

01

The Myth Of Hidden Males/Significant Others

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has published the third national review of serious harm caused to children under the age of 1. The Review focussed on the role of men as perpetrators of violence to babies. Babies under 1 are the subject of 35% of all serious incident notifications; 257 since July 2018. Rapid Reviews often refer to male carers as 'invisible'- yet they are more likely to cause harm. 'We know the least about the biggest source of risk to babies'

02

Introduction

During 2020, the independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) received 482 Serious Incident Notifications (SINs) relating to 514 children that are seriously harmed or killed through nonaccidental injury (NAI). Significantly, in these cases, men (fathers and stepfathers) were a greater source of physical abuse to these babies than their mothers.

03

Findings

Birth fathers are more likely to kill or harm their babies than step fathers but can be unseen by practitioners

Unknown males/Significant others can be fathers or step parents; partners or ex-partners; partners or relatives of childminders; grandparents, uncles/aunts, other relatives, or family acquaintances. This relates to the cases of Arthur Labinjo Hughes and Star Hobson their step-parents were female

Risk factors

- adversity in childhood,
- substance misuse,
- mental ill health including adhd,
- anger management, anxiety and depression
- the coexistence of domestic abuse increased the risk of harm
- poverty
- young parents
- care leavers
- The men did not necessarily have a known history of violence

Think Family

- Adopt a think family approach when assessing vulnerability and risk factors
- Consider the history of both parents
- Check in with Dad's/Significant others when seeing mums
- Consider who is involved in a child's life
- Consider the impact of domestic abuse
- Ensure ICON: Babies Cry, You Can Cope is discussed with new parents

07

Further Learning

[The Myth of Invisible Men](#)

[National Review of Non-Accidental Injury in under 1s](#)

learning.nspcc.org.uk

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

[ICON: Babies Cry, You Can Cope!](#)

Next Steps

- Discuss this briefing in team meetings
- Reflect the on the work you do with parents and others
- Think Family
- Risk Assess
- Discuss in safeguarding supervision

06

05

04