Child safety and wellbeing during COVID-19

A tool to support strategic responses

DARTINGTON SERVICE DESIGN LAB

We are a research and design charity dedicated to improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

We work in close partnership with those commissioning, designing or delivering services for children.

Our work is grounded in data and evidence, as well as a deep understanding of public systems and the diverse needs and community contexts they serve.

Please contact us via *info@dartington.org.uk* if you have feedback on this tool, and/or would like to discuss other available resources.

Introduction to the tool

This tool synthesises and adapts guidance from the *Alliance for Child Protection* in humanitarian action, *Unicef* and wider learning from past infectious disease outbreaks into a practical checklist that children's service planners, commissioners and management level staff can use to inform planning in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Who is this tool for?
Commissioners, service planners, case work managers and those directing strategy level responses to COVID-19.

What is this tool for?
This tool provides the foundation for a COVID-19 response strategy for child protection. It functions as a 'living' document that can be updated and revised at different stages during the crisis. Each risk category should be discussed collectively with the relevant mutli-agency taskforce. This can be used as a touch point for future meetings to guide discussion and ensure a broad range of risks are being addressed and regularly reviewed.

This checklist seeks to...

- Highlight high priority risks in your local context;
- Provide a structure for systematically monitoring risks;
- Highlight gaps in risk mitigation strategies;
- Inform collaborative working responses to local risks.

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UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENT

The tool is made up of two elements: The Risk Register and Priority Actions

1 RISK REGISTER

The risk register highlights the risks posed to children and families as a result of COVID-19 and its associated prevention and control measures. This checklist requires input from key multi-agency stakeholders to help provide clear strategic actions to respond to COVID-19.

2 PRIORITY ACTIONS

Once the risk register has been completed, high priority risks will be summarised at the end of the checklist alongside risks that require monitoring.

This is an interactive PDF

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RISK REGISTER

COVID-19 is having a profound impact on the lives of children and families. The prevention and control measures in the UK needed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 will also have an impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of children and families. On the next page is a checklist intended to support decision-making amongst those responsible for child protection.

HOW TO USE

This document will help you prioritise risk, work out mitigations towards them and produce a strategy to monitor each individual risk factor. We have placed these four icons on each section to help you consider the impact of each risk on these different target populations.

CHILD
Abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, psychological distress and associated negative impacts on health, wellbeing and development

FAMILY
Separation, reduced access to social support, caregiver distress, increased risk of domestic violence / abuse

COMMUNITY
Breakdown of trust, competition over resources, limited access to community support services, loss of education and play space

SYSTEM
Erosion of social capital; Disruption or limited access to basic services; Capacity for systemic collaboration

1. **Click on the red, amber or green indicators to determine the priority of that risk in your local context as high, medium or low.** All of the information you provide in this column will be transferred to the 'Mitigating Actions Summary' page at the end, which will help you moving forward.
    High: The risk is likely to have high prevalence in your local area and requires an immediate coordinated response;
    Medium: Some responses are in place to manage the risk in your local area, but this could escalate and requires monitoring;
    Low: Adequate responses are in place and these are regularly monitored, the risk does not have a high local prevalence or risk of escalation.

2. **Click on the second column to identify the services you should be working with to respond to that particular risk.**
    Who: Think about how different services could work together effectively to manage that risk;
    Where: What services respond to that risk at different levels of the environment - i.e. community services addressing social need and specialist services working one on one with a child or family;
    Share: If a single service is responding to the majority of risks, consider how this burden can be shared or reduced.

3. **Click on the final column to identify how you will monitor the risk and associated response activity. Think about:**
    What procedures and data collection methods are presently in place that can be adapted to monitor the risk?
    How will you monitor your response actions highlighted in question one?
    When or at what point do you scale or de-escalate a risk response?

