Each month we will be focusing on a different safeguarding theme to raise awareness and signpost to resources.

Image by FreeP!k

For April, our theme is

Safeguarding Unborn Babies and Under 2's

#safeguardingbaby

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Follow us on:

Or via email:
safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk

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The hyperlinks will assist you to navigate this document and to identify what information is most relevant for you/your agency/service.

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Context of this theme

Local and National Reviews, together with other research findings, show that children under one year of age and in particular, very young babies, are extremely vulnerable to being seriously injured or to dying as a result of abuse or neglect.

Over the next slides we have highlighted some useful information and resources for you to view.

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Learning from Reviews

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Report

- This national safeguarding practice review for England was carried out following the findings from the rapid review into the death of baby Victoria Marten in 2023.
- This looked at the broader themes raised by the death of baby Victoria and present in other serious safeguarding incidents involving unborn infants and babies.
- It aims to identify systemic learning that can strengthen safeguarding practice for all vulnerable babies.
- The key findings and learning from the report, included:
  - need for earlier and stronger pre-birth safeguarding
  - importance of trauma-informed practice to help reach families who struggle to work with professionals
  - need for better engagement with and support for parents before and after children are removed through care proceedings
  - need for adult and children's services to work closely together
  - implementing stronger links between children's social care and offender management services, especially when serious sex offenders are parents or carers
  - need for clearer arrangements when families frequently move between areas.

Report: Protecting all vulnerable babies better

NSPCC Learning: Recorded Protecting all vulnerable babies better: national review into the death of baby Victoria Marten

Webinar: 4th March 2026 – YouTube: Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

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The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Report

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel commented in their annual report 2023-2024 that:

During 2023-24 under 1s were still experiencing the most harm and represented over a third of all Serious Incident Notifications. SUDI remains the most common likely cause of death.

Click on this link to read the report:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safeguarding-practice-review-panel-annual-report-2023-to-2024

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Local Learning from Local Reviews

In 2022, Swindon completed and published a thematic review into the assessment and safeguarding of infants prior to and following a non-accidental injury.

There is a dedicated webpage where you can find out more - Safeguarding unborn babies, under 1's and working with fathers or use the QR code below.

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Recurring Learning Themes in Reviews and Audits

- Over the past year several recurring learning themes have been identified in local reviews and audits. Some are also highlighted in national reviews.
- Examples of these learning themes included:
  - A lack of professional curiosity,
  - Absence of the voice of the child
  - Responding to concerns in isolation, failing to consider the family history, or risk posed by perpetrators and the intersectionality of abuse.
- Further information can be found in the practice brief Learning from reviews and audits - safeguarding children
- View the recorded webinar: Recurring learning themes from reviews and audits

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Suspected Bruising in Children

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Responding to suspected bruising in children

- The younger the child, the greater the risk that bruising is non-accidental and therefore there is a greater potential risk.
- Infants under the age of one are more at risk of being killed by another person, usually a carer, more than any other age group of children.

Resources to find out more:

- Webpage: Safeguarding unborn babies, under 1's and working with fathers
- Policy: Pan BSW Policy on Unsuspected Bruising or Injuries in Children who are not Independently Mobile
- Leaflet for parents/carers: Bruising in Non-Mobile Infants leaflet
- SSP Practice Brief Suspected bruising on children

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Resources: The Child Safeguarding Review Panel

- ✓WEBINAR: The management of bruising in non-mobile infants Recorded in March 2023 (duration 25 minutes) provides information about the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's briefing paper on bruising in non-mobile infants. This highlights the key findings and recommendations from the report.

- ✓Panel Briefing 1 - The management of bruising in non-mobile infants paper - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (September 2022)

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THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW PANEL

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Working with Fathers

Includes links to reports, resources and training.

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Working with Fathers

- A new baby is a huge change for everyone in a family. This impacts on fathers as well as mothers. It is common for dads to experience low mood and anxiety when they have a new baby.
- National reviews published by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel **Out of Routine** (sudden unexpected death in infancy) and **The Myth of Invisible men: Safeguarding children under 1 from non-accidental injury**, highlighted how men are often the perpetrators of abuse but remain unseen or unassessed within safeguarding practice. For further information and resources regarding those reviews click here.
- Resources to support working with fathers are included on the next slide.

