

# A Guide To Safe Sleep in the Child Care Setting

*In order to reduce the risk of SIDS and prevent accidental suffocation it's important caregivers follow these guidelines:*

- ✓ Babies should always be placed to sleep on their backs. Side and tummy sleep positions are not safe.
- ✓ Only use safety approved crib, bassinet or play yard with only a firm mattress and tight fitted sheet.
- ✓ Do not put any soft objects, toys, pillows, blankets, bumper pads or bottles – **NOTHING BUT BABY IN THE CRIB.**
- ✓ Inspect sleep area before each sleep session.
- ✓ To avoid overheating, babies should be dressed appropriately for the room temperature.
- ✓ Babies should not sleep in a swing, car seat or bouncy seat
- ✓ Separate sleep surfaces should be provided.
- ✓ Remove bibs, pacifiers and clothes or jackets with ties or cords on infants while sleeping.
- ✓ Make sure crib is located away from window blinds and electrical cords that could pose a safety hazard.



For more information visit [www.firstcandle.org](http://www.firstcandle.org)



# Safe Sleep Saves Lives!

One of the most important decisions you will make as a new parent is where and how you place your baby to sleep. If you follow these safe sleep rules, you will help protect your baby from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), suffocation and accidents during sleep.

- Always place your baby to sleep on his back. Side and tummy positions are not safe.
- Use a crib that meets current safety standards. The mattress should be firm and fit snugly in the crib. Cover the mattress with only a tight-fitting crib sheet. Portable cribs and play yard style cribs are also good choices.
- Do not put anything soft, loose or fluffy in your baby's sleep space. This includes pillows, blankets, comforters, bumper pads, stuffed animals or toys and other soft items.
- Use a wearable blanket or other type sleeper instead of blankets to keep your baby warm and safe.
- Place your baby's separate, safe sleep space near your bed to help you protect her and make breastfeeding easier. This is called room sharing.
- Falling asleep with your baby in bed or on a couch or armchair is dangerous; room share instead.
- Never place your baby to sleep on top of any soft surface. This includes adult beds, sofas, chairs, waterbeds, pillows, cushions, comforters and sheepskins.
- Do not use wedges or positioners to prop your baby up or keep him on his back.
- Make sure your baby doesn't get too warm during sleep. Use light sleep clothing and keep room temperature at what would be comfortable for a lightly-clothed adult.
- Offer your baby a pacifier every time you place her down to sleep. If you are breastfeeding, wait until nursing is well established before using a pacifier (usually around 1 month.)
- Educate everyone who cares for your baby about these safe sleep rules!



## OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS

- Do not smoke when you are pregnant and make sure that no one smokes around your baby after he is born.
- Get good prenatal care as soon as you know you are pregnant and keep all your doctor's appointments.
- If possible, give your baby only breast milk for at least the first six months.
- Give your baby lots of tummy time when she is awake and being watched. This helps make her arm and neck muscles strong and prevents flat spots on the back of her head.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.FIRSTCANDLE.ORG](http://WWW.FIRSTCANDLE.ORG)**

# Safe Sleep Guidelines



## 1. Back To Sleep

Babies should always sleep on their back.



## 2. Share A Room

Infants should share a bedroom with parents, but not the same sleeping surface, preferably until the baby turns 1 but at least for the first six months.



## 3. Decrease Risk

Room-sharing decreases the risk of SIDS as much as 50 percent.



## 4. Firm Sleep Surface

An infant should be placed on his or her back on a firm sleep surface such as a crib or bassinet with a tight-fitting sheet. The crib should be otherwise bare – no blankets, pillows, stuffed animals or bumpers.



## 5. Breastfeed

If possible, mothers should breastfeed exclusively or feed with expressed milk for at least 6 months. Breastfeeding reduces the risk of SIDS.



## 6. No Sofa Sleeping

Infants should never be left to sleep on sofas, armchairs or in sitting devices.

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Saving babies. Supporting families.

Every year 3,500 babies die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and other sleep-related infant deaths, such as accidental suffocation. By following the Safe Sleep Guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the risk of SIDS can be dramatically reduced and other sleep-related deaths can be eliminated.

First Candle is committed to the elimination of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths through education and research, while providing support for grieving families who have suffered a loss. **For more information visit [www.firstcandle.org](http://www.firstcandle.org).**

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A close-up photograph of a woman with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a grey tank top, breastfeeding her baby. The baby is wrapped in a white cloth with colorful floral patterns. The woman is looking down at the baby with a gentle expression.

# Breastfeeding and Your Baby

- Breast milk is the best food for your baby during the first year of life. It helps your baby grow healthy and strong.
- Breastfeeding helps protect your baby from many illnesses. Breastfed babies have fewer health problems than babies who aren't breastfed.
- Your breast milk changes as your baby grows so he gets exactly what he needs at the right time.
- Breast milk has antibodies that help protect your baby from many illnesses. Antibodies are cells in the body that fight off infection.
- Breastfed babies have fewer health problems than babies who aren't breastfed.
- It may lower the chances of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is the unexplained death of a baby younger than 1 year old.
- A breastfed baby may have less gas and belly pain than a baby who is fed formula.