Once you are finished inputting your information, you can skip to page 36 to view your personalised Mitigating Actions Summary plan.
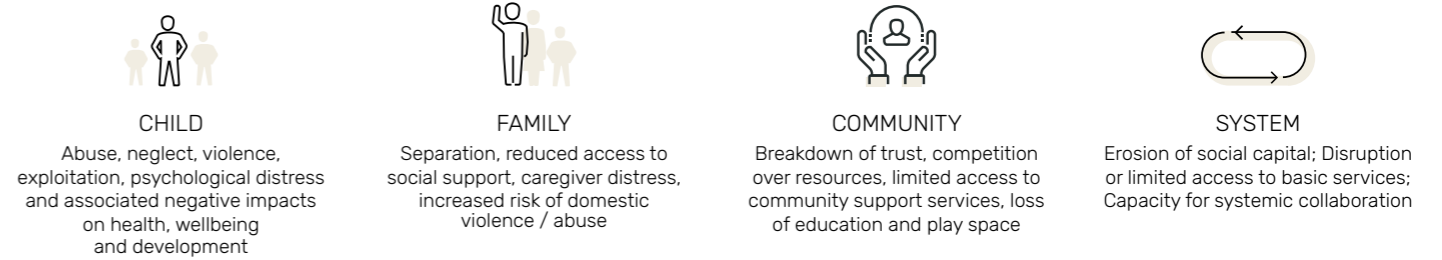
1

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RISK REGISTER

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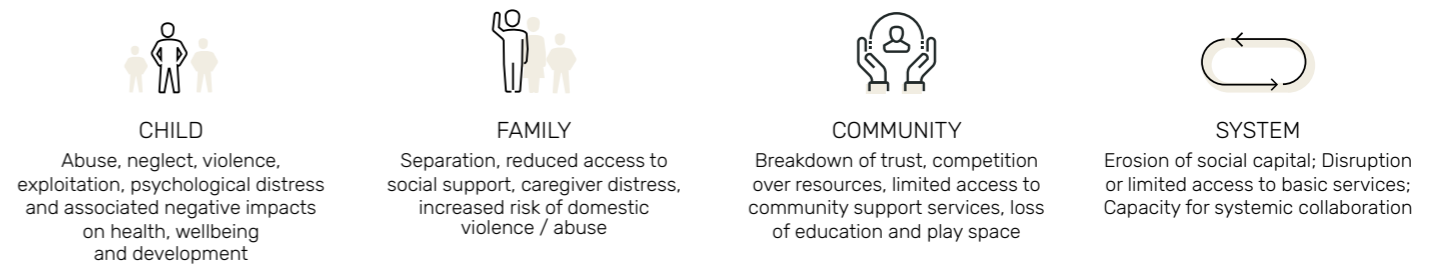Erosion of social capital; Disruption or limited access to basic services; Capacity for systemic collaboration

SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM CAREGIVER

Hospitalisation of caregiver

Death of a caregiver

Compromised ability of caregiver/s to look after child at home due to severe illness and/or distress

SEXUAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE

School closure and reduced access to sexual health information and services (e.g. access to contraception)

Increased risk of child sexual exploitation due to longer, unsupervised periods of being online

Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of sexual violence

Death or illness of caregiver reduces family protection

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Increased violence from parents to children

Increased violence from adolescents to parents

Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of physical violence

Increased risks of domestic violence

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Loss of household income

Increase in household expenditure on utilities & energy

Pressure for young people to work instead of participating in remote education

Increased risk of participation in illicit activity for financial gain

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Emotional distress as a result of hospitalisation of caregiver

Isolation - children feel anxious and lonely - cannot be comforted or play with friends

Fear, panic and hostile behaviour within the community

Personal protective gear worn by front-line workers can appear alien and frightening

Fear of infection with the virus

Emotional distress as a result of death or illness of family, friends and neighbours

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Social stigmatisation of individuals who were in quarantine or treatment

Stigmatisation and targeting of 'at-risk' individuals

Racial stigmatisation related to the infectious disease

Criminalisation of young people during isolation measures

RISK REGISTER

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PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

- Increased violence from parents to children
- Increased violence from adolescents to parents
- Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of physical violence
- Increased risks of domestic violence

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

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SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM CAREGIVERS

Hospitalisation of caregiver

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

Death of a caregiver

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

Compromised ability of caregiver/s to look after child at home due to severe illness and/or distress

