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**BACKGROUND**

Work to promote safer sleep for babies has been going on since 2005. This arose from increased awareness that deaths might have been prevented, if parents had known about safer sleeping.

Information about the current advice can be found at: [www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)

**Safer Sleep for Babies**

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**WHAT TO DO**

It is essential that professionals when working with families ensure that parents understand about safer sleep messages; it is everyone's responsibility.

Grandparents, carers and babysitters should also be targeted.

The advice is based on strong scientific evidence and should be followed for **all sleep periods both day and night**

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**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

•How will you use this information? • Where do we see babies? Or their parents? • Do we routinely ask about sleeping arrangements, and other carers? Do you feel confident giving safer sleep advice / challenging parents or carers? • Do we routinely ask about smoking, alcohol, drugs and medication? • Do we routinely give information about and discuss safer sleep? When do we discuss safe sleep? • Do we check that the baby always sleeps in a safe sleep space? • Has temperature regulation been discussed

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**WHY IT MATTERS**

Many unexpected baby deaths have modifiable factors.

Sadly, around 4 babies a week die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Since 2017 in Rochdale, safe sleep has been identified as a key theme in 2 Serious Case Reviews and 1 Health Review.

This advice is aimed at reducing the risk of death and ensuring everyone who cares for a baby knows about safer sleep.

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**HELP PARENTS AND CARERS TO MAKE AN INFORMED CHOICE**

Remember - parents spend a lot of time feeling judged so may find being told what to do difficult and may become defensive or resistant. Take time to empathise with how hard it is to be a parent and have open discussions to ensure that they understand the rationale for advice.

Highlight the risks of using alcohol / drugs / medication that may make them drowsy whilst caring for a baby.

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**KEY MESSAGES**

- Keep baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth.
- Always place baby on their back to sleep.
- The safest place for a baby to sleep is in their own sleep space. Place baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as baby's carer for the first 6 months.
- Use a firm, flat waterproof mattress in good condition.
- Breastfeed your baby, if you can

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**THINGS TO AVOID**

- Never leave a baby to sleep on a sofa or in an armchair (with or without another person)
- Avoid letting baby get too hot
- Avoid risk of baby's face or head becoming covered while sleeping; do not use loose bedding
- Avoid pillows, cushions or beanbags
- Avoid placing cuddly toys in cot/Moses basket
- Avoid sleeping in a car seat