

# The Importance of Early Child Development

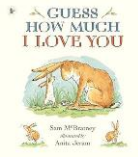
## Keeping baby safe

Janet Smethurst

Team Leader

Calderdale Public Health Early Years' Service

# What equipment do babies need?



What equipment don't babies need?

**EVERYTHING ELSE!**

# Other unnecessary products!

Prep machines



Baby Walkers, jumperoos



Prop feeding aids

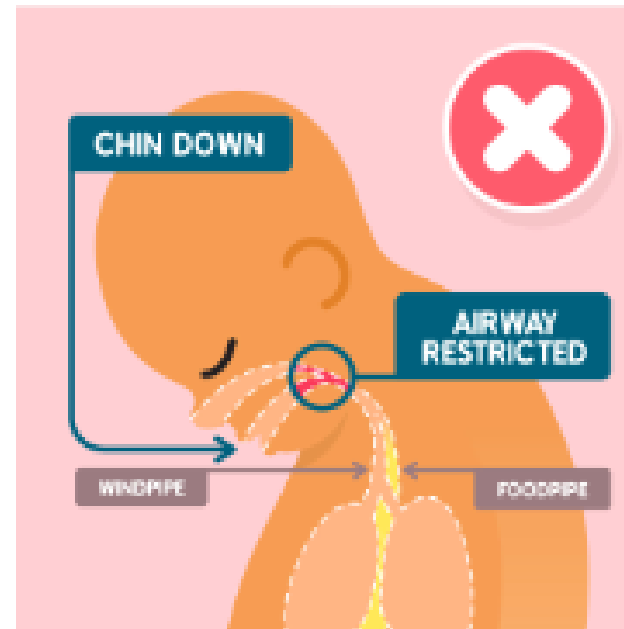


# These products are not safe for sleeping!

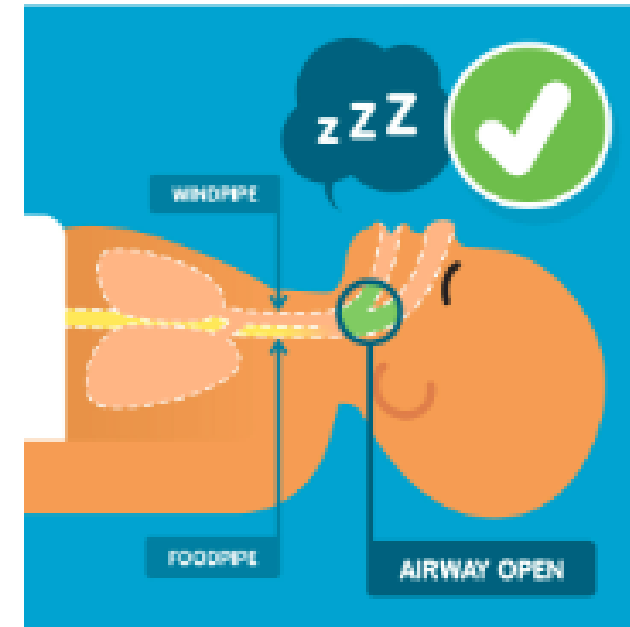
If your baby falls asleep in a product like these move them onto a clear, flat, firm space.



Folded airway



Open airway



# How to address unsafe sleep images you see on social media or website platforms

OK! Celebrity News ▶ Gogglebox

## Gogglebox star gives birth to adorable baby boy and reveals sweet name and first pic

Georgia Bell has shared a string of cute pics - and pal Abbie Lynn was among the first to congratulate her...

CELEBRITY NEWS By **Jamie Downham** Editor, OK.co.uk  
07:04, 14 NOV 2024 | UPDATED 08:54, 14 NOV 2024

Bookmark



Comments



The Gogglebox family has a new - and very cute - baby

Gogglebox star **Georgia Bell** has given birth to a baby boy and revealed his cute name alongside a string of cute pictures. The Channel 4 favourite - famous for her blunt takes on TV shows alongside

ADVERTISEMENT



- Send a direct message or reply within the social media platform
- Email the account that posted the image
- Comment on the post, gently noting what about the image is unsafe and offering a link or suggestions for how to follow the guidelines
- Remember, it is important to offer helpful, constructive feedback in a kind and nonjudgmental tone

What is wrong with this picture?



# Car seats, buggies and pram systems





# Slings

## Is baby wearing safe?

- The World Health Organisation supports 24 hour-a-day babywearing for premature babies, until they reach their full gestational age.
- Carefully check any sling or baby carrier that you own, buy or borrow for wear and tear. Only undertake safe activities while your child is in the sling or baby carrier – no jogging, cycling or extreme sports!
- Placing a baby incorrectly in a sling or soft carrier can be dangerous, and lead to risk of falls, entrapment, or suffocation.
- Be careful when selecting your sling, carrier, or other equipment. Some 'bag style' slings are shaped in a way that leads to the baby curling up in the sling, pressing their chin towards the chest.
- The safest position is an upright one that meets the TICKS guidelines – Tight, In View, Close enough to Kiss, Keep Chin off the Chest, Supported Back.