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Resources:
The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

- ✓ The Myth of Invisible men: Safeguarding children under 1 from non-accidental injury caused by male carers. published in September 2021 highlights how men are often the perpetrators of abuse but remain unseen or unassessed within safeguarding practice.
- ✓ **NSPCC Learning Briefing**: Safeguarding children from non-accidental injury caused by male carers
- ✓ Out of Routine, published in 2020 related to a review of sudden unexpected death in infancy.
- ✓ Webinar - Non-Accidental Injury of Children under 1 webinar – YouTube Recorded October 2021 (duration 55 minutes) informs safeguarding professionals about the Panel's third national review. This focussed on safeguarding children under 1 from non-accidental injury caused by male carers. This recording highlights the key findings and recommendations.

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THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW PANEL

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Resources: Working with Fathers

Below are some additional resources to support fathers.

- ✓DadPad | The Essential Guide for New Dads | Support Guide for New Dads: information and advice for new Dads to feel more confident about fatherhood.
- ✓**Research in Practice (RIP)** free digital download: working effectively with men in families, gives practice pointers for including fathers in children's social care.
- ✓**NSPCC Learning (2022):** Unseen men: learning from case reviews
- ✓SSP 7 Minute brief: working with fathers
- ✓Working with male carers to reduce non-accidental injury to infants under 1 year old - Foundations explores current practice and the evidence base relating to working with fathers to reduce non-accidental injury (NAI) in infants under 1 year old.
- ✓Looking after yourself – dads, co-parents and partners « PATH_UK

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Swindon Local Offer

- ✓Swindon Local Offer - Services for parents and carers
- ✓Resources | Health visitor services
- ✓SEND Local Offer - OnePlusOne
- ✓Speech and language: Lets talk resources – Lets Talk Dads
- SEND Local Offer - NSPCC includes:
  - **Baby Steps** – free, friendly group that empowers parents-to-be, builds their confidence and helps them feel ready for the arrival of their new baby
  - **Pregnancy in Mind** – preventative mental health service designed to support expectant parents who are at risk of, or currently experiencing, mild to moderate anxiety and low mood during their pregnancy. It helps parents manage any difficulties they are experiencing and builds their capacity to provide sensitive, responsive care to their babies through the post-natal period and beyond as their children develop.

Swindon resource: Young fathers practice guide - offering tips and advice on partnership working with young fathers.

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Invisible – Fathers Mental Health

- **Invisible** follows Luke's journey as he becomes dad to baby Josh. It is a dramatised version of events, highlighting factors that may impact new dads' mental health.
- The storyline has been developed following extensive interviews by the filmmakers with a diverse range of fathers and is based on research findings.
- Click on this link to view: ihv.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-mental-health/invisible-fathers-mental-health-film/invisible-the-full-film/

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Working With Fathers Training

- This training is open to partner agencies
- The objectives for this session are to:
- reflect on the role of fathers
  - Create time and space to consider personal and professional perceptions of fathers and their involvement in family life
- identify the father's role and factors that may prevent their development
  - Examine the key roles fathers play in their children's lives (emotional, practical and developmental)
  - Recognise barriers – both personal and systemic – that may hind fathers, particularly young fathers, from fulfilling these roles
- develop understanding of effective practice in working with fathers
  - Review and apply principles from working with fathers practice guidance on engaging and supporting fathers
  - Identify strategies for inclusive, strengths-based and flexible approaches that promote father involvement

- Find out more and to book a place by clicking on this link: Working with Fathers Tickets, Multiple dates

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Information/support for parents/carers

