

## Tips for Creating a Safe Sleep Environment for Infants in Child Care

This checklist can serve as a basis for assessing the safe sleep environment for caregivers of infants. This information is based on American Academy of Pediatrics standards and the publication *Caring for Our Children* and applies to **infants under 1 year of age**. You are encouraged to attend the training, *Safe Sleeping Practices and Reducing the Risk of SIDS in Child Care*, offered through your local child care resource and referral agency (<http://iacrr.org>), to learn the most recent research-based practices.

### Assess the sleep environment:

- The infant is always placed to sleep on a firm sleep surface, such as a safety-approved crib mattress, in a safety-approved crib, porta-crib, or play yard (check with what licensing allows)
- The mattress fits snugly in the crib
- The fitted crib sheet fits tightly around the mattress
- The infant is never placed to sleep on a sofa, chair, or adult bed
- There is no soft or loose bedding, such as a quilt, placed underneath the infant
- All blankets, pillows, quilts, and bumpers are kept out of the infant's sleep area
- Nothing covers the infant's face (i.e., bibs)
- Crib gyms, crib toys, mobiles, mirrors, and all objects/toys are prohibited in or attached to an infant's crib
- Stuffed animals, stuffed toys, and loose bedding are kept out of the sleep area
- There is no smoking in the program
- The infant is kept away from any area where smoking has occurred
- The sleeping infant is not overheated by a room temperature that is too high or by too many layers of clothing
- There is a medical waiver on file that is signed by a doctor and lists the medical reason for a sleep position other than on the back for all infants who require an alternate position

### Be sure to follow these important rules of infant care:

- ✓ Infants under one year of age are always **placed on their backs to sleep**, for naps and at night
- ✓ Instead of a blanket, the infant is placed to sleep in sleep clothing such as a one-piece sleeper
- ✓ When the infant is awake and **being watched by a caregiver**, it is desirable to place him or her on the stomach for "tummy time." (Tummy time helps infants achieve developmental milestones.)
- ✓ Shall not use products such as wedges etc. that are intended to control the position of the infant in sleep as these have not been sufficiently tested for effectiveness or safety).
- ✓ If the infant falls asleep in another surface (carrier, car seat, swing) they should be immediately removed and placed in a safety approved crib, porta-crib or pack and play
- ✓ Do not swaddle infants using blankets. Swaddling is not recommended in child care.
  - If you do swaddle infants under 3 months then use a safe swaddler according to manufacturer specifications and not a blanket
- ✓ The infant is not placed to sleep with a bottle

### In addition:

- ✓ **Pacifier use:** Consider offering a clean dry pacifier when placing the infant down to sleep for naps or at night
  - The pacifier does not need to be re-inserted if it falls out
  - If infant refuses the pacifier, he or she should not be forced to take it

- For breastfed infants delay pacifier use until 1 month of age to ensure good onset of breastfeeding
- The pacifier should not be coated in any solution. Pacifier should be cleaned often and replaced regularly
- The pacifier should not be clipped or attached to the infant or the crib (strangulation hazard)
- ✓ Develop and follow a policy regarding sleep position in your child care setting
- ✓ Discuss your policy with parents before enrollment
  - It is recommend that parents sign the policy
  - Provide safe-sleep-related educational resource materials for parents
- ✓ Develop a schedule to check for recalls of infant products. *Consumer Product Safety Commission at: <http://www.cpsc.gov>*

### Does your Crib Meet New Safety Standards?

#### From the Federal Rule:

“[b] beginning June 28, 2011, all cribs manufactured and sold (including resale) must comply with new and improved federal safety standards. The new rules, which apply to full-size and non-full-size cribs, prohibit the manufacture or sale of traditional drop-side rail cribs, strengthen crib slats and mattress supports, improve the quality of hardware and require more rigorous testing.” CPSC’s crib rule includes a standard for full-size cribs ([16 CFR part 1219](#)) and a standard for non-full-size cribs ([16 CFR part 1220](#)).

#### Some things you should know:

- All family child care homes (licensed or license-exempt), child care centers, and unlicensed registered child care ministries must use compliant cribs.
- As of **June 28, 2011** all cribs manufactured and/or distributed in the United States must comply with new standards.
- Cribs manufactured **before July 23, 2010** are not likely to be compliant.
- Cribs manufactured **between July 24, 2010 and June 27, 2011** are not guaranteed to be compliant either.
  - A certificate of compliance must be kept on file for these cribs
- **NO** drop-side crib will be compliant with the new standards, even if it has an “immobilizer” or “fix-it” kit.

#### New Play Yard standards:

Effective Feb 28, 2013, play yards manufactured or imported for sale in the US must meet new and improved federal safety standards ([16 CFR 1221](#)).

#### For Play Yards: (Check with what licensing allows)

- Side rails should not form a sharp V when the product is folded. This prevents a child from strangling in the side rail.
- Corner brackets should be strong in order to prevent sharp-edged cracks and to prevent a side-rail collapse
- The mattress should be sturdy on the play yard floor to prevent children from getting trapped or hurt
- There should be no tears in mesh or fabric
- No missing, protruding, or loose screws, rivets, bolts, or hardware
- In good repair (if it is broken do not use it) and has not been recalled
- No cracks or stress whitening in plastic parts (especially corner brackets)

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