

Safer sleep for babies over the festive period.

As the festive season approaches, the **Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership** is reminding professionals and parents about the importance of safe sleep for babies. Sadly over 300 infants die suddenly and unexpectedly in England and Wales each year. By following the evidence-based safer sleep advice the risk of these tragic events can be reduced.

Although fewer families will be traveling to stay with others this year due to the Pandemic, young babies and families may still be out of their usual routine, and other people may be putting babies to bed. We're encouraging everyone to help ensure the Lullaby Trust's Safer Sleep tips are followed, whether babies are sleeping at home or away, at their normal bedtime and during daytime naps. Key messages are:

- Always place your baby on their back to sleep
- Keep your baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth
- Place your baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as you for the first 6 months
- Breastfeed your baby, if you can
- Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in good condition
- Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby. Be particularly aware of this after drinking alcohol.
- Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you smoke, have been drinking or have taken drugs or are extremely tired, if your baby was born prematurely or was of low birth-weight.

During the cold winter months families may also be worried about keeping their baby warm enough, but it's important that babies are a comfortable temperature-not too hot or too cold

- A room temperature of 16-20 degrees C-with light bedding or a lightweight, well-fitting sleeping bag-is comfortable and safe for sleeping babies. A room thermometer in the room where your baby sleeps can be used to check this.
- Feel your baby's tummy or the back of their neck and if their skin is hot or sweaty, remove one or more layers of bedclothes or bedding.
- When babies feel unwell, with a cold or fever, they may be warmer than usual. It is important that you put fewer layers on an unwell baby so they have the opportunity to lower their body temperature – don't feel tempted to wrap an unwell baby up more than usual.
- Babies do not need to wear hats indoors, nor sleep under a duvet or quilt.
- It is rarely necessary to keep your heating on all night. If you do feel your home is too cold and you want to do this, make sure your heating is set at a low temperature, and certainly no higher than 20°C.

The Lullaby Trust website has lots of information and resources for parents, carers and professionals about safe sleeping and sudden and unexpected death in infancy, <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/>. Follow the Lullaby Trust on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter for up to date messages.

In Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we have been benchmarking our practice against the Government's 'Out of Routine' report; a review of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) where the children are considered at risk of significant harm, published in July 2020.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/901091/DfE_Death_in_infancy_review.pdf

We are developing an action plan focusing on our strategic response, workforce development, information/tools and working with families. Progress against the action plan will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Children Partnership. If you would like to find out more about this work please contact:

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