

Parents Guide to Safe Sleep

Every baby needs their own **Safe Sleep Space**.

A **Safe Sleep Space** is a crib, bassinet or pack & play that meets current guidelines, has a firm surface (mattress meant for that item) with nothing in the crib but a fitted sheet for that mattress. It is recommended that the crib be in the same room as the parents, but a baby should NEVER share a sleep surface with anyone else. This is very dangerous for the baby and increases the risk for SIDS. This guidance should be followed until the baby's first birthday.

START WITH THE ABC'S



ALONE

Stay Close,
Sleep Apart



BACK

On their Back for
Nights and Naps



CRIB

Clean, Clear Crib



DANGER

Be Aware, Not
Impaired

Alone: Babies should always sleep alone. There should never be anything else in a baby's sleep space except for the baby. A pacifier is permissible if the baby uses one, but if breastfeeding, please wait until breastfeeding is well established. Pacifiers should not be attached to a string, cord, stuffed animal or anything else.

Back: A baby should always sleep on his/her back for every sleep time both night and naps. Back sleeping on a firm surface decreases the risk of SIDS.

Crib: Babies should sleep in a clean, clear crib. A baby's crib should contain a fitted sheet only; no blankets, toys, pillows, bumpers, or other items that could cover a baby's face and suffocate them. Cribs, bassinets and pack & plays with firm mattresses are the only safe places for babies to sleep.

Danger: Drinking and drug use impair your ability to care for a baby, making bed-sharing and other unsafe sleep even more dangerous for the baby.

If you do not have a crib, bassinet or pack & play for your baby and cannot afford one, please check with Cribs for Kids at www.cribsforkids.org/find-a-chapter/, or call your local health department.

Important things to remember:

- Do not overheat a baby. If you are comfortable in light clothing, the baby will be too. Keep the room temperature at a comfortable setting for you.
- If your baby does require an extra layer for warmth, dress him/her in layers such as a onesie and a footed sleeper, or use a sleep sac over their clothing. Blankets should not be used in the bed for warmth.
- Keep a baby away from cigarette smoke, including e-cigarettes. This is a good time to make your home and car smoke free.
- A baby should never sleep in a car seat, swing, infant seat, adult bed, couch or chair, or any other item not designated for infant sleep.
- Provide “Tummy Time” for the baby every day, while they are awake and an adult is watching. This helps with muscle development.
- Be Aware, not Impaired. Drinking or drug use, even use of prescription drugs, can impair your ability to parent and increase the danger of SIDS for your baby. Always follow the ABC’s (alone, on their back, in a crib) to keep your baby safe.
- Just as “designated drivers” protect people from the dangers of driving “under the influence,” if you have to take a medication that you know can impair your judgment or reaction time, consider finding a “designated, dependable adult” to help you protect the baby from the dangers of unsafe sleep. Always follow the ABC’s of Safe Sleep for your baby.



If your baby won't sleep and cries continuously:

- Check to see if your baby is hungry, tired or needs changing
- Cuddle the baby in your arms
- Walk and sing with your baby
- Take your baby outside for a walk (weather permitting)
- Give your baby a warm bath
- Call a friend or family member to come watch the baby
- Talk to your baby's doctor
- NEVER, NEVER, NEVER shake a baby

Remember: Babies rely totally on adults for their safe care. A baby may not stop crying no matter what you try. No matter how frustrated you get, NEVER shake a baby. If you need to take time to calm yourself, place your baby in a safe sleep space (alone, on their back and in their crib) and check on them every 15 minutes.

For more information on Safe Sleep Kentucky, please visit our website at safesleepky.org or the national Safe to Sleep Campaign at safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov.