

SAFE

1.





What safe sleep practices do you see in this picture?

SAFE

Safe Sleep Practices:

- Crib is placed next to the bed so the baby can sleep in the same room as the parents, on a separate sleep surface.
- Parents have placed baby on their back to sleep.
- Parents have made sure their baby's sleeping area is clear of heavy or loose blankets, pillows, toys, sheep skins, or bumper pads. These objects are dangerous because they can cover a baby's nose and mouth and make it difficult to breathe.
- Baby is not wearing a toque or hat to sleep, and does not look too warm or overheated. Overheating increases the risk of SIDS.

Discussion Points:

- You can help keep your baby safe by placing them to sleep in the same room as you on a separate safe sleep surface, like a crib, for the first 6 months. This is called 'room sharing' and helps reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Keeping your baby close to you, but on a separate safe sleep surface, makes it easier to breastfeed, care for, and bond with your baby.
- Babies who sleep in the same room as an adult for their first 6 months have only half the usual risk of SIDS.
- You can put a crib or bassinet next to your bed. You can also put the crib or other safe sleep surface next to a couch.
- Adult mattresses are not built for babies to sleep safely on because they are too soft.
- Remember to always place your baby on their back to sleep for naps and at night.
- Placing babies on their backs to sleep is a traditional practice in Aboriginal communities. So you can whisper, "look up to our ancestors" when you put your baby to sleep to help you remember.

SAFE

2.





What safe sleep practices do you see in this picture?

SAFE

Safe Sleep Practices:

- Mom is breastfeeding her baby, which helps protect against SIDS.
- Mom has placed the crib next to her bed so the baby can sleep in the same room as her, on a separate sleep surface. This is called 'room sharing' and helps reduce the risk of SIDS.

Discussion Points:

- Babies who are breastfed have a lower risk of dying of SIDS.
- Breastfeeding for at least the first six months is very important and helps protect babies from illness. Continued breastfeeding to the age of two years or more is encouraged.
- Breastfeeding is the normal, natural way to feed babies. Breastmilk is best for babies and also helps moms because it is free and convenient.
- It is also good for a mother's health to breastfeed, and lowers a mother's risk of some cancers later in life. Moms who breastfeed may also lose weight easier after birth.
- If you have problems with breastfeeding, it may be possible to get help from a public health nurse, lactation consultant, or doula.
- See Appendix 1 in the Facilitator's Guide for resources to support breastfeeding.

SAFE

3.





What safe sleep practices do you see in this picture?

SAFE

Safe Sleep Practices:

- Mom has placed her baby to sleep in a sturdy laundry basket that has a firm and flat bottom. This is a safe alternative sleep surface for a baby when a crib, cradle, or bassinet is not available.
- Mom has placed her baby to sleep on their back.
- Mom has made sure her baby's sleeping area is clear of heavy or loose blankets, pillows, toys, sheep skins or bumper pads. These objects are dangerous because they can cover a baby's nose and mouth and make it difficult to breathe.
- Mom has placed the laundry basket next to the couch so her baby can sleep in the same room as her, on a separate sleep surface. This is called 'room sharing' and helps reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Baby is not wearing a toque or hat to sleep, and does not look too warm or overheated. Overheating increases the risk of SIDS.

Discussion Points:

- It is recommended that babies sleep in a crib, cradle, or bassinet that meets Canadian safety regulations.
- For some families it may be difficult to buy or borrow a crib, cradle, or bassinet. Living in a remote location or a lack of money may make this difficult.
- Alternative safe sleep surfaces are available for little or no cost.
For example, any of these can provide firm sleep surfaces for your baby:
 - o Sturdy, laundry-type basket with a smooth, firm bottom
 - o Heavy, reinforced cardboard box
 - o Dresser, kitchen, or desk drawer
 - o Metal or plastic basin with a flat bottom, such as a washtub
- These sleep surfaces only need a little covering, such as a pad or a thin blanket that will not bunch up. For example, you can wrap a light blanket around a sturdy piece of cardboard and use strong tape on the bottom to secure the blanket. That is all the covering that is needed for a firm sleep surface.
- See Appendix 2 in the Facilitator's Guide for more information on alternative safe sleep surfaces.

UNSAFE

4.





What unsafe sleep practice do you see in this picture?

UNSAFE

Unsafe Sleep Practices:

- Baby is being exposed to secondhand cigarette smoke, which increases the risk of SIDS a lot.
- Baby is also being exposed to the chemical residue from cigarette smoke left on clothes, carpet and furniture.

Discussion Points:

- It is very important to avoid cigarette smoke when you are pregnant and after birth.
- Cigarette smoke is very harmful to babies - it increases the risk of illness and SIDS.
- Secondhand smoke is more harmful for babies than adults, because they breathe faster and are still growing and developing.
- Chemical residue from cigarette smoke also gets on things such as clothes, furniture and carpeting. Babies are at risk as they are often lying on, crawling on, or touching these surfaces.
- Even if people only smoke outside the house, like on the porch, babies still get cigarette chemicals in their bodies – at levels 8 times higher than babies of non-smoking parents.
- Make sure your baby is not around cigarette smoke in the home or community. Talk with elders, family, and friends about not smoking in the house or anywhere near your baby.
- See Appendix 1 in the Facilitator's Guide for resources to help parents quit smoking or to smoke less.

