



Let's Talk Safe Infant Sleep

When Time Matters

Short Conversations

A 5-to-10-minute opportunity

Introduction:

Newborns spend most of their time sleeping, eating, or having other needs tended to. It is a lot of work, but if you know what to expect ahead of time, you will feel better prepared. New parents can expect to be tired because newborns do not spend as much time as adults do in deep sleep. Newborn sleep is largely regulated by their frequent need to eat and be comforted. It is common for people to ask how your baby is sleeping because most don't understand normal infant sleep patterns and believe that *sleeping through the night* is a measure of a "good baby." These questions along with lack of sleep can cause parents to make decisions about sleep practices that put their baby at increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), suffocation, and strangulation.

Ask: Have you heard this information before? What do you think?
What have others told you about sleeping and feeding?
How does what others have told you shape your decisions about sleeping and feeding your baby?

Listen to responses and use them to guide the conversation, share recommendations, acknowledge and support cultural practices, correct misinformation, and support the parent or caregiver to create a plan.

Ask: What are your plans for baby's sleep- including day-time naps and night-time sleep?

Listen for plans that align with the recommendations and those that do not.

Explore feeding in connection with infant sleep. Provide information about breastfeeding as a top-tier SIDS risk reduction strategy and formula feeding's increased risks. (Some parents and caregivers may not know this information.)

Listen for any reasons they give for their intentions.

Share recommendations and explain why they are important. **TOOL = DSHS Safe Infant Sleep Infographic**

Following these recommendations keeps your baby safe by 1) Making sure your baby gets enough oxygen (keeping your baby's airways open and keeping your baby from rebreathing carbon dioxide when face down and 2) Prevent your baby from sleeping so deeply that your baby won't wake up if their oxygen levels are too low.

Ask: Have you heard these recommendations before?
Can I clarify any of the recommendations and why? (Use side 1 of **TOOL = Let's Talk - Recommendations (topic specific discussion guides)** to support concerns the parent or caregiver may share.)
Which recommendations do you think you can follow with your new baby?
Is there anything that may be hard, or that you might need help with?
(This is open-ended to prompt the next phase of discussion. Make notes on the Let's Talk Safe Infant Sleep Parent and Caregiver Plan to help identify recommendations that need support and community resources.)

Listen and respond to clarify recommendations.

Listen for what they can do and what they see their challenges may be. If they didn't share any challenges, you may share some "common concerns." Use side 2 of **TOOL= Let's Talk - Recommendations (topic specific discussion guides)**

Provide resources or referrals to support the parent or caregiver with safe sleep planning.

TOOLS = Let's Talk - Parent and Caregiver Plan, Community Resources, Circle of Support

Let's Talk - Safe Infant Sleep

Continue to share safe infant sleep information with parents and caregivers throughout the first year to increase their use of safe sleep practices!



Let's Talk Safe Infant Sleep

When Time Matters

Digging Deeper
An extended 20-to-30-minute opportunity

Introduction

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Which recommendations do you think you can follow with your new baby?

Is there anything that may be hard, or that you might need help with?

(This is open-ended to prompt the next phase of discussion. Make notes on the **TOOLS = Let's Talk - Safe Infant Sleep Parent and Caregiver Plan** to help identify recommendations that need support and community resources.)

Listen and respond to clarify recommendations.

Listen for what they can do and what they see their challenges may be. If they didn't share any challenges, you may share some "common concerns." Use side 2 of **TOOL = Let's Talk - Recommendations (topic specific discussion guides)**

Ask if they think that they might follow the recommendations—any or all?

Do they have any concerns, questions, or reluctance? These concerns may be related to realistic barriers, personal or cultural beliefs, or pressure from others.

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Let's Talk Safe Infant Sleep

When Time Matters

Digging Deeper
An extended 20-to-30-minute opportunity

Ask if you can share some additional information with them about any concern that they share. If they agree, share the information, and elicit their thoughts and feelings about what you share.

Return to the question- What are your plans for baby's sleep-including naps during the day and night-time sleep?

TOOLS = Let's Talk - Parent and Caregiver Plan, Community Resources, Circle of Support

Discuss with them what they think the most important factors are in making that decision (resource needs—such as getting a safety-approved sleep surface, information on how to obtain a breast pump, what others think, cultural considerations that impact following the recommendations, safety concerns, or space to accommodate closeness to baby, etc.).

- What do I need?
- What will I do?
- What do I need to know?
- Who can help?

Use their responses to build the action plan. **TOOL = Let's Talk – Parent and Caregiver Plan**

Ask: Can you connect your plan to the recommendations we talked about earlier?

If they are unsure of plans or recommendations, offer another conversation or refer them to resources that can help them assist in their decision-making process.

