

# Putting Baby Safely to Sleep:

Tools for Nurses, Family Physicians,  
Obstetricians and Pediatricians



This guidance provides useful ideas and resources for sharing important messages about putting baby safely to sleep with new and expectant parents.

## Your role

Engage new and expectant parents, provide them with information, direct them to resources that educate them about safe infant sleep environments and practices and empower them to cope with infant sleep-related challenges.

## The opportunities

- Ask parents about infant sleep challenges during medical appointments and hospital stays, and whether they have questions about the ***National Institutes of Health's recommended infant sleep guidelines***. Do you have a patient who has just returned from deployment? Discuss the risks associated with fatigue while caring for an infant.
- Share safe sleep information with your patients. Use the ***American Academy of Pediatrics safe sleep information***, First Candle's brochure ***Room Sharing is Safer than Bed Sharing***\* and articles on safe sleep practices on ***Military OneSource***.
- Encounter parents that might need extra support? Encourage them to contact their ***local New Parent Support Program*** by searching 'New Parent Support Program' on ***MilitaryINSTALLATIONS***. If they are not near a military installation they can contact their state's ***Joint Family Support Assistance Program*** for help with infant care and parenting stress.
- Share our archived blogs. Tell them about the archived blog series, ***Sleep Like a Baby: The Keys to Infant Slumber***, designed especially for military parents.
- Participate in free ***American Academy of Pediatrics online training*** about creating safe sleep environments.

## Key messages for new and expectant parents:

- Sleep is often one of the most significant challenges for new parents.
- One of the most important decisions new parents make is where and how they place a baby to sleep.
- Ensuring your baby is in a safe sleep environment involves closely monitoring your own personal level of alertness while caring for your infant.
- Safe sleep can save lives.

## Key online resources:

- <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/safe-sleep-practices>
- <https://www.theparentreview.com/DoD/>
- <http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/from-baby-to-big-kid/>
- <https://text4baby.org/>
- <http://www.extension.org/pages/22110/just-in-time-parenting-newsletters>

\* The American Academy of Pediatrics and First Candle are private organizations. The Department of Defense does not control or endorse the content of these sites.

