

7 Minute Briefing

01 Report

The Child SAFEGUARDING Practice Review Panel published their 3rd national review in September 2021:

[“The Myth of Invisible Men”: safeguarding children under 1 from non-accidental injury caused by male carers](#)

07 Reflections and Resources

How confident are you in working with men? What do you know about the histories of the men with whom you work? Do you routinely check in with dads as you do with mums? What do they think? How would you know?

[Unseen men: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning](#)

[Building Confidence in Practice Resource Packs](#)

[7 Minute ICON Briefing](#)

06 Key issues for Practice

All services need to do more to involve and ‘see’ men. Men who want to be involved are routinely excluded from services and the same structures enable those who present a risk to not be involved. As a system from universal to specialist services are knowledge of and engagement with men is often weak and ineffective.

The same level of curiosity and enquiry should be applied to understanding men’s lives/experiences as it is to that of women. These men were not invisible but were ‘unseen’.

Four Tier Model (for working with men)

- 1) **Understanding men’s lives and their histories** – exploring ideas of fatherhood, race, ethnicity, personal histories – how does this impact them now?
- 2) **Engaging and assessing men** – Developing parental strategies; understanding child developments, building an authentic engagement for a meaningful assessment
- 3) **Supporting best practice** – Role of supervision in sharing fears & anxieties about working with men; how to support the worker. Focus quality assurance systems
- 4) **Service design** – Culture and context; processes, tools, frameworks and services

02 Introduction

The review looks at the circumstances of babies under 1 who have been harmed or killed by their fathers or other males in a caring role. 35% of all serious incident reports to the National Panel involve serious harm to babies, the vast majority involving physical injury or death. This is the biggest category of all notifications that the Panel sees.

Of the 257 incidents reported since 2018 the panel considered that 92 were eligible for the review and 23 cases were considered in greater depth.

The views of professionals and perpetrators were sought during this review.

03 Key Data

At the time of the abuse: 81 were living with their birth father and only 11 with unrelated men.

- 45 (49%) were only known to universal services.
- 24 (26%) were known to early help.
- 12 (13%) were open to social care as children in need.
- 11 (12%) were subject to child protection plans.

ETHNICITY: this was identified as White British in 66 (72%) cases; Asian in 6 (7%) cases; Black and minority ethnic in 3 (3%) cases; mixed ethnic background in 3 (3%) cases; BUT in 14 (15%) cases the information was missing.

04 Risk Factors: There was no single risk factor that emerged, more a combination of factors which impacted on the ability to manage parenting issues like crying, sleeplessness, and illness.

Factors such as:

Adverse Childhood Experiences	Poor impulse control
Young parents/Care leavers	Violence in history
Poverty	Worklessness &/or Debt
Substance misuse, which could be chronic & normalised	Undiagnosed mental health problems
Racism	Low self-esteem

A focus on men with violent histories including domestic abuse is appropriate BUT there are perpetrators with no violent history who may be more difficult to identify.



05 Risk Factors

- 59 featured domestic abuse (either current or historical)
- 32 featured fathers with mental ill health
- 30 featured young parents
- 5 parents were care leavers

Men are more likely to injure babies than women.

Male babies are more likely to be injured than female babies.