

SAFER SLEEP WEEK

10th – 16th March 2025



The Child Death Overview Panel has seen an increase in unsafe sleeping practices during the review of child deaths.

The Child Death Review Strategic Partnership felt that it would be beneficial to remind parents/carers of babies under the age of 12 months of the safer sleeping messages to help to reduce the chances of SIDS (or cot death) occurring.

This briefing shares the key messages of safer sleep, and some useful links and tips for professionals when raising awareness of safer sleep.

We would recommend accessing Lullaby Trust for up to date information, links, resources and guides around safer sleep: [Home | The Lullaby Trust](#)

KEY MESSAGES



- **Lie your baby on their back.**
- **Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress.**
- **Avoid your baby overheating**
- **Keep the sleep space clear**
- **Keep your baby smoke-free**
- **Sleep your baby in the same room as you day and night for at least the first six months**
- **Never fall asleep with your baby on a sofa or armchair.**

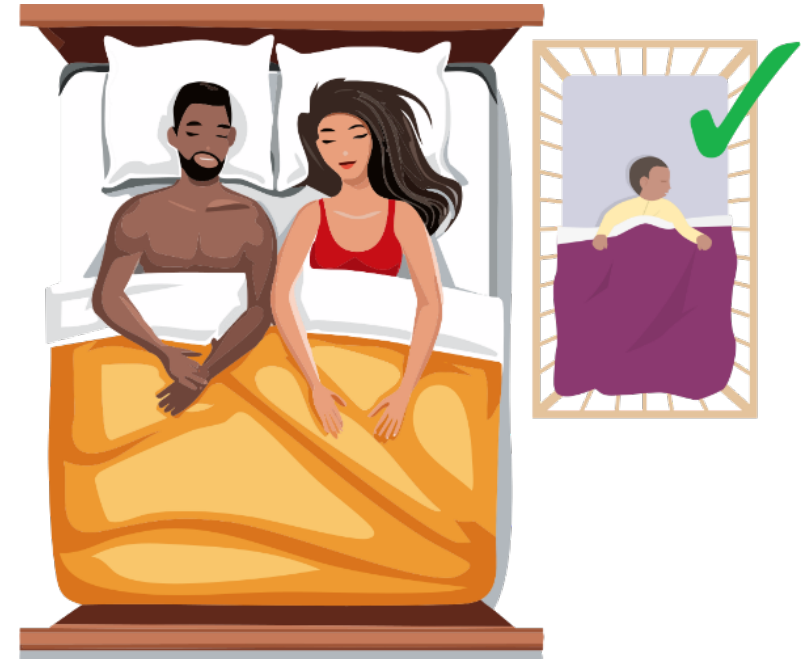
Lie your baby on their back



Always put your baby on their back **for every sleep, day and night**, as the risk of SIDS is particularly high for babies who are sometimes placed on their front or side.

Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress

Place your baby in the "feet to foot" position, with their feet at the end of the cot or Moses basket.



