



# NAPSS

National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep  
A Wake-Up Call to Safeguard Sleeping Infants



National Center for Education  
in Maternal and Child Health  
Georgetown University

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## MODULE 5: Checklist for Biases in Conversations

Before you start a conversation with a family or individual, consider asking yourself the following questions:

1. Do I see this family or person as part of a group or category? (e.g., teen mother, from a particular racial or ethnic group, first-time mother, family with other children, family with low income, family with limited or no English proficiency, etc.)
2. If yes, will that view:
  - Lead to any assumptions about the amount of time I think the conversation will take? (e.g., longer because they will have trouble understanding what I am saying; not worth spending a lot of time, since they will not likely understand or want to implement the recommendations)
  - Influence how I communicate with patients and their families? (e.g., limit how much information I provide, work with an interpreter, give the basic recommendations, but not detailed explanations)
  - Hamper my capacity to feel and express empathy toward my patients? (e.g., feelings about how conversations with families in this group or category have gone in the past, feelings that they use excuses for not following recommendations)
  - Affect the types of information and recommendations I offer? (e.g., make assumptions about their ability to read written materials; omit some recommendations, because people from this group or category don't typically accept or like them)
  - Affect my expectations about whether families can succeed in carrying out their plans for feeding and sleeping their babies? (e.g., people from this group never follow through or always follow through)

After each conversation, check in with yourself again. Did any assumptions creep into your interactions? How did they affect how you interacted? Use this information to keep working on how bias might affect your conversations with families.

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This handout has been developed as a component of the Building on Campaigns with Conversations: An Individualized Approach to Helping Families Embrace Safe Sleep & Breastfeeding online curriculum. To view the entire curriculum, please visit: <https://www.ncemch.org/learning/building>.

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