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

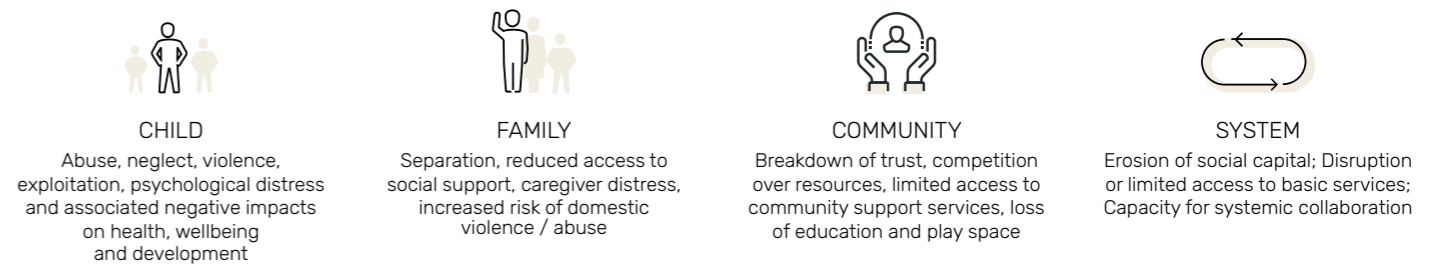**3.** How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

RISK REGISTER

SEXUAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE

This is an interactive PDF

SEXUAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE

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SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM CAREGIVER

- Hospitalisation of caregiver
- Death of a caregiver
- Compromised ability of caregiver/s to look after child at home due to severe illness and/or distress

SEXUAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE

- School closure and reduced access to sexual health information and services (e.g. access to contraception)
- Increased risk of child sexual exploitation due to longer, unsupervised periods of being online
- Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of sexual violence
- Death or illness of caregiver reduces family protection

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

- Increased violence from parents to children
- Increased violence from adolescents to parents
- Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of physical violence
- Increased risks of domestic violence

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SEXUAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE

School closure and reduced access to sexual health information and services

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🖐 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

Increased risk of child sexual exploitation due to longer, unsupervised periods of being online

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🖐 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

SEXUAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE

Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of sexual violence

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🖐 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

Death or illness of caregiver reduces family protection

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

🖐 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

RISK REGISTER

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

1

This is an interactive PDF

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2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

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Increased violence from adolescents to parents

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

👆 🔴 🟠 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Increased obstacles to reporting incidents of physical violence

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

👆 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

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Increased risks of domestic violence

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

👆 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

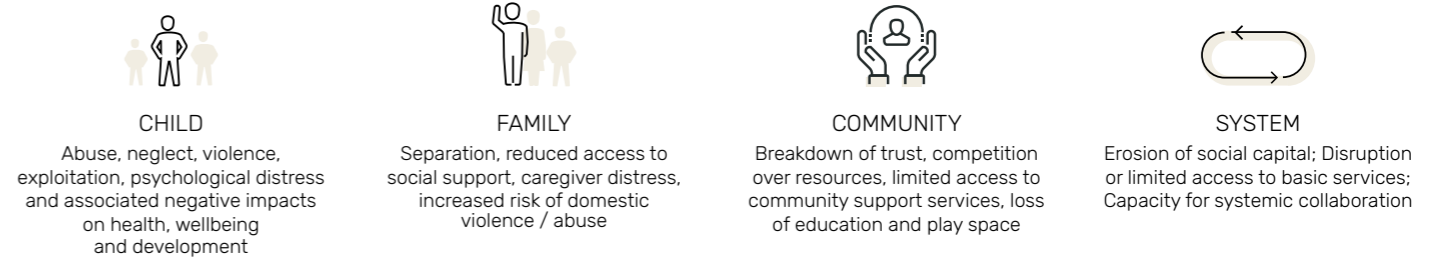**3.** How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

RISK REGISTER

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3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

🖑 🔴 🟡 🟢
high medium low

Increase in household expenditure on utilities & energy

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🖑 🔴 🟡 🟢
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FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Pressure for young people to work instead of participating in remote education