Are there any safe sleep practices in this picture?

SAFE

- Baby has been placed to sleep on their back.
- Baby is sleeping on a firm and flat surface – a crib.
- Baby's sleeping area is free of hazards like loose or heavy blankets, pillows, toys, sheep skins or bumper pads. These objects are dangerous because they can cover a baby's nose and mouth and make it difficult to breathe.
- Baby is not wearing a toque or hat to sleep, and does not look too warm or overheated. Overheating increases the risk of SIDS.

HONOURING OUR BABIES: Safe Sleep Cards



UNSAFE

5.





What unsafe sleep practice do you see in this picture?

UNSAFE

Unsafe Sleep Practices:

- Baby is put to sleep wearing a toque or hat. This can make the baby too warm while sleeping, especially if the room temperature is high or if they are near a heat source such as a wood burning stove.

Discussion Points:

- There is a danger if your baby is too warm while sleeping. Overheating increases the risk of SIDS.
- If you are comfortable with the temperature in a room, your baby will be too. Don't overdress your baby, swaddle, or use toques and hats inside the house.
- If room temperature is higher than 20 °C, there is a risk for SIDS if the baby is overdressed, bundled, or close to heat sources such as wood burning stoves, heaters, or another person in the same bed.
- Warm weather is usually not a problem if your baby is not overdressed and can sweat.
- Your baby is more likely to get too warm if sleeping on their tummy, especially if their head is covered.
- Remember to always put your baby on their back to sleep for naps and at night.
- It is safe to use a sleeper blanket/sleep sack, or a light blanket tucked firmly under the bottom end of the mattress, with the baby's arms free when placed to sleep.

Are there any safe sleep practices in this picture?

SAFE

- Baby has been placed to sleep on their back.
- Baby is sleeping on a firm and flat surface – a crib.
- Baby's sleeping area is free of hazards like loose or heavy blankets, pillows, toys, sheep skins or bumper pads. These objects are dangerous because they can cover a baby's nose and mouth and make it difficult to breathe.

UNSAFE

6.





What unsafe sleep practices do you see in this picture?

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Unsafe Sleep Practices:

- Baby is put to sleep on an adult bed, which is too soft for a baby to sleep safely on.
- Baby is propped up on a pillow, with other pillows and a stuffed animal in the baby's sleeping area. These are soft objects that can become dangerous if the baby rolls and they come up against the baby's face – making it difficult to breathe.

Discussion Points:

- It is important to place your baby to sleep on their own sleeping surface that is firm, flat, and free of hazards. Hazards are loose or heavy blankets, pillows, bumper pads, or stuffed toys.
- Some parents want to create a soft and snuggly sleeping place for their baby, but soft surfaces are dangerous for babies.
- If put to sleep on a soft surface, a baby's face can 'sink in' or get covered up.
- Remember, most adult mattresses are too soft for babies to sleep on safely, even when it feels firm and flat to the adult.
- These are unsafe for babies to sleep on: waterbeds, pillow-top mattresses, couches, armchairs, recliners, and sheepskins. A baby can get trapped in the sides of couches, armchairs, or recliners.
- Don't put things in your baby's sleep area that can cover the mouth and nose to block your baby's breathing, such as loose or heavy blankets, quilts, pillows, stuffed animals, sheep skins or bumper pads.

Are there any safe sleep practices in this picture?

SAFE

- Baby has been placed to sleep on their back.
- Baby is not wearing a toque or hat to sleep, and does not look too warm or overheated. Overheating increases the risk of SIDS.

CHOOSE?





Where is the safest place for baby to sleep?

This couple has just arrived at their uncle's house for a visit after a long drive. Their baby is still asleep in the car seat. They have to decide where the safest place for baby to sleep is. Can you help them decide?

Discussion Points:

CAR SEAT

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- Car seats are not made for sleeping. They are made for keeping babies safe during car rides.
- Car seats have harnesses or straps and are sloped, which carry some risks for safe sleeping. Babies heads can fall forward which can lead to their airway being blocked. Also, babies can move their body position and the harness or strap can press across their neck.
- Remember, safe sleeping surfaces for babies must be firm, flat, and free of hazards.
- Now that the parents have arrived at their uncle's house, they should take their baby out of the car seat and place him or her on a safe sleeping surface.

COUCH

UNSAFE

- The couch is not a safe place for the baby to sleep. The cushions are too soft and the baby's face may sink into the cushions or become trapped between the cushions. Even babies who do not roll over yet can slide in between the cushions.

LAUNDRY BASKET

SAFE

- The laundry basket is the safest place for the baby to sleep if it has a firm, flat bottom. All clothing must be taken out of the laundry basket.
- Only a little covering for the bottom of the laundry basket is needed, such as a pad or a thin blanket that will not bunch up. For example, the parents can wrap a light blanket around a sturdy piece of cardboard and use strong tape on the bottom to secure the blanket. That is all the covering that is needed for a firm sleep surface.
- The baby should be placed on her back to sleep every time, for naps and at night.

HONOURING OUR BABIES: Safe Sleep Cards

