



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

MODULE 4: Discussion Points on Keeping Baby Safe in Dangerous Situations

When we talk about keeping babies safe while they sleep, it relates to the AAP recommendations to reduce SIDS and SUID deaths. However, many families who live in neighborhoods with high levels of violence and poor housing conditions do not see this issue as their highest safety priority.

I need to keep the baby in bed with me to keep the baby safe.

Families who live in neighborhoods with high levels of violence see keeping the baby in the adult bed as a potential way to shield them from stray bullets entering the room. Mothers in families where domestic violence is an issue may see keeping the baby near them in bed as a way to protect the baby (and sometimes themselves) from that violence. There are also issues in poor housing with rodents and mothers wanting babies in bed to protect them from rats. These issues are much more immediate in the family's experience. Plus, SIDS and SUID are not very common, and they may not know about anyone who has experienced that type of loss. Unfortunately, they may know about children killed by stray bullets or see daily the impact of domestic violence.

Discussion Points:

- Acknowledge these concerns and the importance of keeping babies safe in many ways. Discuss if there may be alternatives to having the baby in bed with the parent for protection. As part of a plan, for example, a mother could think about areas of the room least likely to be penetrated by bullets.
- If the mother plans to bed share, discuss the recommendations for reducing the risks in the adult bed (See Module 3 and the handouts that accompany Module 3).
- Urge mothers who are concerned about domestic violence to seek help. As part of the plan for that family, provide support in doing so or connect them with those who can.
- Discuss as part of planning, helping families find advocates for safe housing.
- Side cars are now approved sleep surfaces and may be a solution. Side cars are an attachment to the side of the bed that gives the baby some separate space within arm's reach of the mother. Side cars are not affordable for all families.

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>.

Suggested Citation: Bronheim, S. (2017). Building on campaigns with conversations: An individualized approach to helping families embrace safe sleep and breastfeeding. Washington, DC: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health.

Information is based on the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) technical report: Moon, R. Y., & AAP Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. (2016). SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths: Evidence base for 2016 updated recommendations for a safe infant sleeping environment. *Pediatrics*, 138(5) e20162940 and the AAP policy statement: Eidelman, A. I., Schanler, R. J., Johnston, M., Landers, S., Noble, L., Szucs, K., & Viehmann, L. (2012). Breastfeeding and the use of human milk. *Pediatrics*, 129(3), e827-e841.

This material is copyrighted © Georgetown University and National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health. This handout can be downloaded and used with families as long as it is not altered and proper credit is given to NCEMCH. For copyright information, visit <https://www.ncemch.org/copyright.php>.

This project was supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UF7MC26937 for \$1,500,000. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.