- **Health visitor services :** Health Visitors encourage, empower and support parents, guardians and carers to ensure the healthy development of their children
- **Swindon Family Nurse Partnership:** a voluntary, preventative, home visiting programme for first-time young mums and families. A one-minute guide about the service and contact details Growbaby — Pattern Church: provides free baby clothes, toiletries, baby equipment and food and formula for children between the ages of 0-5 years.
- Guidance for parents | Speech and language: Typical development for age groups
- **Birth to Five booklet** - Birth to five | HSC Public Health Agency (hscni.net)
- Services and support for parents - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- Where can I go for support for my mental health as a new parent? | Healthwatch
- Support for parents | NSPCC

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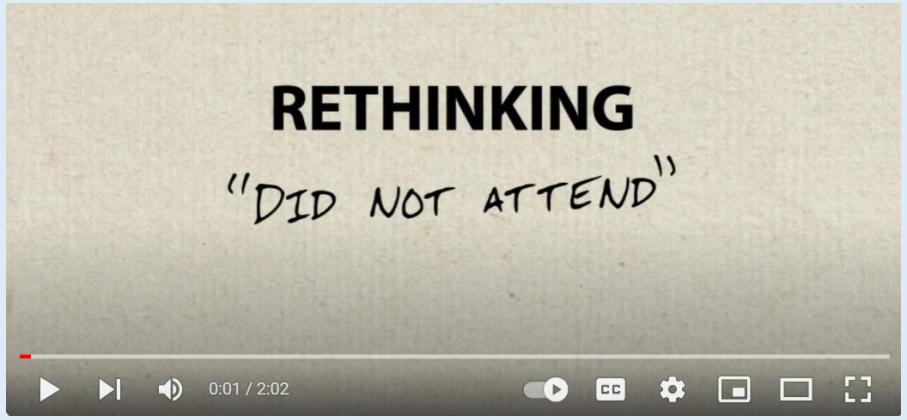
Rethinking Did Not Attend - Missing Appointments Matter



Promotes use of 'Was Not Brought' instead of 'Did Not Attend' when referring to children not being presented at medical appointments.

Commissioned by Nottingham City Council, NHS Nottingham City CCG and the NCSCB.

Link to access: Rethinking 'Did Not Attend' – YouTube (2017, duration 2 minutes)

Missing Appointments Matter is aimed at raising awareness about the consequences of missing appointments and to ensure that children and adults get the medical care that they need.

Commissioned by NHS Nottingham City CCG

Link to access: Missing Appointments Matter FINAL on Vimeo (duration 2:23 minutes)

For subtitled version: A subtitled version of the video is also available here.

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Resources to support practitioners in understanding vulnerability and protective factors for parents

- Use of the vulnerability and protective factors in pregnancy to early parenthood practical resource is encouraged.
- This helps professionals to increase their awareness of the breadth of factors that may impact on the development of unborn children and infants.
- This ensures families receive the support they need to give children in Swindon the best start in life.
- It includes a summary page with information on application in practice, which can be used as a stand alone resource.
- To access click on this link: Vulnerability and protective factors in pregnancy to early parenthood
- **Useful resource:** Speech and language: Typical development for age groups – information for professionals

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If you have concerns

Children and Families Contact Swindon provides a single point of contact to request help and support for families or report safeguarding concerns for a child.

Further information can be found on this webpage:

Request for help and support guidelines and contact information

Please also refer to the revised The Right Help at the Right Time

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Baby Steps and Pregnancy in Mind

NSPCC - Local Offer

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NSPCC invite you to come and hear about our…

- Early Years group work services Pregnancy In Mind and Baby Steps.
- You will learn more about these services and how to make a referral.
- We will consider how these services can meet the needs of unborn babies antenatally and postnatally and answer any questions that you may have.

- **Pregnancy in Mind:** a preventative mental-health service designed to support parents-to-be who are at risk of, or currently experiencing, mild to moderate anxiety and depression during their pregnancy. It is an antenatal group intervention delivered by professionals after the first trimester of pregnancy.

- **Baby Steps:** a holistic antenatal group for expectant parents. It consists of 6 antenatal group sessions, a home visit once baby arrives and then 3 postnatal group sessions.