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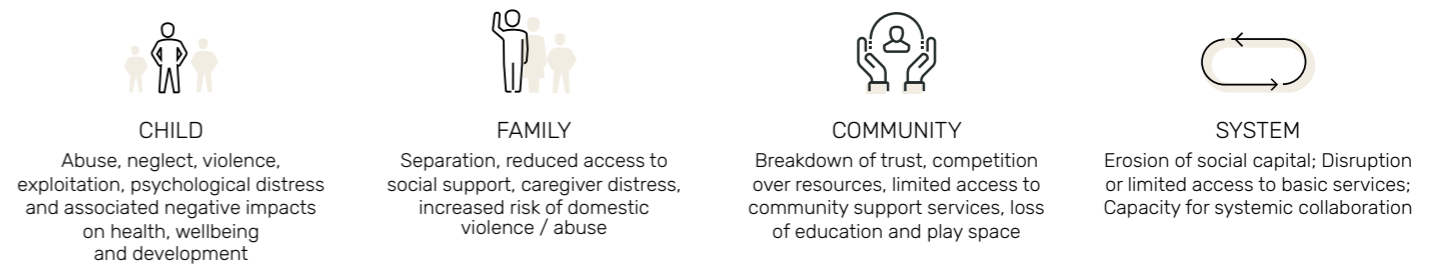**3.** How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

🖑 🔴 🟡 🟢
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Increased risk of participation in illicit activity for financial gain

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Fear, panic and hostile behaviour within the community

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PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

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3. How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

🖑 🔴 🟡 🟢
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Fear of infection with the virus

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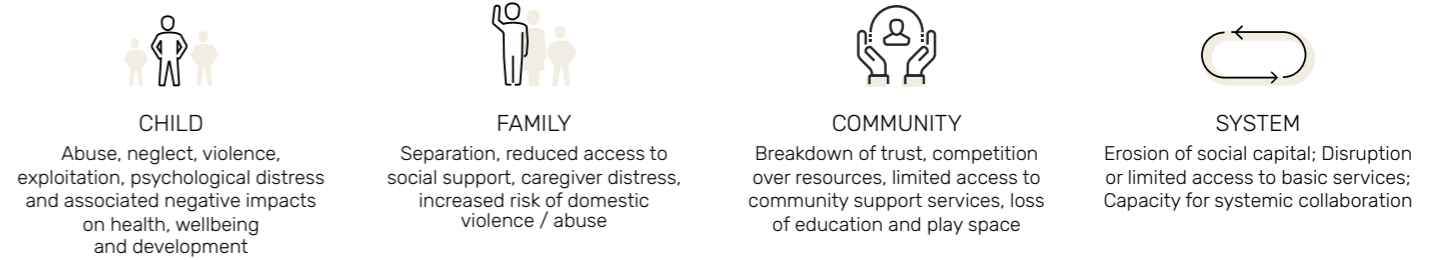**3.** How can you regularly monitor these risks and activities?

🖑 🔴 🟡 🟢
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Emotional distress as a result of death or illness of family, friends and neighbours

1. What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

2. What services should you be working with to minimise these risks?

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RISK REGISTER

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

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- Increased risks of domestic violence

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

- Loss of household income
- Increase in household expenditure on utilities & energy
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SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Social stigmatisation of individuals who were in quarantine or treatment

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🔴 high 🟡 medium 🟢 low		

Stigmatisation and targeting of 'at-risk' individuals

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🔴 high 🟡 medium 🟢 low		

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Racial stigmatisation related to the infectious disease

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🔴 high 🟡 medium 🟢 low		

Criminalisation of young people during isolation measures

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🔴 high 🟡 medium 🟢 low		

2

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PRIORITY ACTIONS

SUMMARY

SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM CAREGIVER

- Hospitalisation of caregiver
- Death of a caregiver
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- Increased violence from parents to children
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MITIGATING ACTIONS SUMMARY

What is the priority of this risk and what are your mitigating steps and activities?

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Emotional distress as a result of hospitalisation of caregiver
● ● ●

Isolation - children feel anxious and lonely - cannot be comforted or play with friends
● ● ●

Fear, panic and hostile behaviour within the community
● ● ●

Personal protective gear worn by front-line workers can appear alien and frightening
● ● ●

Fear of infection with the virus
● ● ●

Emotional distress as a result of death or illness of family, friends and neighbours
● ● ●

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Social stigmatisation of individuals who were in quarantine or treatment
● ● ●

Stigmatisation and targeting of 'at-risk' individuals
● ● ●

Racial stigmatisation related to the infectious disease
● ● ●

Criminalisation of young people during isolation measures
● ● ●

This is version 1.0. We are looking for feedback to understand whether this tool adds value to your local decision-making processes, and welcome feedback on possible adaptations and refinement.

Please contact us via *info@dartington.org.uk* to let us know how your found the process and whether you would like to discuss other available resources.

Child safety and wellbeing during COVID-19

A tool to support strategic responses

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