

Safe Sleep Saves Lives!

As a new parent, one of the most important decisions you will make is where your baby will sleep. The following information will help you keep your baby safe from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), suffocation and accidents during sleep.

The safest place for your baby to sleep, for at least the first six months, is in a crib* placed near your bed.



*Your baby's crib should meet current safety standards. For guidelines, please visit www.cpsc.org or www.jpma.org

*For guidelines on using cradles and other products intended for sleeping babies instead of a crib, visit www.firstcandle.org/bedtimebasics

Research Shows That Pacifiers can Greatly Reduce the Risk of SIDS!

- ★ Offer a pacifier at nap time and nighttime
- ★ Wait one month to offer a pacifier if you are breastfeeding
- ★ Never use a pacifier to replace nursing or feeding
- ★ Don't worry about putting the pacifier back in your baby's mouth if it falls out after he falls asleep
- ★ Never coat your baby's pacifier with anything sweet
- ★ Don't use a string or anything else to attach a pacifier around your baby's neck or to clothing
- ★ Limit pacifier use to the first year of life

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry also says that pacifiers will not cause long-term problems for your baby's teeth if stopped by age three.



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It is the goal of **First Candle's National Infant Safe Sleep Campaign** to ensure that every parent has access to a safe crib and is aware of and understands the importance of safe sleep practices in caring for their baby. **Infant deaths caused by unsafe sleep practices can be prevented.**

The content of this educational brochure was entirely developed and copyrighted by First Candle and peer reviewed by a national panel of experts. References include national and international studies by the American Academy of Pediatrics; Kemp, JS (St. Louis University School of Public Health); Scheers NJ/Rutherford, GW (Consumer Products Safety Commission); Blair PS/Fleming PJ (University of Bristol, UK) and Tapin, D (University of Glasgow). For a full list of citations, please visit www.firstcandle.org.

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Room Sharing is Safer than Bed Sharing!

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Important Things to Know!

Research shows that bed sharing (falling asleep with your baby) can be unsafe. Bed sharing is the most unsafe if:

- ★ You smoked during pregnancy, or if you or your partner smoke now
- ★ Your baby is less than 11 weeks old
- ★ Your baby was born too early or at a low birth weight
- ★ You or your partner have taken drugs, alcohol or medications that make you sleepy

Falling asleep with your baby on a couch or armchair is very unsafe.

It is also very unsafe for other adults, children or pets to share a sleep surface with your baby.

Adult Beds are not Safe for Sleeping Babies!

- ★ Soft bedding, such as pillows, blankets and quilts increase your baby's risk for SIDS and suffocation
- ★ Adults or other children in the bed can accidentally roll too close to or onto your baby while they sleep
- ★ Babies can get trapped between the mattress and the wall, headboard, footboard or another piece of furniture
- ★ Your baby could fall from the bed and get hurt

Create a Safe Sleep Zone!



- ★ Your baby should sleep on a firm mattress covered with only a tight-fitting crib sheet
- ★ Use a wearable blanket or other type sleeper instead of blankets to keep your baby warm and safe
- ★ Soft or pillow-like bumpers, wedges and positioners should never be used in your baby's sleep area
- ★ **Always place your baby on her back for sleep!**

Make sure your baby has a safe place to sleep when visiting or traveling!



Breast Milk is Best for your Baby's Health!

- ★ If you can, give your baby only breast milk for at least the first six months
- ★ Breastfeeding gives you lots of time to cuddle and bond with your baby
- ★ Breastfeeding helps protect against many illnesses
- ★ It's OK to nurse your baby in bed, but when it's time to go to sleep, place your baby in a separate, safe sleep area near your bed
- ★ Studies show that offering your baby a pacifier beginning at one month, when your baby is nursing well, will not cause problems with breastfeeding