- No need to book a place you can attend on the day.
- **Date/time: 22nd April 2026 – 1000 am – 1100 am**

Click on this link to **JOIN SESSION**

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NSPCC Baby Steps and Pregnancy in Mind Professionals Catch up Meetings

- Baby Steps video
- Baby Steps Information

- PIM Video
- Pregnancy in Mind (PiM) Information

- An informal catch up for professionals to discuss potential referrals to NSPCC free Early Years services and explore how we can support each other with referrals and reciprocal referral pathways.
- The 30-minute fortnightly meetings are an opportunity to share any updates and plans for these services and for professionals to
  - ask any questions
  - bring potential referrals
  - obtain support with referrals

Dates for April/May 2026:

- 7th April 2026 – 0930-100
- 21st April 2026 -0930 -1000
- 5th May 2026 – 0930 – 1000
- Dates will be fortnightly thereafter. Join the session by clicking on the MS Teams link below *(same link for each session)*

Join the meeting

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Useful Resources

SSP Policy and Procedures

- Pan BSW Policy on Unsuspected Bruising or Injuries in Children who are not Independently Mobile
- **Leaflet for parents/carers:** Bruising in Non-Mobile Infants leaflet
- BSW Multi-agency pre-birth protocol to safeguard unborn babies - October 2024
- Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Adult and Children Resolution Policy (Escalation Process)
- Think Family Practice Guidance – updated 2025
- The Right Help at Right Time Guidance
- Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) Policy
- Sudden unexplained death in infancy (SUDI) prevention guidance and pathway

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Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Resources

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) dedicated webpages:

- ✓ Safeguarding unborn babies, under 1's and working with fathers
- ✓ Neglect
- ✓ Child Sexual Abuse
- ✓ Information sharing and consent
- ✓ Professional curiosity

SSP 7-minute briefs and practice briefs:

- ✓ Resource pack - professional curiosity
- ✓ Safeguarding unborn babies - 7-minute brief
- ✓ Capturing the voice of the child
- ✓ SSP practice brief - Working with resistance or disguised compliance
- ✓ Safeguarding children – Oral Health
- ✓ Neurodiversity information and resources for practitioners
- ✓ Trauma-informed practice learning from reviews - Practice brief

