

AAIMH Keynote 2019

For Baby's Sake: Intervention Development, Delivery and Evaluation Design of a Whole-Family Perinatal Intervention to Break the Cycle of Domestic Abuse

Around one in five UK children experience domestic abuse during childhood. This can lead to impairment across a range of health, social, behavioural and developmental outcomes, especially where abuse impacts on parents' abilities to provide sensitive, attuned caregiving. Evidence suggests that intervening with families from pregnancy until their baby is age two is particularly beneficial to reduce poor outcomes for children and harnesses the motivations of mothers and fathers during early parenthood.

However, the majority of interventions addressing the impacts of domestic violence on children concentrate on school-aged children; very few work with families during the perinatal period and these predominantly work with mothers and children alone.

For Baby's Sake is the first UK programme to address existing limitations of whole-family interventions, by working with both parents from pregnancy to age two and combining evidence-based treatments for domestic abuse, adult mental health and trauma (including trauma arising from the parents' adverse childhood experiences), alongside parenting interventions focused on infant mental health and parent-infant attachment. The programme's holistic nature and its integration with multi-agency systems also supports robust risk assessment and management.

The programme launched in 2015 across two community settings in England, with an independent evaluation led by King's College London, due to be published in the autumn of 2019. Building on the article (Domoney, J. et al) on *For Baby's Sake*, published in the Journal of Family Violence in January 2019, the keynote address will share the learning from developing, implementing and evaluating this complex whole-family intervention, taking a trauma-informed and attachment-based approach to breaking cycles of domestic abuse.