

Practice Guidance Specific to Safe Sleep and Co-Sleeping

- Babies need their own Safe Sleep Space. A crib, bassinet, or pack & play with a firm mattress (one designed for that device) and a snug fitting crib sheet.
- Babies should always sleep **ALONE**. Babies should sleep close to their parent by sharing a room, but not the bed. Sharing a bed with a sleeping adult puts the baby at high risk for suffocation or overlay.
- Babies should always be on their **BACK** for every sleep.
- An adult bed is never a safe place for an infant to sleep. Neither is a couch, recliner, or chair, with or without another person.
- Babies should NOT be placed on their side or stomach to sleep. This has been proven to be very dangerous and raises the likelihood of SIDS.
- Babies should never be around cigarette smoke, including e-cigarettes.
- Avoid overheating the baby. If the caregiver is comfortable, the baby needs no more than one layer more than the adults in the room.
- Never have the baby share a bed with another adult or child. Especially someone who has been using alcohol or drugs, even if the drugs are by prescription.
- The **CRIB** (includes a bassinet or pack & play) should not have anything in it but the baby — no added soft bedding such as blankets, pillows, bumper pads, or toys.
- Babies should always use a footed sleeper, infant sleep sac or gown for added warmth if needed.
- **Dangerous** behavior such as drinking and drug use (even some prescription drugs) impair one's ability to care for a baby, making bed-sharing and other unsafe sleep even more dangerous for the baby. In Kentucky's child abuse deaths, this a common finding among the infant deaths. Be sure families where there is substance abuse are counseled to always follow the ABCs and that they understand the potential consequences of not following them.

Things You Can Do

- Talk to your families and specially ask "Where does your child sleep?" Discuss why the ABCD's (Alone, Back, Crib, Danger) of safe sleep are important.
- Use the "[What does Safe Sleep Look Like?](#)" Handout and explain the **ABCD's of Safe Sleep**: Baby should always sleep **Alone** on their **Back**, and in a clean, clear **Crib** (bassinet or pack & play) and avoid **Dangerous** situations. If families you work with don't have a crib or other safe sleep space, you can check with the nearest Cribs or Kids program at www.cribsforkids.org/find-a-chapter/ or call your local health department. If the family has a crib check the safety of the crib on the Consumer Product Safety website: www.cpsc.gov/cribs.
- Dangerous behavior such as drinking, and drug use (even some prescription drugs) can impair a person's ability to care for a baby. Counsel your families about this.

Things for Families to Avoid

- Babies should not sleep in car seats, swings, infant seats, or other items not designed for infant sleep.

- The baby's crib should not have bumper pads, blankets, pillows, toys, or other items in the crib. These things are hazards and increase the risk of suffocation.