



NAPPPSS

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

Safe Infant Sleep and Breastfeeding Support: What to Consider When Looking for Child Care

As you look for child care outside your home, there are many things to consider. This guide will help you assess two important aspects of child care, safe infant sleep and breastfeeding, as you decide who will care for your baby. Please keep in mind, this document has a limited focus and there are many other safety issues to be aware of in finding a safe and supportive place for your child and family. Note: The term “child’s caregiver” will be used for child care centers, home child care, faith-based child care providers, and child care professionals, as well as family, friend and neighbor care.

Breastfeeding Support: Things to Ask

These questions are designed to identify breastfeeding-friendly child care practices and to create the opportunity for conversation around your baby’s feeding.

- Do you welcome and encourage mothers to breastfeed infants onsite at any time during the day?
- Will you feed my baby when he/she is hungry by recognizing hunger and fullness (feeding cues), rather than on a strict schedule?
- Will my baby be held while being fed?
- Are you willing to hold off feeding right before I pick up my baby?
- Do you create/make a feeding plan for each infant with information from parents? This plan should be changed as needed.
- Will you share time and amount of feedings with me every day?
- Do you have a breastfeeding policy/practice in place?
- Are all caregivers, including regular staff, volunteers, floaters, and substitutes, trained in and following proper procedures for the handling and storing of breast milk?

Things to Look for

- Breast milk handling and storing instructions posted in kitchen area
- Breastfeeding space that is comfortable, quiet, and clean with a nearby outlet for pumping if needed
- Refrigerator space for your milk
- Caregivers washing their hands before preparing and feeding infants and children
- Posters & signs that create a welcoming place for breastfeeding

Additional Resources

- Supporting breastfeeding in child care (online training course)
<https://www.carecourses.com/Ecommerce/CourseDetail.aspx?ItemID=381>
- Support for breastfeeding in early care and education (CDC’s model breastfeeding policy)
<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/strategy6-support-breastfeeding-early-care.pdf>
- Breastfeeding and going back to work (Office on Women’s Health article, additional resources)
<https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-home-work-and-public/breastfeeding-and-going-back-work/#3>

Safe Infant Sleep: Things to Ask

Here are some questions designed to identify safe sleep “best practice” and encourage conversations with the child caregiver about your routines at home.

- Will the sleep space be an approved crib, play yard or other approved sleep surface?
- Will my child have his/her own sleep space that is the same each day?
- Since it is NOT recommended, if my baby falls asleep in a swing, car seat or bouncy seat, will he/she be moved to an approved sleep surface?
- Is the caregiver within sight and sound of my baby during sleep?
- Is the sleep area inspected before each sleep session?
- Do you have a safe infant sleep policy/practice in place?
- Are all caregivers, including regular staff, volunteers, floaters, and substitutes, trained in and following safe infant sleep guidelines?

Always Ask to See the Sleep Area. Things to Look for

The child’s caregiver follows the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) [recommendations](#) for a safe infant sleeping environment (highlights below).

- Babies always placed on their backs to sleep
- Firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety approved crib, play yard, or other sleep surface covered by a fitted sheet with no other bedding
- EMPTY CRIB - No soft objects, pillows, blankets, toys, bumper pads, bottles or any other items in baby’s sleep area
- Babies dressed appropriately for the room temperature, and not in clothes that could cause overheating
- Nothing with ties, such as bibs, pacifiers, cords or other attachments on infants while sleeping
- No use of products in the sleep space that claim to reduce the risk or prevent SIDS (such as wedges, positioners, or other products that claim to keep infants in a specific position)
- Posted safe sleep guidelines to remind all staff, volunteers, floaters, and substitutes of these important practices
- There are no electrical cords or window blind cords near the crib. Electrical cords and window blind cords can create a safety hazard

Additional Resources

- Learn more about finding and selecting quality child care at Child Care Aware <http://www.childcareaware.org/>
- Consumer Products Safety Commission Crib Information Center <https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/cribs>

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