Avoid your baby overheating

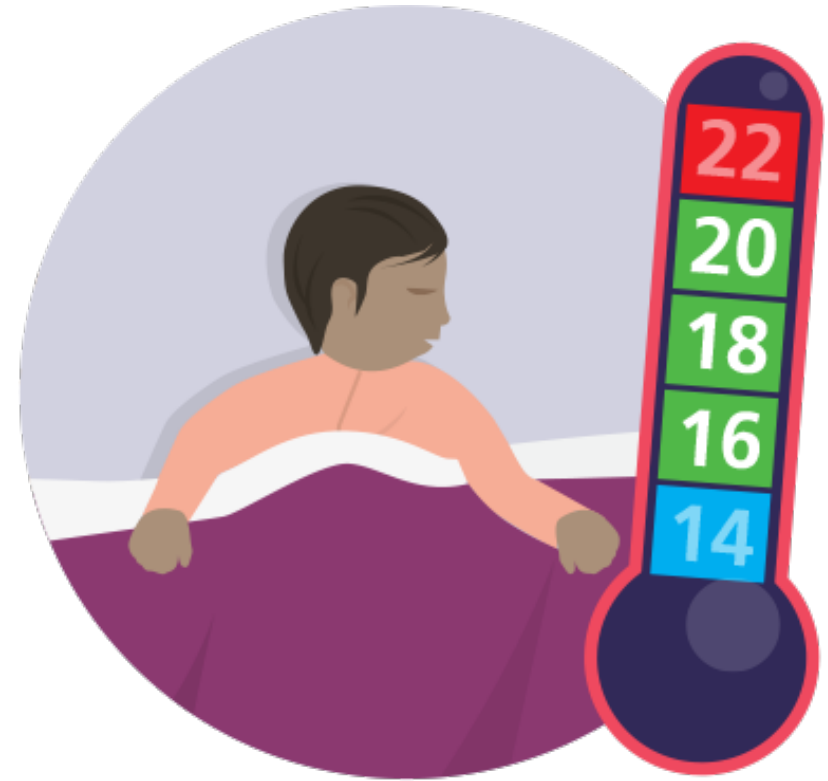


It is important to make sure that your baby's room is a comfortable temperature. Try to keep the room temperature between 16 -20°C.

The risk of SIDS is higher in babies who get too hot.

Keep your baby's head uncovered. Their blanket should be tucked in no higher than their shoulders.

If it's very warm, your baby may not need any bedclothes other than a sheet. Even in winter, most babies who are unwell or feverish don't need extra clothes.



Keep the sleep space clear



Babies are at higher risk of SIDS if they have their heads and faces covered.

When preparing your baby's sleep space, remember:

- No pillows or duvets
- No cot bumpers
- No soft toys or comforters
- No weighted or bulky bedding
- No pods or nests, rolled up towels or anything soft placed on top of the mattress.
- No products designed to keep your baby in one sleeping position, such as wedges or straps



Keep your baby smoke-free



Keep baby, and any places they spend time (e.g. car) completely smoke free.

If you or your partner smokes while you're pregnant or after your baby is born, the risk of SIDS is greatly increased.



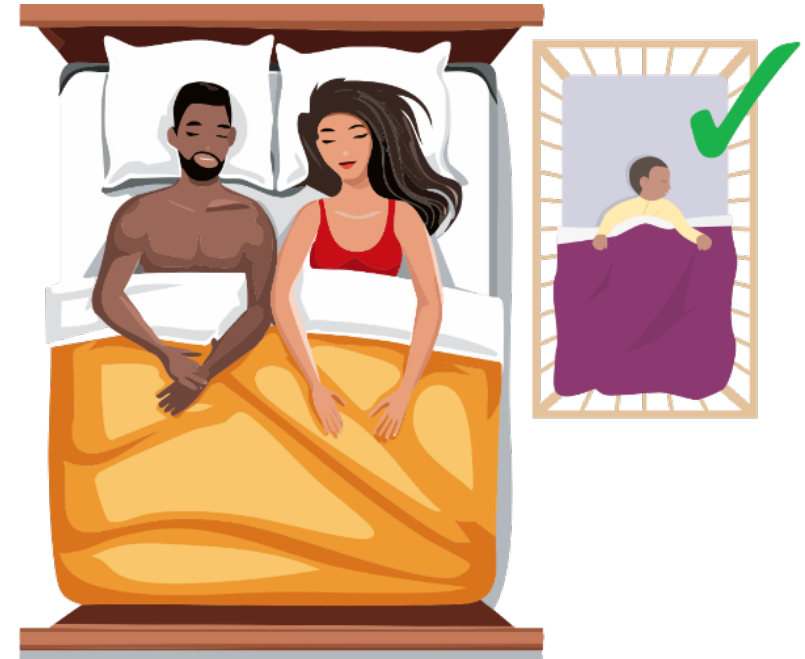
NO SMOKING AREA

Sleep your baby in the same room as you for the first six months



Sleep your baby in the same room as you **day and night** for at least the first six months.

The risk of SIDS is lower when your baby sleeps in the same room as you, compared to having them sleep alone.