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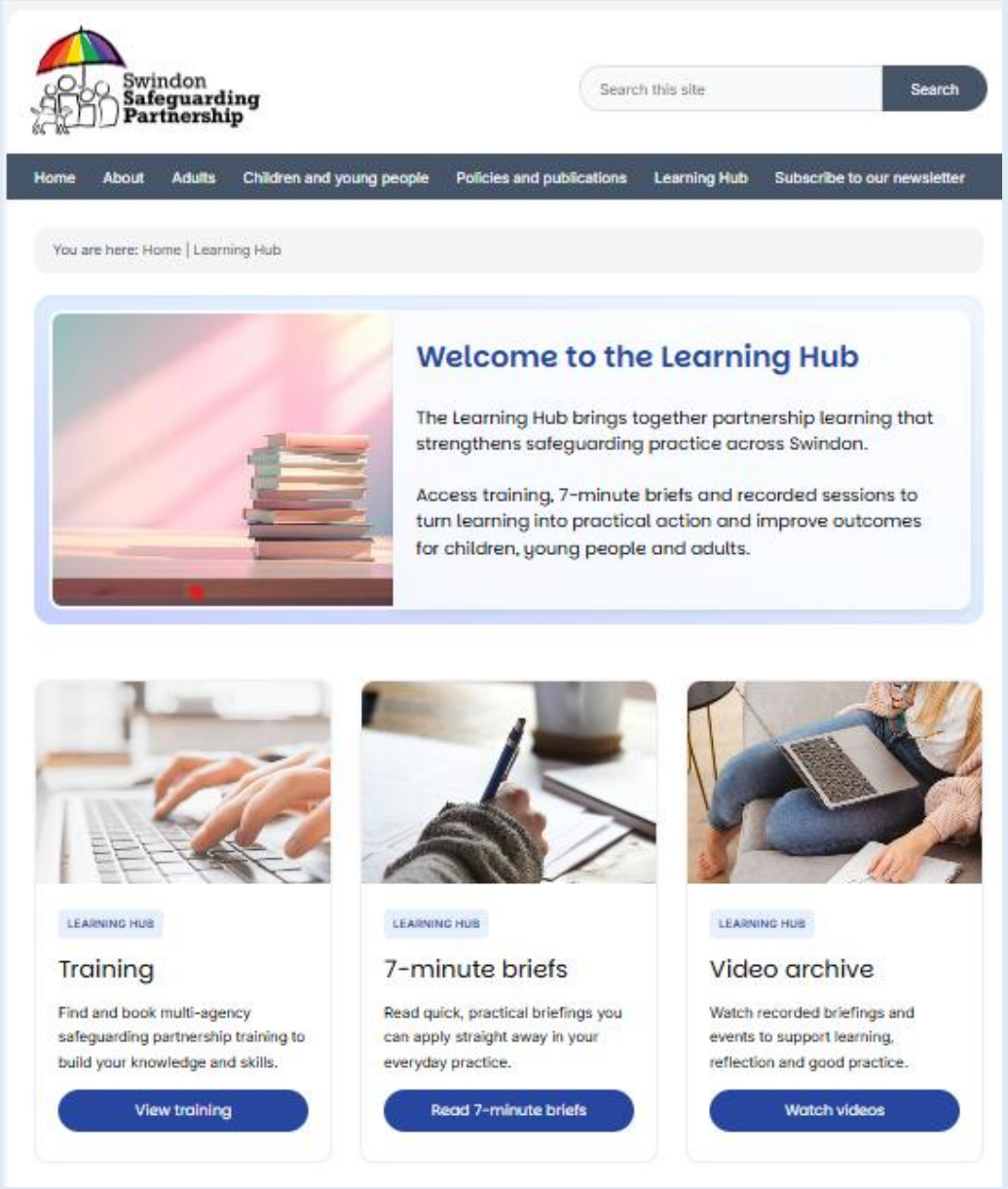

Safeguarding Partnership training, 7 minute and practice briefs and recorded webinars are all accessible via our learning hub.

Click on this link to find out more Learning Hub Information

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Free eLearning

Image by FreeP!k

New! eLearning: Being professionally curious This resource provides information and knowledge about being professionally curious in your practice. It comprises of several short recordings in **four** parts.

Supporting and Exploring Child Development: This resource aids understanding of how babies, toddlers and young children develop, the adult role in supporting the development of all babies, toddlers and young children and how the environment supports child development.

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Useful Resources

Supervision and Management Oversight:

- Defensible decision-making in children's social care - resource pack for practice supervisors: Frontline Briefing (2022) – Includes a link to download a resource pack and may be useful to partner agencies.
- Neglect supervision guide
- Neglect strategy - Appendices 2 and 6
- Supervision management oversight - Learning from audits

Useful resource: Speech and language: Typical development for age groups – information for professionals

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Other information/resources

- **Transforming pre-birth work: Insights and resources for better outcomes** Research in practice have some useful information on this topic Transforming pre-birth work
- The government has updated the Homelessness Code of Guidance to include cots for children aged under two in temporary accommodation - https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/homelessness-guidance-changed-to-ensure-babies-have-a-cot-in-temporary-accommodation-85433
- A guide to neurodiversity in the early years | Anna Freud
- Why babies' first relationships matter - Centre for Mental Health
- Spotting Trauma in Children and Adults: Breaking Down the Signs - For Baby's Sake
- New animated film seeks to help children & young people who are involved in family court proceedings | Cafcass

NSPCC Learning:

- What is safeguarding in early years? | NSPCC Learning
- Infants: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning Summary of risk factors and learning for improved practice around working with children aged two and under.
- How can we hear and facilitate the voice of the child? Practice points
- Why Language Matters – disguised compliance problematic
- Thermal injuries on children: Core info leaflet
- Using 'non-accidental head injury' and not 'shaken baby syndrome'

