



**Child Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Carer Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) is a tragic experience for a family. Some of these deaths are preventable and this tool helps practitioners to work with parents and identify those babies that are most at risk.**

Safe sleep advice is given out to all new parents in pregnancy and the first few days and weeks of a baby's life by universal health services. To prevent further deaths, we need everyone working with families in Jersey to help ensure safe sleep advice is followed.

This tool allows professionals and workers to identify, and therefore support, families who may be vulnerable by identifying the risk factors? The expectation is that all workers who come into contact with families with infants up to 15 months use this risk tool to assess the sleeping environment and as a basis for discussion to reinforce safe sleeping messages.

**Remember, every sleep needs to be a safe sleep** – whether baby is sleeping at night or during the day, at home or away from home (staying with grandparents, Dad, friends, babysitters).

**The safe sleep advice for parents/carers is:**

- ❖ Always place your baby on their back to sleep
- ❖ Keep your baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth
- ❖ Place your baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room for the first 6 months
- ❖ Breastfeed your baby, if you can
- ❖ Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in good condition
- ❖ Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby
- ❖ Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you:
  - Smoke
  - Have drunk alcohol
  - Have taken drugs
  - Are extremely tired
  - Your baby was born prematurely
  - Your baby was of low birth weight
- ❖ Avoid letting your baby get too hot
- ❖ Don't cover your baby's face or head while sleeping or use loose bedding

**To avoid accidents, remove all pillows, soft bedding, cot bumpers and soft toys from the cot.**

The Child Safeguarding Review Panel completed a second review around SUDI in 2020. They found that almost all incidents of SUDI involved carers co-sleeping in an unsafe sleep environment with infants. Almost all carers had consumed alcohol or drugs. In addition, there were often wider safeguarding concerns such as neglect, domestic abuse & mental health. All parents who lost children were devastated by their loss. Families in adverse circumstances will present with a range of pre-disposing risk factors. Certain babies will have unknown risk factors, (intrinsic risk factors). Family circumstances such as overcrowding, poverty & history of adversity are at increased risk of SUDI.

**Parents living with situational risk factors (particularly when they are out of routine e.g. having a party, sleeping at someone else's home or if their baby is ill) find it more difficult to follow Safe Sleep Advice.**