- ✓ TIGHT
- ✓ IN VIEW AT ALL TIMES
- ✓ CLOSE ENOUGH TO KISS
- ✓ KEEP CHIN OFF THE CHEST
- ✓ SUPPORTED BACK

# Swaddling



## The research

- Research around swaddling is contradictory, with newer studies suggesting that swaddling might not always be safe
- Babies that are swaddled may sleep more deeply. While this may appear to be good it may put babies at higher risk of SIDS. The ability to arouse (begin to wake) from sleep is key to a baby's ability to cope with things in their environment that might otherwise put them at risk of SIDS.
- Research shows that swaddling reduces this ability much more among babies for whom swaddling is a new experience – ie. have NOT been swaddled since birth.
- Studies have suggested that swaddling can put babies at higher risk of bone-development problems, chest infections and overheating.
- It is not considered to be a good idea to swaddle a baby when bed-sharing. Babies need to be able to use their arms and legs to alert adults who get too close, and to move covers from their faces. Swaddling prevents a bed-sharing baby from doing this.

## Guidelines

- Use thin materials.
- Never put a swaddled baby to sleep on their front.
- Stop swaddling (with arms wrapped inside the material) when a baby shows signs of rolling.
- Ensure baby is not overdressed under the swaddle, has their head uncovered and does not have an infection or fever.
- Baby should be swaddled securely to reduce the risk of face-covering by loose material.
- Check the baby's temperature to ensure they do not get too hot. **DO NOT USE** blankets or place any additional bedding over a swaddled baby, this could cause them to overheat.
- Swaddles should not be applied very tightly around the hips as this is strongly associated with developmental dysplasia of the hip.

# Are bath seats safe?



- No, bath seats are not safe!
- Babies can slip out of the seat, tip over, or climb out and drown, even in a small amount of water
- Babies should never be left alone in a bath seat even if an older child is present



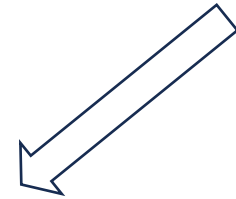
# Toddlers



- Safe sleep space
- Away from window blind cord pulls, curtains or electrical cords
- Entrapment risks
- 30cm bed to wall gap
- Head of bed against the wall is safest



# “The Safest Place” Safer Sleep Week campaign 2024



**42 of these children were  
less than a year old**

# Safer Sleep

- It isn't helpful to tell parents what they must or mustn't do
- Advice must be evidence based and tailored to the individual circumstances of the family
- Sleeping in close contact helps babies to settle and supports breastfeeding, which in turn protects babies from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- On any night, 22% of babies will bedshare – so 149,000 babies will be in bed with their parent tonight

# Co-sleeping and SIDS

**~680,000**

babies are born each year  
in England and Wales<sup>1</sup>

**~340,000**

babies will have slept together in an adult  
bed with one or both parents by three  
months, whether intended or not<sup>2</sup>

- The messages can seem complex, controversial and at odds with the reality of parents' lives. You may also fear getting it wrong, as this could result in the loss of a baby's life and/or serious consequences. It can, therefore, feel safest to either simply tell all parents to never co-sleep or just to say nothing at all.



- Unfortunately, this approach is not safe. It can increase the risks to babies because:

Young babies wake frequently at night and need to be fed and cared for somewhere. In most homes this will be in bed or on a sofa or armchair, simply because there is no other comfortable place. Parents can easily choose the more dangerous sofa over the less dangerous bed because they are trying to follow advice to never bed-share.

Mothers can try and sit up rather than lay in bed to breastfeed to stop themselves falling asleep. As most babies breastfeed frequently, mothers risk falling asleep in a more dangerous position than if they had been lying down.

Babies thrive on closeness and comfort. Many parents end up co-sleeping, whether they intended to or not, as it settles their baby and so enables everyone to sleep.

While some young babies settle easily in a cot or Moses basket between feeds, others do not. Some parents who choose not to co-sleep may decide to encourage their baby to learn to sleep independently using the controlled crying method, which is not recommended. This approach can be distressing for the parents and their baby, be detrimental to the baby's growth and development and can undermine breastfeeding.



It is most important to explain that around half of all parents will sleep with their baby at some point, be this planned or unplanned, and, although SIDS is very rare, it is much more likely to happen in certain circumstances.

Provide parents with advice about how to care for their baby at night Caring for your baby at night and when sleeping

Sleeping on a sofa or chair with a baby is very dangerous and should always be avoided. If parents fall asleep with their baby, they are much safer in a bed than on a sofa or chair.\*

SIDS is more likely if parents co-sleep after drinking or taking drugs; having an open conversation can help them to understand why they should be very careful not to fall asleep with their baby after drinking or taking drugs. Drink and drugs also affect normal functioning and decision-making. Discuss the importance of planning care for their baby at such times, for example by asking a sober adult to help.

Co-sleeping is much more dangerous when parents smoke or have smoked during pregnancy; help parents understand this and offer every support for them to cut down or stop, especially in pregnancy.

SIDS is more common in babies who were born low birthweight or premature; therefore, parents of these babies should avoid co-sleeping especially in early infancy.

Try and take time to discuss the issues with these parents and to help them look for practical solutions to issues that are affecting them such as lack of a cot, bed or space for sleeping. Breaks in routine, such as visiting friends and family overnight or going on holiday can also present an extra risk to babies. Suggesting that parents think about what they are going to do at such times can therefore be helpful.

Remember, shocking messages that imply that all/any co-sleeping leads to death are not helpful. They do not reflect the evidence, and they frighten parents and staff, induce guilt and closedown honest conversations.

# Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy Multi-agency Risk Minimisation Training



# Further information and signposting

- Lullaby Trust [The Lullaby Trust - Safer sleep for babies, Support for families](#)
- Basis [BASIS – Baby Sleep Information Source](#)
- Unicef [Baby sleep | UNICEF Parenting](#)
- ICON [Home - ICON Cope](#)
- CAPT [Child Accident Prevention Trust | A safer world for all our children](#)
- RoSPA [RoSPA – The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents - RoSPA](#)

