**MULTI- AGENCY PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE FOR**

**PLANNING & COMPLETING PRE-BIRTH ASSESSMENTS**

When undertaking a Pre-Birth assessment, social work practitioners will complete a Child and Family Assessment within Central Bedfordshire, a Single Assessment in Bedford and within Luton the Social Worker will complete a Pre-Birth Assessment and then cross reference the information on to a Single Assessment as well. To ensure that the assessment specifically identifies and addresses those areas which are relevant to expectant mothers where there are vulnerabilities and concerns, the following checklist can be used to enhance and supplement the assessment.

Consider using the [Day in Life Tool for Unborn Baby](https://bedfordscb.proceduresonline.com/contents.html) alongside this assessment/checklist

### ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **FAMILY STRUCTURE** | | |  | | |
|  | **Mother**  Name  Address  DOB  Ethnicity  Religion |  | **Father (and/or partner)**  Name  Address  DOB  Ethnicity  Religion | |  | |
| **Extended family members and others offering potential support should be included;** | | | | | |
| Name  Address  DOB  Ethnicity  Relationship to the parents | | Name  Address  DOB  Ethnicity  Relationship to the parents | | | |
| Name  Address  DOB  Ethnicity  Relationship to the parents | | Name  Address  DOB  Ethnicity  Relationship to the parents | | | |
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| **2.** | **MEDICAL AND OBSTETRIC HISTORY** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | **INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM MIDWIFE / HEALTH PROFESSIONAL AS PART OF A PRE-BIRTH RISK ASSESSMENT**  *This section should be completed by an appropriate Health Professional. (See annex B for general guidance)*  Factors to consider as part of the Assessment and the likelihood of these having significant adverse impact on the child:   * Details of the medical and obstetric history and relevance in terms of parenting * Partner support? * Family structure and support available (or potentially available or not available)? * Whether pregnancy planned or unplanned? * Feelings of mother about being pregnant? * Feelings of partner / putative father about the pregnancy? * Dietary intake - and related issues? * Medicines or drugs - whether or not prescribed - taken before or during pregnancy? * Alcohol consumption? * Smoking? * Previous obstetric history? * Current health status of other children? * Miscarriages and terminations? * Chronic or acute medical conditions or surgical history? * Psychiatric history – especially depression and self-harming? | | |  | | |
| **3.** | **ASSESSMENT of PARENTS AND POTENTIAL RISKS TO CHILD** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | This section will usually be completed by the Social Worker who will need to draw on help from a range of other professionals regarding some aspects of the assessment. Particular care should be taken when assessing risks to babies whose parents are themselves a young person. Attention should be given to:   * evaluating the quality and quantity of support that will be available within the family (and extended family) * evaluating the quality and quantity of support that will be available within the family (and extended family) * the needs of the parent(s) and how these will be met) * the context and circumstances in which the baby was conceived, and the wishes and feelings of the child who is to be a parent. | | |  | | |
| **FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN UNDERTAKING AN ASSESSMENT** | | | | | | | |
| **3.1** | **Relationships** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * History of relationships of adults? * Current status? * Positives and negatives? * Violence? * Who will be main carer for the baby? * What are the expectations of the parents re each other re parenting?   Is there anything regarding "relationships" that seems likely to have a significant and negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.2** | **Abilities** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Physical? * Emotional? (including self-control) * Intellectual? * Knowledge and understanding re children and child care? * Knowledge and understanding of concerns / this assessment?   Is there anything regarding "abilities" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.3** | **Social history** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Experience of being parented? * Experiences as a child? And as an adolescent? * Education? | | |  | | |
| **3.4** | **Behaviour** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Domestic Violence/abuse to partner? * Violence to others? * Violence to any child? * Drug misuse? * Alcohol misuse? * Criminal convictions   Chaotic (or inappropriate) life style? Is there anything regarding "behaviour" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what?  If drugs or alcohol are a significant issue, more detailed assessment should be sought from professionals with relevant expertise. | | |  | | |
| **3.5** | **Circumstances** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Unemployment / employment? * Debt? * Inadequate housing / homelessness? * Criminality? * Court Orders?   Social isolation? Is there anything regarding "circumstances" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.6** | **Home conditions** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Chaotic? * Health risks / insanitary / dangerous?   Over-crowded? Is there anything regarding "home conditions" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.7** | **Mental Health** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Mental illness? * Personality disorder? * Any other emotional/behavioural issues?   Is there anything regarding "mental health" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? If mental health is likely to be a significant issue, more detailed assessment should be sought from professionals with relevant expertise. | | |  | | |
| **3.8** | **Learning Disability** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | Is there anything regarding "learning disability" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? If learning disability is likely to be a significant issue, more detailed assessment should be sought from professionals with relevant expertise. | | |  | | |
| **3.9** | **Communication** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * English not spoken or understood? * Deafness? * Blindness? * Speech impairment?   Is there anything regarding "communication" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? If communication is likely to be a significant issue, more detailed assessment should be sought from professionals with relevant expertise. | | |  | | |
| **3.10** | **Support** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * From extended family? * From friends? * From professionals?   From other sources? Is there anything regarding "support" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? Is support likely to be available over a meaningful time-scale? Is it likely to enable change? Will it effectively address any immediate concerns? | | |  | | |