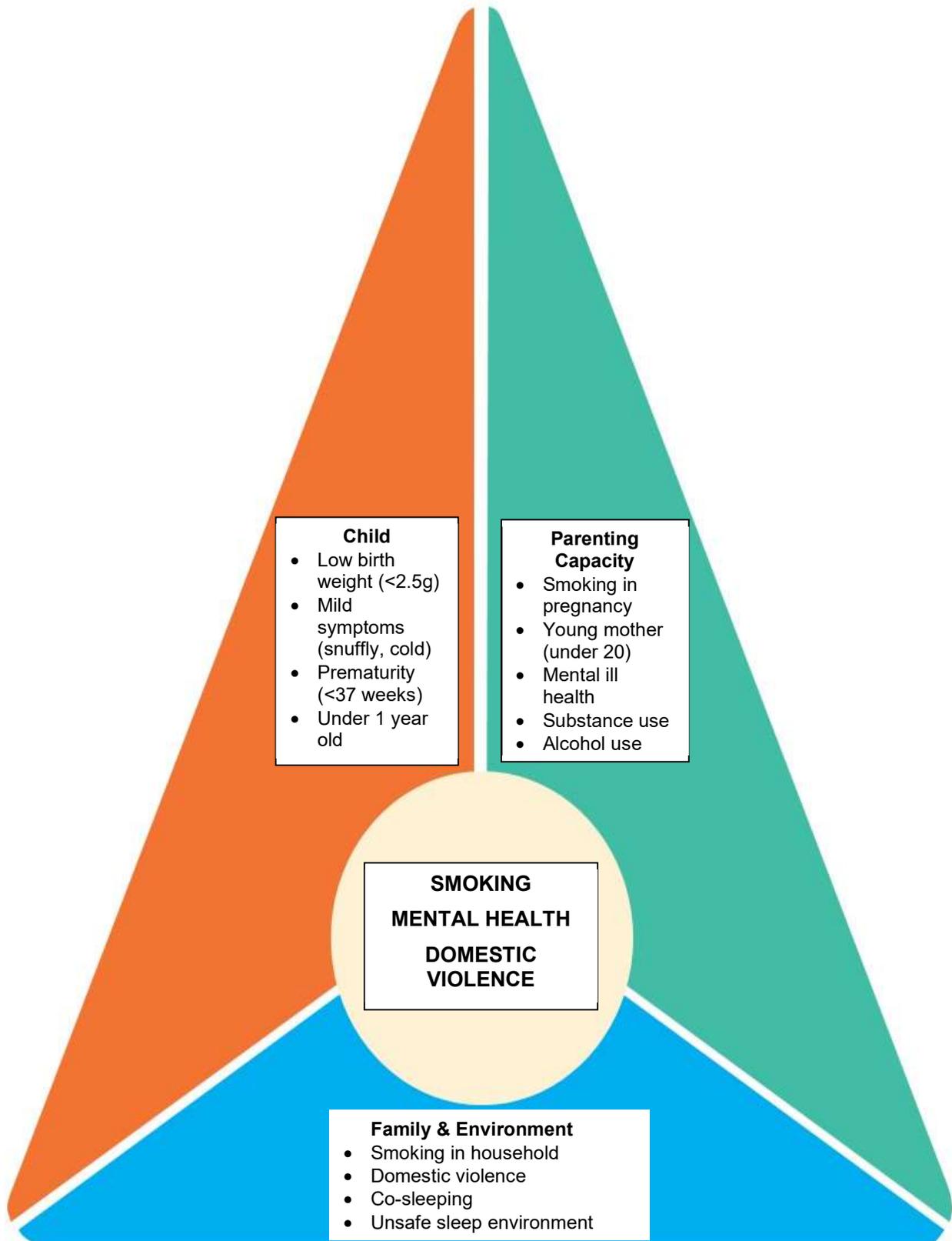
**Risk Factors Include:**

- Babies sleeping in an unsafe sleep position: face down or side
- Unsafe sleep environment: co-sleeping with other risks including bed sharing/overwrapping with covers, pillows, blankets/soft sleep surface (second-hand mattresses, couches)
- The use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs in utero and in the environment
- Pregnant women, who book late and/or have poor antenatal attendance
- Babies with low birth weight or pre-term (less than 37 weeks)
- Parents who struggle to identify their risks and/or who disengage
- The risks are greatest from birth to one year with the highest risk period at 2 - 4 months of age

**What to do:** Pregnancy is a 'reachable moment'. Co-sleeping is common & complex; some parents may not follow simple 'don't do it' advice. Use face-to-face opportunities to give meaningful safe sleep advice. Giving advice specific to parental circumstance is more likely to be followed than a list of 'do's and don'ts'. Provide parents with a plausible mechanism of harm, e.g. risk of suffocation when sleeping on a sofa. Ask parents to plan for 'out of the ordinary' events that disrupt their routine (a party at home, sleeping elsewhere, when a child is ill) and advise that by following safe sleep advice at these times they may avoid rare lethal scenarios.

**The tool helps you to identify who is most at risk of unsafe sleeping and sudden unexpected death in infancy so that you can ensure they know and follow the safe sleeping advice. You are asked to map presence of risk factors. It's not about how many boxes are ticked; these are all risk factors.**

# Child at Risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy



## What to do next

If you identify any of the risk factors, follow these steps:

- Check whether the family know what the safe sleep advice is: check their understanding of the advice, and why it's so important to follow it
- Are they following the safe sleep advice? Ask where the baby woke up. Remember, every sleep needs to be a safe sleep – whether the baby is sleeping at night or during the day, at home or away from home
- Ensure that the safer sleep for babies' information from the Lullaby Trust is given out in the parent's first language
- Explore what might be preventing the family from following the advice. There could be a range of things. Where you can, put in place support and follow up as much as your professional role allows.
- Consider referring to another service for support, this may be with smoking, mental health, domestic violence. Try and explore why they haven't engaged before and follow up any referral you make
- Remember, families can always access advice and support from universal services as required
- If you have concern, liaise with other professionals working with the family
- Consider the need for referral to the Children and Families Hub

## Resources

Any professional can print the safe sleep resources [www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/)

- These are easy read and have been translated into multiple languages that you can give to parents
- There is a 'make a room' and 'spot the risks' game which helps parents visualise the best sleeping arrangement

The Lullaby Trust website has lots of information about safe sleeping and sudden unidentified death in infancy for both professionals and parents

[www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)