

Exercise

How can parental problems such as mental health impact your baby now and as they get older?

Try putting these examples in order of child development, starting with before the birth and finishing with late adolescence.

You could cut these squares out to put them in a timeline or highlight which age range you think the example impacts are from.

Choose from the following:

	Pre-birth	0-2 yrs	3-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15+ yrs
Genetic transmission of some forms of mental illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child could experience aggressive / hostile / neglectful or rejecting care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children may miss school as they care for parents or siblings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child could miss important appointments if parents were unwell and unable to remember or take the child out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child's cognitive development may be delayed through lack of stimulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School behaviour becomes problematic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's own needs may be sacrificed to meet the needs of parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the parents' behaviour is unpredictable and frightening children may display emotional symptoms like those seen in post-traumatic stress disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pre-birth	0-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	15+
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Children may take on too much responsibility for themselves

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The child is, in these years particularly, developing their attachment style which requires attuned care giving

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Boys more quickly exhibit problem behaviour; girls are also affected if parental problems endure

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Children are at increased risk of their own mental health issues arising

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Children may take on responsibilities beyond their years

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Children's education suffers as they find it harder to concentrate

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Children have poorer life chances due to issues at school, and periods of exclusion

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Low self-esteem, problems in peer relationships due to inconsistent parenting.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Remember these things are not certain to happen, they are things that could happen. By working with a plan many of these can be avoided.

Discuss with your social worker:

- Which of the points above worry you?
- How could you reduce the likelihood of these happening?
- What else could you do? Do you need any help to enact your plan? Who from?

How can parental problems such as mental health impact your baby now and as they get older?’

Answer Sheet

Pre-birth

- Genetic transmission of some forms of mental illness.

0-2 years

- Child could experience aggressive / hostile / neglectful or rejecting care.
- Child could miss important appointments if parents were unwell and unable to remember or take the child out.
- The child is, in these years particularly, developing their attachment style which requires attuned care giving.

3-4 years

- Child’s cognitive development may be delayed through lack of stimulation.
- If the parent’s behaviour is unpredictable and frightening children may display emotional symptoms similar to those seen in post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Children may take on responsibilities beyond their years.

5-9 years

- Children may take on too much responsibility for themselves.
- Boys more quickly exhibit problem behaviour; girls are also affected if parental problems endure.
- School behaviour becomes problematic.

10-14 years

- Children are at increased risk of their own mental health issues arising.
- Children may miss school as they care for parents or siblings.
- Children’s education suffers as they find it harder to concentrate.

15+ years

- Children have poorer life chances due to issues at school, and periods of exclusion.
- Children’s own needs may be sacrificed to meet the needs of parents.
- Low self-esteem, problems in peer relationships due to inconsistent parenting.