

## **Safer Sleep for Babies and Infants**

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (sometimes referred to as SIDS or Cot Death) accounts for a significant proportion of sudden and unexplained deaths amongst infants, nationally. Each of these deaths represent an unexpected and tragic loss for a family. Research into this area has not yet found a clear cause of SIDS. However, there are several simple key messages about safer sleeping, based on research evidence, that may help parents and carers reduce the risk for their baby.

- ✓ Always place your baby on their back to sleep, with their feet at the foot of the cot. The safest place for your baby to sleep for their first 6 months is in a cot or Moses basket in the same room as you.
- ✓ Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress that is clean and in good condition.
- ✓ Keep your baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth. For help and advice speak to your midwife, GP or visit [www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk](http://www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk)
- ✓ Breastfeed, if you can. For help and advice, you can speak to your midwife or GP.
- ✗ Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby.
- ✗ Don't cover your baby's face or head while sleeping or use loose bedding.
- ✗ Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you smoke, drink, take drugs or medication that may make you drowsy, or if your baby was born prematurely or was of low birth weight.
- ✗ Avoid letting your baby get too hot. A room temperature of 16-20°C, with light bedding or a lightweight well-fitting baby sleep bag is comfortable and safe for sleeping babies.

### **Contact for Further Information**

**Email:** [info@lullabytrust.org.uk](mailto:info@lullabytrust.org.uk)

**Call:** 0808 802 6869

**Tweet:** @LullabyTrust

**Website:** [www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)



## Practitioners: Giving Safer Sleep Advice

- Practitioners and staff should make it a priority to see where the baby sleeps and discuss and record the information they give to parents/carers about safe sleeping arrangements at all 'key contacts'.
- Families should be given information in a way that is accessible and understandable for them. Some individuals will respond to verbal discussions/messages, others will respond to visual prompts, while for some it will be a combination of both.
- All families need to make their own choices in relation to how they care for their baby. Some cultures actively practice co-sleeping as part of their parenting approach. While it is important to recognise this, it is equally as important to promote the safer sleep advice to all families.
- Remember that parents/carers soon pick up on inconsistent advice; this may lead them to disregard it completely. It is essential that every opportunity is taken to promote clear and consistent safer sleeping advice, as stated on the front page of this guidance, by all practitioners and staff.

## Practice Guidance & Resources

The full Suffolk LSCB 'Safer Sleep Guidance for Partner Agencies' document and 'Safer Sleep Poster' are both available on the Board's website: [www.suffolkscb.org.uk](http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk) under 'Information and Links'.

### The Lullaby Trust Resources [www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)

- [Safer Sleep Guide for Parents](#)
- [Sudden Infant Death Syndrome – A Guide for Professionals](#)
- [Easy Read Card for Parents](#) (endorsed by UNICEF UK) with translations available in languages other than English.
- The Lullaby Trust Safer Sleep Video is a 4m video clip offering key pieces of advice on safe sleep for babies. It is posted on YouTube, or available to watch on the Lullaby Trust website.

**Did You Know?** The Lullaby Trust has a range of face-to-face training packages that can be tailored to your needs, at a small cost.

Training is suitable for professionals working in many different settings, such as Emergency Services, Police, Midwifery and Neonatal care, Children's Centres and other services supporting parents.

For more information, visit [www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)

### UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative [www.unicef.org.uk/BabyFriendly](http://www.unicef.org.uk/BabyFriendly)

"Caring for your baby at night" guides for Parents and for Professionals with translations available in other languages.

Further information about all Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board publications can be found on our website. [www.suffolkscb.org.uk](http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk)