



Safe Sleep Policy for Infants in Child Care

This Safe Sleep policy will be reviewed annually with all staff and enrolled families in _____ (Name of Program) to familiarize them with the program's sleep policies for infants and to provide them with current recommendations.*

Safe sleep and napping practices reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and the spread of contagious diseases. SIDS is the unexpected death of a seemingly healthy infant under one year of age for whom no cause of death can be determined. It is the leading cause of death in children from one to twelve months of age. The chance of SIDS occurring is highest when an infant first starts child care.

In order to maintain safe sleep practices, these policies and procedures will be followed:

Infant Sleep Practices and Environment:

1. Healthy infants will always be put to sleep on their backs. Side sleeping is not as safe as back sleeping and is not advised. Research shows that putting an infant to sleep on his back does not cause him to choke or aspirate.
2. If a parent/guardian requests that their child be put to sleep in a position other than on their back, the parent must provide a Physician's Signed Note that explains how the infant should be put to sleep and the medical reason for this position. This note will be kept in the child's medical file and all staff will be notified of the infant's prescribed sleep position.
3. Infants will be placed to sleep on a firm mattress that fits tightly in a crib that meets Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards. The sheet will fit the mattress snugly.
4. No toys, stuffed animals, pillows, crib bumpers, positioning devices (unless ordered by a health care provider) or extra bedding will be in the crib.
5. If a blanket is used for extra warmth, the infant will be placed in the Feet-Foot positioning with the infant's feet up against the foot of the crib with a thin blanket that reaches only as far as the infant's chest and is placed under the infant's arms and tucked around the crib mattress (see photo). This position prevents the blanket from slipping up over the infant's face or the infant slipping under the blanket.
6. If the infant requires additional warmth, a blanket sleeper will be used, if available.



7. Overheating is one of the risk factors for SIDS; to avoid overheating:
 - a. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
 - b. Avoid excessive blankets and bedding.
 - c. Do not overdress infants when they sleep.
8. The infant's head will remain uncovered when she sleeps.
9. When an infant can easily turn over from back to front and front to back, the infant will be put to sleep on his back but will be allowed to assume his preferred sleep position.
10. Sleeping infants will be visually checked every 15-20 minutes. This is especially important during the first weeks an infant is in child care. The infant will be observed to verify that the infant's skin color is normal, and the infant's chest is rising and falling as she breathes.
11. Infants will not share cribs.
12. Infants will never be put to sleep on a couch, chair, cushion, or an adult bed, even a twin bed (there are no safety standards for mattresses unless they are crib mattresses).
13. The child care program is a smoke-free environment. Infants exposed to smoke have an increased risk of SIDS.
14. Awake infants will have supervised "Tummy Time" to allow for the development of strong back and neck muscles and prevent the development of flat areas on the head.
15. The time infants spend in a car seat, swing or bouncy chair will be limited as this can delay motor development and may also cause the infant to develop a flat area on the back of her head.
16. Pacifier use has been shown to decrease the risk for SIDS. Infants may be offered a pacifier when they are in the crib if parents offer a pacifier at home (delay introducing a pacifier to breastfeeding infants until one month). Pacifiers will not be attached by a string or to the infant's clothing. Pacifiers will not be re-inserted if they fall out after the infant is asleep.

Resources

A Child Care Provider's Guide to Safe Sleep.

Available at: <http://www.healthychildcare.org/pdf/SIDSchildcaresafesleep.pdf>

Caring For Our Children, standards 3.008, 5.144-5.1448. Available at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/PDFVersion/NationalHealthandSafetyPerformanceStandards.pdf>

Visit www.cpsc.gov <<http://www.cpsc.gov>> or www.jpma.org <<http://www.jpma.org>> for crib safety standards.

CCHP Health and Safety Note, Protecting Infants in Our Care from SIDS.

Available at: <http://ucsfchildcarehealth.org/pdfs/healthandsafety/sidsen112805.pdf>

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and the Child Care Provider: Setting Policy On Infant Sleep Position, National SIDS & Infant Death Program Support Center.

Available at: <http://www.firstcandle.org/FC-PDF2/HHS&P/settingpolicyoninfantsleepposition.pdf>

*** This policy reflects the safe sleep research as of November, 2008.**

Prepared by the UCSF California Childcare Health Program with support from the CJ Foundation.