



<b>Professional curiosity (series of 4 articles)</b>	<b>Bexley Safeguarding Children's Board</b>
<b>2. Supporting families to reduce the risk of SIDS</b>	<b>October 2017</b>
<p>The focus of this leaflet is on vulnerability factors of under 1s. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) affects over 300 families every year.</p> <p><b><u>What advice should you give parents?</u></b></p> <p>This advice has been taken from The Lullaby Trust and the following <a href="#">leaflet</a> can be shared with parents. It is advisable to have this discussion in the room where the baby will sleep so the sleeping environment can be observed and the key messages made more relevant for families.</p> <p><b>✓ Safe sleeping environment</b>  The safest place for a baby to sleep for the first 6 months is in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as the parents - including daytime sleeps. Parents should be advised that sofa sharing greatly increases the risk of SIDS and that they should never sleep on a sofa or armchair with their baby. Bed sharing also increases the risk of SIDS and the risk is particularly increased where the adult is a smoker, has consumed alcohol or taken drugs - including medications that may make them drowsy. A safe room temperature is considered to be 16–20°C.</p> <p><b>✓ Safe sleeping position</b>  Parents should be advised to always place the baby on their back at the start of every sleep period (unless there is medical advice to the contrary). If a parent finds that their baby has rolled onto their stomach, the baby should be turned onto their back again, but parents should not feel that they have to get up all night to check. Babies will learn at some point to roll onto their front. It is important to keep a baby's head uncovered while they are sleeping; therefore babies should be placed on their back in the 'feet to foot' position (i.e. placing the baby's feet to the foot of the cot to avoid them wriggling down under the covers) and the use of loose bedding, pillows, quilts and duvets should be avoided. Babies should sleep on a firm, flat mattress that is clean and in good condition. A mattress with a waterproof cover will help parents to keep it clean and dry.</p> <p><b>✓ Go smokefree</b>  Parents should be advised not to smoke during pregnancy or after birth; this applies to both parents. During pregnancy, the more cigarettes smoked, the higher the risk of SIDS. You can give pregnant women who smoke the best chance of stopping by putting them in contact with the local stop smoking service. Passive smoking also significantly increases the risk of SIDS and the risk increases further where both parents smoke, therefore it is important to keep a baby out of smoky atmospheres.</p> <p><b>✓ Breastfeeding</b>  Studies have consistently shown a reduced risk of SIDS in breastfed infants. Breastfeeding should be encouraged, where possible. If the parent wishes to give their baby a dummy, breastfeeding should be established before the dummy is introduced.</p> <p><b>✓ Dummy use</b>  Regular use of a dummy has been found to be associated with a lower risk of SIDS and an orthodontic dummy is best as it adapts to a baby's mouth shape. Parents may consider offering a dummy when settling the baby to sleep once the baby is over 4 weeks old. Parents should not force their baby to take a dummy or put it back in if the baby spits it out. Parents should not offer a</p>	

dummy during awake time or use a neck cord. The dummy should gently be withdrawn between the ages of 6-12 months to avoid any potential adverse effects.