

DRAFT BSIL Definition for Gwent

Enabling **EVERY** baby and child to have the best start in life is about ensuring all babies and children in Gwent have the optimal conditions necessary for healthy physical, emotional and cognitive development and supporting them to reach their potential. Child development is influenced not only by healthcare access but by wider social determinants, such as housing, income, education, employment, and the environment. Addressing these contributory factors is essential to giving every baby and child the best start in life and supporting them to thrive.

Inequalities in the early years are significant contributors to inequalities in adulthood which impacts health, wellbeing, education and social outcomes. Brain development starts before birth, with the most active period occurring during the early years and therefore, supporting optimal development during pregnancy, infancy and childhood is key.

Positive early experiences are shaped by a number of factors such as sensitive attuned parenting, effects of socio-economic status and the impact of high-quality early education and care. Exposure to adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse, neglect and household dysfunction increases the risk of poor outcomes and entrenched inequalities. Early intervention, wraparound services and family-centred support are vital to prevention, building resilience and mitigating intergenerational cycles of poverty.

Enabling **EVERY** baby and child the best start in life for the Gwent region encompasses ages 0-7 years, which is understood as the following phases:

- Preconception
- Pregnancy
- Birth to 2 years
- Preschool – 3 to 4 years
- Primary school – 4 to 7 years

Eleven ambitions for action have been identified, which have been grouped into five themes. Addressing inequity and access to services will be embedded as a cross cutting themes for all ambitions.

Parental Preparation and Support

1. Prospective parents are well prepared for parenthood
2. Parents/carers are in secure employment with appropriate maternity/paternity policies in place
3. Families have good quality, stable accommodation. Where temporary accommodation is required, its suitability is addressed immediately and a package of practical support is easily accessible

Maternal, Infant and Child Health

4. Mothers and babies have positive pregnancy outcomes
5. Babies, children and parents/carers have good health outcomes
6. Parents/carers and families have good mental health and wellbeing and where mental health problems occur, they are identified early and individuals are supported

Early Relationships and Childhood Development

7. Babies and parents/carers have good early relationships

8. Parents/carers are engaged and participate in play and home learning from birth
9. Babies, children and parents/carers are supported with early language, speech and communication

Early Learning and School Readiness

10. Children are ready for nursery and school and demonstrate a good level of overall development
11. Children have access to high quality early years provision

Access to Services

To reduce inequalities and give EVERY baby and child the best start in life, universal services with targeted interventions, are required. This will enable a baseline of support for EVERY child, with an active approach to 'level up' and reduce the gap in inequality. Access to services will be a cross cutting theme for all ambitions.