



# Pre- Birth Protocol

## Policy and Practice Guidance 2024

**Expected baby Principles**



**Concealed pregnancy**



**When to be concerned**



**Who do I contact?**



**Where can I get more information?**



## South West Child Protection Procedures

South Gloucestershire Child Protection Procedures can be found on the **South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP) [website](#)**. Pre-Birth procedures are available [here](#). This two page guidance document must be read alongside the SWCPP procedure.

## Principles

Wherever possible parents will be supported to care for their baby by accessing support within the community

Requests for help regarding unborn babies should be made without delay.

If you believe that prospective parents will require support to care for their baby or you have concerns that the baby will be at risk a referral should be made to Access and Response Team (ART)

Concealed pregnancy is rare, it happens when a woman knows she is pregnant and does not tell anyone or she and others who know conceal the pregnancy from caring and health agencies. This can be an active decision or a form of denial. It can lead to risks of an unassisted birth. Where there is a strong suspicion that a pregnancy is being concealed, it may be necessary to share this information with other agencies, irrespective of whether consent to disclose can be obtained. Every effort should be made by the person alerted to suspicion of concealed pregnancy to encourage the woman to obtain medical advice. If the response shows that this is unlikely then make a referral to ART.

# Concealed Pregnancy

## When to be concerned

- If the mother is under 16, or either parent is subject of a child protection plan
- If the unborn baby has siblings who are subject of a child protection plan
- Previous children have been removed from the parent's care
- A previous child has died and abuse or neglect was suspected (or there has been a CSPP)
- Domestic abuse, substance misuse
- Significant perinatal mental health concerns
- One of parents or close family member poses a risk to children
- There is concern that the baby may be at risk of significant harm for any reason

## Who do I contact?

Contact the ART Team 01454 866000

Complete a [request for help form](#)

If you suspect an unborn child, or any child may be in immediate danger, you should dial [999](#) immediately

Full Guidance is available on the South West Child Protection Procedures [here](#)  
More information about concealed pregnancies is available [here](#)

## Where can I get more information?

