



## Message from the Pan-Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Public Health

**Safer Sleeping Arrangements Over the Festive Season:** Over the past few years there have been a number of tragic sudden unexpected deaths of infants (SUDI). Each one of these child deaths brings with them unimaginable trauma and pain for families, friends, communities and professionals. Sadly, some of these deaths are preventable. The risk factors for SUDI are well recognised, and the steps parents can take to reduce the risk are generally shared with parents and carers by professionals including Social Workers, Midwives, and Health Visitors.

**Think about your sleeping arrangements this festive season:** Routines often change over the festive season. People visit friends and relatives, have more to drink and often go to bed at a different time. It may be more difficult to access a safe sleeping space for a baby.

### Every Sleep Must be a Safer Sleep

#### Sleeping Environment –

- The safest place for your baby to sleep is a separate cot or Moses' basket in the same room as you for the first 6 months, even during the day. Keep the sleeping environment clear of toys, cot bumpers, pillows and any products marketed for babies to sleep with. Always seek advice from your Midwife or Health Visitor.
- Always take your baby out of the car seat when you are not traveling – the position carries potential risk and may inhibit breathing.
- If you're sleeping somewhere different, think in advance about the sleeping arrangements for your baby. Parents, carers, and older children must never sleep on the sofa or in an armchair with the baby as this can increase the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) by 50 times.

### Temperature –

- It is important to make sure that your baby's room is a comfortable temperature – not too hot or too cold.
- At this time of year, you might be tempted to wrap your baby up to keep them warm while they are sleeping. However, it's important to make sure your baby doesn't get too hot.
- The chance of SUDI\* is higher in babies who get too hot. Try to keep the room temperature between 16 -20°C. Remember to remove hats, blankets coats/snow suits when you move from cold environments to warm heated environments.

### Out of Routine –

- If you're taking medication, consumed alcohol, taken any substances or away from home don't change your routine, stick to the safer sleep advice.
- Babies are at greater risk when any of these things have changed from the normal routine.

### [Out of routine: A review of sudden unexpected death in infancy \(SUDI\) in families where the children are considered at risk of significant harm \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### Position –

- Always put your baby on their back for every sleep, day and night, as the chance of SUDI is particularly high for babies who are sometimes placed on their front or side.

### **#EverySleepMustBeASaferSleep / For more information and Safer Sleep advice contact – [The Lullaby Trust - Safer sleep for babies, Support for families](#)**

**Babies Should not be in Smoky Environments:** Smoking remains a significant threat to the safety of children and babies. It was the most frequently identified modifiable factor in reviews of child death in England in the year 2019/2020. Babies exposed to second-hand smoke after they are born are more likely to die of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDs) than those not around second-hand smoke.

NHS research has found that children who live in a household where at least one person smokes are more likely to develop:

- Asthma
- Chest infections such as bronchitis or pneumonia

- Meningitis
- Ear infections
- Coughs and colds

### **How to Keep Your Baby Smoke-free**

- You should also keep your baby out of smoky areas.
- Don't let people smoke near your baby and keep your home, car, and other places your baby spends time, smoke free.
- If you or your partner smoke, you should not share a bed with your baby as this greatly increases the chance of SIDS even if you do not smoke in the bedroom.

**[Smoking during pregnancy or after birth increases the risk of SIDS - The Lullaby Trust](#)**