birth defects, premature birth, being born underweight and withdrawal symptoms.

In later years, substance misuse can put children at risk of:

- physical and emotional abuse or neglect
- behavioural or emotional problems
- having to care for their parents or siblings
- poor attendance at school or low grades
- experiencing poverty
- being exposed to drugs or criminal activity
- being separated from parents.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLnUK1Mgh>

Sg

• <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/alcohol-drugs-parenting/>



# The need for early identification & Intervention

- Providing timely support is vital. Identifying and addressing a child or family's needs early on can increase protective factors that positively influence a child's wellbeing, and decrease risk factors that may be impacting a child's life negatively.
- Research suggests that early help and intervention can:
  - protect children from harm
  - reduce the need for a referral to child protection services
  - improve children's long-term outcomes
  - improve children's home and family life
  - support children to develop strengths and skills to prepare them for adult life.

[Early help and early intervention | NSPCC Learning](#)



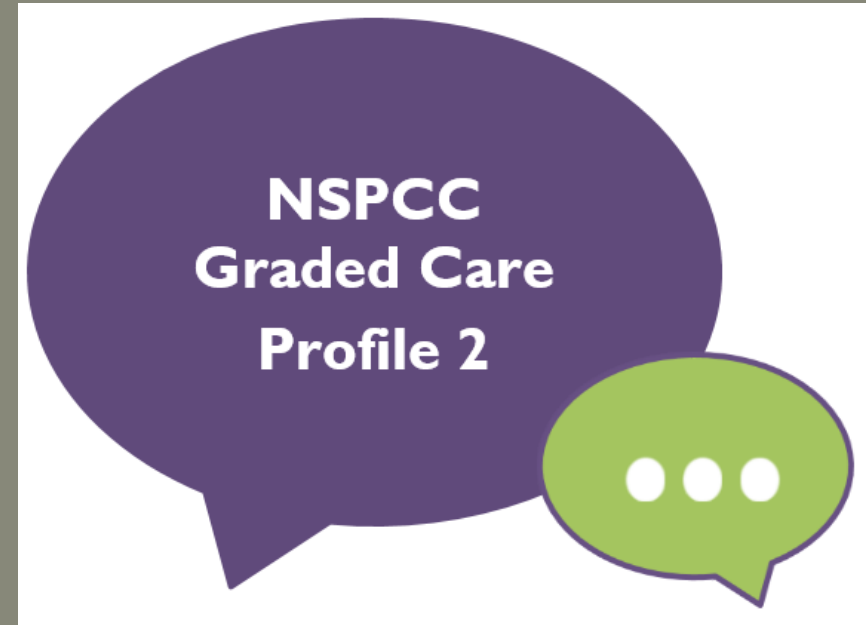
# Antenatal Neglect Screening Tool

	<b>Are You Worried About?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments / Evidence</b>
1	The baby's mother booking late in pregnancy or missing antenatal appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
2	Conditions in the home (are they unhygienic/cluttered/ overcrowded/lacking basic amenities?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
3	A lack of adequate preparations made for the baby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
4	A lack of understanding of the baby's future needs (physical/emotional/ developmental) and/or unwillingness to learn or take on advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
5	A lack of emotional warmth/negativity towards unborn baby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
6	Parents' presentation (eg poor hygiene, unkempt appearance, unclean clothing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
7	Significant financial issues or homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
8	Lack of support network (particularly for very young parents, children with additional needs, or families with large number of children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
9	Parental mental health difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
10	Parental drug and/or alcohol use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
11	Parental learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
12	Domestic abuse in household	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
13	History of abuse or neglect with previous children or in parents' own childhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
14	Any other concerns around neglect? Please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
	Total (add number in each column)			

# Introduction to GCP2

[GCP2: How We Spot Neglect \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Event List : Graded Care Profile 2 \(GCP2\) Training for Practitioners \(lscpbirmingham.org.uk\)](#)





# Thank you

Questions?

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