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Children of the 2020's Longitudinal Study

- The Department for Education (DfE) has published findings from the second wave of the Children of the 2020s longitudinal study in England, measuring the circumstances and outcomes of children and their families.
- Read the report: Children of the 2020s: second survey of families at age 2 - GOV.UK

Image by FreeP!k

- The report draws data from a primary caregiver survey conducted when children were two years old. It focuses on family economic circumstances;
  - parenting;
  - mental health and wellbeing of caregivers;
  - screen time and digital media use;
  - children's language development; and
  - emotional and behavioural outcomes.
- Findings include:
  - 10% of primary caregivers reported symptoms of depression;
  - 25% of children scored above the threshold for possible emotional or behavioural problems; and
  - overreactive parenting, broadly defined as displaying anger or irritability in response to a child's behaviour, was linked to children's emotional and behavioural problems.

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There are a range of resources and information for professionals and parents/carers on the website Home - ICON Cope

You can also register for free e-learning, click on the link below: ICON eLearning – Babies cry, you can cope

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The Lullaby Trust

Safer Sleep Week promoted by The Lullaby Trust – 9th to 15th March 2026 you can find out more on this webpage: Safer Sleep Week | The Lullaby Trust

There are a range of resources available for parents/carers and professionals: Home | The Lullaby Trust

Webpage: Baby sleep patterns | The Lullaby Trust – you can also download the poster.

Baby Check app gives you peace of mind, in your pocket. If you look after a baby that is under six months of age, you can use the Baby Check app to find out if they need to see a health professional – find out more Baby Check app

Safer Sleep on Holiday: Easter is fast approaching and there is some useful information about safer sleep on holiday - Lullaby Trust - baby-safety/travel-and-weather/safer-sleep-on-holiday/

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Other resources

Child Safety Week 2026: Monday 1st to Sunday 7th June

Child Accident Prevention Trust have a range of resources / information focusing on preventing death and serious injury to children from avoidable accidents.

Click on the links below to find out more:

Child Safety Week | Child Accident Prevention Trust

Free educational resources | Child Accident Prevention Trust (capt.org.uk)

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child accident prevention trust

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Babies and Domestic Abuse

- Information and resources about breaking the cycle of domestic abuse and giving babies the best start Home - For Baby's Sake (forbabyssake.org.uk)
- **Research in Practice:** For Baby's Sake: Understanding the impact of domestic abuse on infants
- **Women's Aid Toolkit:** https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Supporting-women-and-babies-after-domestic-abuse.pdf

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Domestic abuse: learning from case reviews

- Being exposed to domestic abuse in childhood is child abuse.
- Domestic abuse creates an atmosphere of fear and control in the places children live or visit and impacts children's safety and development.
- Case reviews highlight the importance of being able to identify the different forms of domestic abuse and recognise their impact on babies, children and young people.
- A number of key themes emerged from the case reviews, including focusing on the child's experience, understanding family dynamics and being professionally curious when there are concerns about domestic abuse.
- The learning from these reviews highlights that professionals should:
  - speak to children alone where appropriate
  - gain an understanding of how different communities and cultures may perceive domestic abuse
  - explore denial or minimisation of abuse and consider where any barriers to reporting may come from.

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Source: Domestic abuse: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning

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Email signature

If appropriate, please add the text below to your email signature

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership's Theme for April 2026 is

Safeguarding Unborn Babies and Under 2's

Image by FreeP!k

Find out more by visiting the SSP Events webpage

Events - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership

or follow us on @SwindonSafegua1

#safeguardingbaby

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And finally…

Please let us know if the information and resources have been helpful to you.

You can give us your feedback by clicking on the link below

Feedback on SSP Monthly Safeguarding Theme 2026

or scanning the QR code.

It will only take you two minutes!

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Do you want to be kept updated about SSP related matters such as training, learning resources and our newsletter?

You can sign up to our circulation list circulation list by clicking on this link: https://forms.office.com/e/f7CRNF6Wax

Or using the QR code.

You can ask to be removed at any time by emailing safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk

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