

Safer sleep checklist for choosing a baby sleep professional

the
lullaby
trust



About baby sleep patterns

The first year when your baby wakes up often can be tough, and just when you think you have things figured out, your baby's sleep pattern can change again.

It might seem like everyone else's babies sleep more than yours or you may worry that you are doing something wrong. Baby sleep patterns are different to adults and it's not uncommon for them to wake up often.

Our past surveys show that almost two thirds (59%) of parents with babies under a year old say their baby sleeps for less than four hours at a stretch. And almost half (44%) of parents think their baby should be sleeping for longer than they do.

For new and expectant parents', knowing safer sleep advice is vital for the safety of your baby. Thanks to this advice, rates of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) have decreased significantly.

You might see products available or receive well-meaning advice to help you get your baby to sleep longer or deeper. This can actually be dangerous as it can affect your baby's ability to wake up if they need to.



Seeking support

You can read more about baby sleep patterns and sleep deprivation on our website, and contact us for support.



If you decide to seek support from a sleep coach or sleep consultant, it's important to make sure they also follow safer sleep advice. They should not recommend anything that goes against this advice or could put your baby at risk.

We have developed a checklist to help you have conversations with sleep consultants, sleep coaches and others who may help with baby sleep advice. This will help empower you to make informed decisions about the support you receive and the care of your baby.

If you are planning on using a night nanny, maternity nurse or any other professional who will be directly responsible for placing your baby to sleep, use our [early years toolkit](#) instead.





Sometimes having conversations with professionals can feel difficult. We have come up with some practical tips and phrases to help you feel confident in starting those conversations.

Before you ask the questions in this toolkit, you can introduce it to the sleep professional. You may wish to say something like:

“ We follow safer sleep guidance at home, and we want to be sure that any advice you offer around sleep is in line with the safer sleep advice from The Lullaby Trust. The Lullaby Trust have produced a checklist I would like to go through to help me feel comfortable. ”

“ The Lullaby Trust have produced a checklist to help me choose a sleep coach or sleep consultant that follows safer sleep guidance – can we go through this please? ”

“ I don’t know what you would advise around safer sleep and reducing the risk of SIDS. The Lullaby Trust suggests using this checklist to help me understand how you take this into consideration with any advice you offer. ”

Here are some questions to ask any sleep coach or sleep consultant you are considering using for all babies under 12 months of age (or 12 months adjusted for babies born premature).

1 Are you aware of The Lullaby Trust's safer sleep advice?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Notes:



2 Have you completed SIDS & safer sleep training such as that provided by The Lullaby Trust?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Notes:

3 What's your knowledge of safer sleep and how do you implement this into your advice, guidance or strategies?

Notes:



4

What position do you recommend babies sleep in?

We would always recommend that babies under one year (or one year adjusted for babies born premature) are placed down to sleep on their backs.

Notes:



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What items do you recommend a baby sleeps in?

We advise that babies should sleep on a firm, entirely flat, waterproof mattress such as in a cot, Moses basket, travel cot or carrycot, with no raised or cushioned sides.

Notes:



We specifically **advise against** babies sleeping in

- Soft sided pods or nests
- Bouncy chairs
- Baby hammocks
- Bean bags
- Baby swings
- Sleep positioners
- Sofas

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What is your advice on co-sleeping and are there any times you would advise against co-sleeping?

We specifically **advise against** co-sleeping if:

- You or anyone in the bed has recently drunk any alcohol
- You or anyone in the bed smokes or the baby was exposed to smoking in pregnancy
- You or anyone in the bed has taken any drugs or medication that make you feel sleepy
- Your baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) or weighed under 2.5kg or 5.5 pounds when they were born
- You should not sleep on a sofa or armchair with your baby



Notes:

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Where do you recommend babies sleep for the first six months?

We advise that babies should be slept in the same room as the parents/carers for at least the first 6 months.



Notes:

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What is your understanding of 'clear cot'?

We recommend no additional items in a baby's cot other than the baby and their bedding.

Notes:



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How do you take room temperature and the risk of overheating into consideration as part of your advice?

Notes:



10

How do you support the continuation of breastfeeding where applicable?

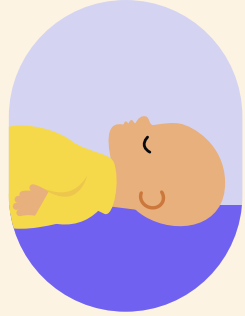
Notes:



11

What would your advice be for babies with reflux?

We would always advise that from the point of view of SIDS prevention, a baby should be slept on their back on a firm, flat, waterproof mattress. Do not incline, tilt or prop the mattress, cot or baby. Doing so will not help with reflux and is unlikely to improve cold symptoms.



Notes:



12

What would you advise if we want to sleep our baby in a way that doesn't follow safer sleep?

Notes:

Notes

Remember

Extreme tiredness can be very hard to live with. **Even though you were probably expecting some sleepless nights, the reality might be harder than you imagined.**

If you are struggling with lack of sleep, don't be afraid to ask for help from friends and family, and even neighbours. One parent told us, **"I was so tired I put shoes in the fridge!"**

Sometimes it can feel uncomfortable asking for help, but we aren't meant to do this alone and people are often willing to help. If a trusted friend, relative or neighbour can watch the baby for an hour or so while you catch up on sleep, this can make a big difference.

If you are worried about your baby's sleep, ask your midwife, health visitor, GP or NHS 111. You can also complete 17 simple checks on our free Baby Check app if your baby is showing signs of illness. The app will let you know whether your baby needs to see a health professional.

For more information, visit www.lullabytrust.org.uk



Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

At The Lullaby Trust, we exist to keep babies safe and grieving families supported.

We hope you found this information empowering. If you did, please consider donating today. You can place this same information in the hands of another parent or carer who needs it: lullabytrust.org.uk/donate



For every baby.
For every family.
Forever.

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