

LEARNING BRIEF

BRUISING IN NON-MOBILE INFANTS

Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board

Background

"A recent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Briefing (Sept 2022) stated that when an infant has previously presented with apparent minor bruising, the failure to follow established guidance is a potential contributory factor to subsequent serious injury or even a child's death".

Bruising is strongly related to mobility- It is unusual in a baby who is not crawling, cruising or walking and should prompt suspicion of abuse.

Despite learning from national reviews professionals continue to underestimate the significance of minor injuries in babies (NSPCC SCR Repository)

"Bruising in Non-Mobile Babies is Rare"

Assessments

Robust analysis is critical in assessing risk to a baby.

- Consider:**
1. Cumulative risk; this episode in the context of previous, not as a single isolated episode.
 2. **All in the home;** invisible males, other adults / children.
 3. Other agencies e.g. adult mental health services.
 4. **Voice of the baby;** consider their lived experience, needs, feelings, ability to form attachments.
 5. **Appropriate documented challenge if you are concerned about a baby.**

Remember
"This is complex and difficult work.
Good support and self-reflection is important"
Seek appropriate supervision.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Recommendations

In all cases of bruising in children who are not independently mobile there must be an immediate referral to a medical professional who has the appropriate expertise to assess the nature and presentation of the bruise and to appraise the circumstances of the presentation

*A multi-agency discussion to consider any other information on the child and family - this multi-agency discussion **should always include the health professional who reviewed the child.***

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel do not support blanket policies that require section 47 enquiries or other interventions without an initial appraisal of the circumstances of the presentation

BNSSG Resources

[Bruising in non-mobile infants \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/108422/non-mobile-baby-injury-policy-update-march-2019-bristol-approved.pdf)
[non-mobile-baby-injury-policy-update-march-2019-bristol-approved.pdf \(bristolsafeguarding.org\)](https://www.bristolsafeguarding.org/non-mobile-baby-injury-policy-update-march-2019-bristol-approved.pdf)
[non-mobile-baby-injury-kbsp-policy-reviewed-may-2020.pdf \(bristolsafeguarding.org\)](https://www.bristolsafeguarding.org/non-mobile-baby-injury-kbsp-policy-reviewed-may-2020.pdf)
[Non-Mobile-Baby-Injury-Policy-2018-FINAL.pdf \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://www.southglos.gov.uk/non-mobile-baby-injury-policy-2018-final.pdf)

**Possible serious
harm call 999**