

Things to Consider:

Reporting Infant Substance Exposure



Do I know enough about the circumstances surrounding prenatal substance exposure to understand the family's risk and protective factors?



What is my understanding of the birthing parent's unique cultural background?



How are my own experiences impacting my understanding and assessment of the birthing parent?



Is the birthing parent's prior history influencing my decision despite evidence of change?

www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/report-abuse



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

How can Health Care Providers understand risk and protective factors?

Health Care Providers need to assess whether risk factors related to parental substance use could impact the safety of the infant upon discharge.

This assessment should engage critical thinking, compassion, and a non-judgmental approach.

If a concern is identified, first ask if this is an opportunity to understand parent perspective and provide patient education? Or is it a risk factor that could impact safety of the infant?

The following questions can help providers understand the family situation:

1. Is the birthing parent actively participating in treatment or a recovery program? If so, are they stable in recovery with support in place?
2. Is stabilization care/MOUD or inpatient treatment available? If so, is the birthing parent interested in these resources?
3. Did the birthing parent engage in prenatal care? If not, do you understand their decision not to engage in prenatal care?
4. Is the birthing parent involved and included in medical decisions for the infant? Has the birthing parent received supportive patient education around caregiving?
5. Is the birthing parent aware of and meeting the infant's caregiving and bonding needs?
6. Does the family have housing? What are the sleeping arrangements for the infant?

This is not a complete listing of potential risks factors, but is intended to aid providers. Health Care providers are encouraged to call DCYF if they have any concerns about the safety of a family or newborn.

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