Never fall asleep on a sofa or armchair with your baby



The risk of SIDS is 50 times higher for babies when they sleep on a sofa or armchair with an adult.

They are also at risk of accidental death as they can easily slip into a position where they are trapped and can't breathe.

Never sleep with a baby on a sofa or armchair. It's lovely to have your baby with you for a cuddle or a feed. But remember it is safest to put your baby back in their cot/Moses basket before you go to sleep.



When speaking to families about safer sleep



- There is no advice that guarantees the prevention of SIDS or SUDC but following the safer sleep advice, it is possible to significantly lower the risk of this tragedy occurring.
- Consider that parents/carers or families make decisions/buy things/hear about things they might want for baby at different times.
- It is vitally important for anyone working with families to target parents early on in pregnancy with the safer sleep message.
- This advice should be followed up after the birth, again in the early weeks of the baby's life.
- Make sure that the messages are understood, check the understanding
- Do not assume that someone else has already offered leaflets or other materials.

Co-sleeping definitions



- **Room sharing:** when a baby sleeps in the same room as their parent(s) or carer, but in their own separate sleeping space such as a cot or Moses basket.
- **Bed sharing:** when a baby shares the bed with an adult for most of the night including for sleep – not just to be comforted or fed.
- **Sofa sharing:** when a parent or carer sleeps on a sofa or armchair with a baby (remember, this is dangerous so avoid falling asleep like this).
- **Co-sleeping:** when parents or carers sleep with a baby on a bed, sofa or chair.

When NOT to co-sleep



Whether you choose to co-sleep or sleep and asleep together unplanned, there are some key times to avoid co-sleeping.

Co-sleeping with your baby is very dangerous if:

- You or anyone in the bed has **recently drunk any alcohol**
- You or anyone in the bed **smokes or the baby was exposed to smoking in pregnancy**
- You or anyone in the bed has **taken any drugs or medication that make you feel sleepy**
- Your baby was **born prematurely (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) or weighed under 2.5kg or 5.5 pounds** when they were born.
- In these scenarios, it's **always** best to put baby in their own sleep space, such as a cot or Moses basket. Keeping the cot or Moses basket next to your bed might make this easier.

There is also a risk you might roll over in your sleep and suffocate your baby.

Your baby could get caught between the wall and the bed or roll out of an adult bed and be injured.

Additional links for professionals



- [Safer sleep overview | The Lullaby Trust](#)
- [Safe sleeping :: Black Country 0-18 years website](#)
- [Suffocation | Child Accident Prevention Trust](#)
- [Understanding SIDS and SUDI – BASIS](#)
- [Product safety – RoSPA](#)

- [Who's In Charge? - Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Launched in 2020 by The Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership the 'Who's in Charge' campaign. (To view the video's please click on campaign materials)

Slings/Carriers



The simple safety advice for a bag-style sling is to make sure that:

- It is tight.
- You can always see your baby's face by simply glancing down.
- You can kiss your baby's head by tipping your head forward.
- Your baby should never be curled up so their chin is forced onto their chest, as this can restrict their breathing.

Parents of premature babies, twins, babies in fragile health and those with low weight should seek advice from their GP before using a soft sling.

If you use a carrier, use the TICKS rule:

- T** tight
- I** in view at all times
- C** close enough to kiss
- K** keep chin off the chest
- S** supported back

Support for Families



Lullaby Trust Bereavement Support helpline

0808 802 6868

Calls are free from all landlines and most mobile phone networks.

Helpline advisers understand how hard it can be to talk about what you are going through and are patient and empathetic.

Monday – Friday: 10:00am to 2:00pm

Weekends and public holidays: 6:00pm to 10:00pm

support@lullabytrust.org.uk

Email for bereavement support enquiries, or to request a phone call from a Bereavement Support Advisor.

Terminology



- **SIDS** - Sudden infant death syndrome

SIDS is the sudden and unexpected death of a baby where no cause is found. This is also known as “cot death”. While SIDS is rare, it can still happen and there are steps parents can take to help reduce the chance of this tragedy occurring.

- **March 2025**

Black Country Child Death Overview Panel

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