# Child Caregiver Breastfeeding Checklist



As you explore child care outside your home, bring this checklist with you. This guide will help you assess a caregiver's support regarding breastfeeding as you decide who will care for your baby. Your child's "caregiver" is anyone who will be caring for your baby: child care centers, home child care, faith-based providers, friends, neighbors and family members.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE DECIDING WHO WILL CARE FOR YOUR BABY:

These questions are designed to help you identify a caregiver's support regarding breastfeeding. It is important to discuss mutual expectations with potential caregivers, who should respect and follow your baby's feeding practices.

- ☐ Do you have a breastfeeding policy in place?
- ☐ Do you welcome and encourage mothers and staff to breastfeed their own infants onsite at any time?
- ☐ Will you feed my baby when he/she is hungry by recognizing hunger and fullness (feeding cues), rather than on a strict schedule?
- ☐ Will my baby be held while being fed?
- ☐ Are you willing to hold off feeding right before I pick up my baby so I may breastfeed at home?
- ☐ Do you create/make a feeding plan for each infant with information from parents and are these plans adjusted to accommodate baby's needs?
- ☐ Will you keep a feeding log with times and amount of feedings and share it with me each day?
- ☐ Have all child care staff, volunteers, floaters and substitutes received training and follow proper handling and storing to meet breast milk requirements?

## LOOK FOR THESE SIGNS OF AN ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS BREASTFEEDING:

- ☐ Breast milk handling and storing instructions are posted in the kitchen area.
- ☐ Breastfeeding space is comfortable, quiet and clean with a nearby outlet for pumping if needed.
- ☐ Ample refrigerator space is provided for your milk.
- ☐ Caregivers wash their hands before preparing and feeding infants and children.
- ☐ Posters & signs create a welcoming place for breastfeeding.



## MORE RESOURCES

### Supporting Breastfeeding in Child Care Training:

<https://www.carecourses.com/Ecommerce/CourseDetail.aspx?ItemID=381>

### CDC Model Breastfeeding Policy:

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/strategy6-support-breastfeeding-early-care.pdf>

### Office on Women's Health:

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-home-work-and-public/breastfeeding-and-going-back-work/#3>

### Firstcandle.org

First Candle is a 501(c)3 committed to eliminating Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and other sleep-related infant deaths while providing bereavement support for families who have experienced a loss.

# Child Caregiver Safe Sleep Checklist



As you explore child care outside your home, bring this checklist with you. This guide will help you assess infant safe sleep as you decide who will care for your baby. Your child's "caregiver" is anyone who will be caring for your baby: child care centers, home child care, faith-based providers, friends, neighbors and family members.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE DECIDING WHO WILL CARE FOR YOUR BABY:

These questions are designed to identify safe sleep "best practices." All potential caregivers should be willing and able to respect and follow your parenting practices and routines you follow at home.

- ☐ Will the sleep space be an approved crib, play yard or other approved sleep surface?
- ☐ Will my child have his/her own sleep space that is the same each day?
- ☐ If my baby falls asleep in a swing, car seat or bouncy seat, since it is NOT a recommended sleep space, will he/she be moved to an approved sleep surface?
- ☐ Is the caregiver within sight and sound of my baby during sleep?
- ☐ Is the sleep area inspected before each sleep session and clear of toys and unnecessary blankets?
- ☐ Does the child caregiver have safe infant sleep policy/practices in place?
- ☐ Are all caregivers, including regular staff, volunteers, floaters and substitutes trained in and following safe infant sleep guidelines?

## ALWAYS ASK TO SEE THE SLEEP AREA

Confirm that every sleep area follows these American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations:

- ☐ Babies are always placed on their backs to sleep.
- ☐ Firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety approved crib, play yard other sleep surface is covered by a fitted sheet with no other bedding.
- ☐ EMPTY CRIB - No soft objects, pillows, blankets, toys, bumper pads, bottles or any other items are in baby's sleep area.
- ☐ Babies are dressed appropriately for the room temperature, and not in clothes that could cause overheating.
- ☐ Nothing with ties such as bibs, pacifiers, cords or other attachments is on infants while sleeping.
- ☐ No products claiming to reduce the risk or prevent SIDS (such as wedges, positioners, or other products that claim to keep infants in a specific position) are in the sleep space.
- ☐ Posted safe sleep guidelines to remind all staff, volunteers, floaters and substitutes of these important practices.
- ☐ No electrical cords or window blind cords are near the crib where they can create a safety hazard.



## MORE RESOURCES:

**Find a child care provider by zip code:** <http://www.childcareaware.org/ccrr-search-form/>

**Consumer Product Safety Commission Recall List:** <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>

## Firstcandle.org:

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# Put me to sleep the right way, baby!

Safe sleep guidelines for sweet dreams



## Back to sleep

Babies should always sleep on their backs on a safety-approved sleep surface, with a tight-fitting sheet. No exceptions!

## Let's beroomies!

Room-sharing decreases the risk of SIDS by as much as 50%. It is recommended that an infant sleep in the same room as parents (but on a different sleep surface) for the first 6 months.



## Just Me, Myself, and I

Nothing but a baby belongs in the crib! Soft objects, toys, pillows, blankets, bumper pads, or bottles can all pose a suffocation risk.

## Crib sweet crib!

Babies should not sleep in swings, bouncy seats, car seats, on couches, etc. If they do fall asleep, move them to a safe and appropriate sleep surface, like a crib or bassinet.

