

Appendix 2

Risk Factors of Child Abuse

Issues in the home that kaiako might become aware of, that might lead to abuse and neglect include:

- Parents with money problems, being out of work
- Overcrowding or housing struggles
- Parents with stress
- Child with special needs
- Parents isolated from friends, family and whānau
- Parents with a history of depression or other mental illness
- Parents separating.

Early signs that can lead to abuse and or neglect can be:

- Parent has a drug, alcohol or gambling problem
- Parent does not engage with their child or has a difficult relationship with them
- Child doesn't have enough clothes on and is often cold and hungry
- Child has unexplained or changeable emotions (eg, withdrawn or depressed)
- Parents frequently yell at, swear at or shame a child
- Child seems scared of a particular adult.

Parental Factors:

- Parent has already abused a child
- Pregnancy was not wanted
- Parent has a background of abuse when growing up
- Young, unsupported mother often with low education
- Parents have unrealistic expectations of the child and lack parenting knowledge
- Parent is isolated and has few supports
- Parent has a mental illness or is abusing drugs or alcohol

Environmental Factors:

- Overcrowding in the house
- Poverty or lack of opportunity to improve the family's resources
- Family violence is present
- A non-biological adult living in the house
- Family is experiencing multiple stresses

Child Factors:

- Baby is sickly, colicky or unwanted
- Child has a physical or developmental disability
- Child is the product of an abusive relationship
- Lack of attachment between child and parent

Source: <https://www.childmatters.org.nz/insights/risk-factors/>