| **3.11** | **History of being responsible for children** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Convictions re offences against children? * Children subject to CP plan? * CP concerns - and previous assessments? * Court findings? * Care proceedings? Children removed?   Is there anything regarding "history of being responsible for children" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? Consider the following:   * Category and level of abuse * Ages and genders of children. | | |  | | |
| **3.12** | **History of abuse as a child** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Convictions - especially of members of extended family? * Subject to a CP plan? * CP concerns * Court findings?   Previous assessments? Is there anything regarding "history of abuse" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.13** | **Attitude to professional involvement** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Previously - in any context? * Currently - regarding this assessment? * Currently - regarding any other professionals?   Is there anything re "attitudes to professional involvement" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.14** | **Attitudes and beliefs re convictions or findings (or suspicions or allegations)** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Understood and accepted? * Issues addressed?   Responsibility accepted? Is there anything regarding "attitudes and beliefs" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? It may be appropriate to consult with the Police or other professionals with appropriate expertise. | | |  | | |
| **3.15** | **Attitudes to child** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | Re specific issues? Is there anything regarding "attitudes to child" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.16** | **Dependency on partner** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Choice between partner and child? * Role of child in parent's relationship?   Level and appropriateness of dependency? Is there anything regarding "dependency on partner" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.17** | **Ability to identify and appropriately respond to risks?** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | Is there anything regarding this that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? | | |  | | |
| **3.18** | **Ability to understand and meet needs of baby** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | Is there anything regarding this that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? It may be appropriate to consult with Health professionals re this section. | | |  | | |
| **3.19** | **Ability to understand and meet needs throughout childhood** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | Is there anything regarding this that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? It will usually be appropriate to consult with relevant Health professionals re this section. | | |  | | |
| **3.20** | **Ability and willingness to address issues identified in this assessment** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | * Violent behaviour? * Drug misuse? * Alcohol misuse? * Mental health problems? * Reluctance to work with professionals? * Poor skills or lack of knowledge? * Criminality? * Poor family relationships * Issues from childhood? * Poor personal Care?   Chaotic lifestyle? Is there anything regarding "ability and willingness to address issues" that seems likely to have a significant negative impact on the child? If so, what? It will usually be appropriate to consult with other professionals re this section. | | |  | | |
| **3.21** | **Any other issues that have potential to adversely affect or benefit the child** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | E.g. one or more parent aged under 16? Context and circumstances of conception? | | |  | | |
| **3.22** | **Planning for the future** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | |
|  | Realistic and appropriate? | | |  | | |
| **4.** | **Additional questions re Risk** | | |  | | |
|  | 1. Has there been a previous unexplained death of a child, whilst in the care of either parent?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 2. Has a parent or other adult in the household been convicted for violent offences/conduct?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 3. Is the mother, father or sibling/s in the household subject to a Child Protection Plan?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 4. Has the mother, father or a sibling previously been removed from the household by court order or Accommodated Section 20, as a result of concerns regarding Significant Harm?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 5. Is the degree of domestic abuse known to have occurred, likely to impact on the baby's safety or development?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 6. Is the degree of parental substance misuse likely to impact on the baby's safety or development?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 7. Is the degree of parental mental illness/impairment likely to significantly impact on the baby's safety or development?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 8. Is there concerns about the prospective parents’ ability to care for themselves and/or to care for the child? For example where the parent has no support and/or has learning disabilities or their parenting is impacted due to their own childhood experiences?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 9. Is there evidence of Female Genital Mutilation or Honour Based Abuse with regards to maternal and/or paternal family members?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 10. Has a parent previously been suspected of having Fabricated or Induced Illness in a child, or a prospective parent who has been the subject of fabricated or induced illness as a child themselves?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| 11. Any other concern/s that the baby may be at risk of significant harm?  If YES, please provide further information; | | | | | **YES** |
| **NO** |
| **5.** | **Summary Risk Assessment and Conclusions** | | | **Notes/Observations** | | | |
|  | The assessment analysis should address the following issues. | | | | | |
| Concerns identified | | |  | | |
| 1. **Strengths or mitigating factors identified**. | | |  | | |
| 1. **Is there a risk of significant harm for this baby?** It is crucial to clarify the nature of any risk - of what? From whom? In what circumstances? etc. - and to be clear how effective any strength or mitigating factors are likely to be in reality. | | |  | | |
| 1. **Will this risk arise:** 2. Before the baby is born? 3. At or immediately following the birth?   c) Whilst still a baby (up to 1year old)?  d) As a toddler? Or pre-school? Or as an older child? If there is a risk that the child's needs may not be appropriately met ... | | |  | | |
| 1. **What changes should ideally be made to optimise well-being of child?** If there is a risk of significant harm to the child | | |  | | |
| What changes must be made to ensure safety and an acceptable level of care for child? | | |  | | |
| 1. **How motivated are the parent's to make changes**? | | |  | | |
| 1. **How capable are the parents to make changes? And what is the potential for success?** | | |  | | |