

Safe Sleep for Your Baby

Consider these facts before you decide where your baby will sleep:

- Suffocation and strangulation in an adult bed is the leading cause of injury-related death for infants under one year of age in the state of Florida.
- The risk of sleeping-related infant death is 40 times higher for babies who sleep in adult beds compared to babies who sleep in their own cribs.

“The safest place for an infant to sleep is alone in a crib, in the parents’ room for the first year of life.”

—The American Academy of Pediatrics

To lower the risk of sleep-related infant death and keep your baby safe while he or she sleeps, it is important to:

- Place babies on their backs (face up) every time they sleep. Sleeping on the stomach or side increases the risk of suffocation. Once an infant can roll from back to stomach and stomach to back, the infant can remain in the sleeping position they choose.
- Make sure your baby’s crib is in good condition and meets current Consumer Products Safety Commission standards (www.cpsc.gov).
- Use a firm crib mattress that fits tightly in the crib’s frame and cover it with only a tightly fitted sheet.
- Keep soft objects and loose bedding (pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, toys, etc.) out of your baby’s crib.
- Place your baby’s crib close to your bed until your baby is one year old. Infants may be brought into the bed for feeding or comforting, but should be returned to their own crib or bassinet when the parent or caregiver is ready to return to sleep.
- Keep all loose strings (i.e., blind cords, electrical cords and clothing) away from your baby’s crib.
- Keep the room temperature of your baby’s sleeping area comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. This will help keep your baby from getting too hot or overheated.
- Use infant sleep clothing designed to keep your baby warm without the possible hazard of head covering or entrapment; but over-bundling should be avoided due to the possibility of overheating. Infants are typically comfortable with one layer more than an adult would wear to be comfortable in the same environment.
- Offer your baby a pacifier, but never prop a bottle, at naptime and bedtime. If your baby doesn’t want the pacifier, don’t force it. If breastfeeding, wait until breastfeeding is well-established before offering a pacifier.
- Avoid exposing your baby to smoke, both during pregnancy and after birth, as exposure to smoke is a major risk factor for SIDS.
- If your baby’s crib has a mobile, make sure it is out of your baby’s reach. Once your baby can sit up, remove the mobile.
- To keep your baby from falling out of the crib, lower the mattress when your baby learns to sit, and again when he learns to stand.
- Respond to your baby’s cries during the night.

Information gathered from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle’s Protect Your Precious Cargo campaign

HERE’S HELP

Use the **Family Resources on pages 95–99** to learn about a variety of family support services available in your community.

*IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

Research shows that using a pacifier may decrease SIDS. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends pacifier use throughout the first year of life. Here are some tips for pacifier use:

- The pacifier should be used when placing the infant down for sleep. It is okay if the baby spits it out during sleep.
- If the infant refuses the pacifier, he or she should not be forced to take it.
- Pacifiers should not be coated in any sweet solution.
- Pacifiers should be cleaned often and replaced regularly.