Remember, it is not your goal to convince parents and caregivers to follow the recommendations but to listen to their identified barriers while helping them problem-solve to create the safest sleep environment possible.

Once they have shared their goals, offer to help them make a plan that will help them succeed in their choices. Explain that both safe sleep and breastfeeding need some preparation:

- Engage support partners, families, or friends
- Identify a safety-approved infant sleep surface
- Plan for bumps in the road
- Become familiar with your baby's normal behaviors
- Connect with resources to help with expected challenges

Remind them that they can always change their plan, especially if there are new or unexpected barriers or changes in their goals. Let them know that sharing their safe sleep and feeding plans with all their baby's caregivers can help when they are tired, need sleep, or are concerned for their baby's safety while sleeping. If they agree, help them develop a plan or connect them with a resource that helps address their concerns. **TOOLS = Let's Talk - Parent and Caregiver Plan, Community Resources, Circle of Support**

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Let's Talk Safe Infant Sleep

When Time Matters

Continued Conversations

An ongoing opportunity to support

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Ask: Have you heard this information before? What do you think?

What have others told you about sleeping and feeding?

How does what others have told you shape your decisions about sleeping and feeding your baby?

Listen to responses and use them to guide the conversation, share recommendations, acknowledge and support cultural importance, correct misinformation, and support parents and caregivers to create a plan.

Ask: What are your plans for baby's sleep- including day-time naps and night-time sleep?

Listen for plans that align with the recommendations and those that do not.

Explore feeding in connection with infant sleep. Provide information about breastfeeding as a top-tier SIDS risk reduction strategy and formula feeding's increased risks. (Some parents and caregivers may not know this information).

Listen for any reasons they give for their intentions.

Share recommendations and explain why they are important. **TOOL = DSHS Safe Infant Sleep Infographic**

2nd opportunity with parent or caregiver

Ask: Do you remember our discussion from your last visit about safe infant sleep recommendations?

Ask: Had you heard these recommendations before?

Can I clarify any of the recommendations and why? (Use side 1 of **TOOL= Let's Talk – Recommendations (topic specific discussion guides)** to support concerns the parent or caregiver may share.)

Which recommendations do you think you can follow with your new baby?

Is there anything that may be hard, or that you might need help with?

(This is open-ended to prompt the next phase of discussion. Make notes on the **TOOLS= Let's Talk – Safe Infant Sleep Parent and Caregiver Plan** to help identify recommendations that need support and community resources.)

Listen and respond to clarify recommendations.

Listen for what they can do and what they see their challenges may be. If they didn't share any challenges, you may share some "common concerns." Use side 2 of **TOOL= Let's Talk – Recommendations (topic specific discussion guides)**

Let's Talk - Safe Infant Sleep

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Let's Talk Safe Infant Sleep

When Time Matters

Continued Conversations

An ongoing opportunity to support

(Continued) 2nd opportunity with parent or caregiver

Ask if they think that they might follow the recommendations—any or all?

Do they have any concerns, questions, or reluctance? These concerns may be related to realistic barriers, personal or cultural beliefs, or pressure from others.

Ask if you can share some additional information with them about their concern. If they agree, share the information, and elicit their thoughts and feelings about what you share.

3rd opportunity with parent or caregiver

Return to the question- What are your plans for baby's sleep- including naps during the day and night-time sleep?

Discuss with them what they think the most important factors are in making that decision (resource needs—such as getting a safety-approved sleep surface, information on how to obtain a breast pump, what others think, cultural considerations that impact following the recommendations, safety concerns, or space to accommodate closeness to baby).

- What do I need?
- What will I do?
- What do I need to know?
- Who can help?

Use their responses to build the action plan. **TOOL = Let's Talk – Parent and Caregiver Plan**

Review their stated plan and connect, where possible, the recommendations provided earlier.

If they are unsure of plans or recommendations offer another conversation or refer them to resources that can help them continue in their decision-making process.

Remember, it is not your goal to convince parents and caregivers to follow the recommendations, but to listen to their identified barriers while helping them problem-solve to create the safest sleep environment possible.

Once they have shared their plans offer to help them make a plan that will help them succeed with their choices. Let them know the plan will work on reducing risk (sleep issues) and maximizing health (feeding issues).

Explain that both safe sleep and breastfeeding need some preparation:

- Engage support partners, families, or friends,
- Identify a safety-approved infant sleep surface.
- Plan for bumps in the road.
- Become familiar with your baby's normal behaviors.
- Connect with resources to help with expected challenges.

Share that they can always change the plan. Let them know that sharing their initial plans with others can help when things get tough and they are tired, sleep deprived, or worried about what is happening to their baby. If they agree, help them work on a plan or connect them with that resource. **TOOLS = Let's Talk - Parent and Caregiver Plan, Community Resources, Circle of Support**

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