

# Health and Safety E-News for Caregivers and Teachers

August 2011



## Safe Sleep Practices

*New Crib Regulations went into effect on June 28, 2011. Child care providers will have to be in compliance by December 28, 2012. To learn more about how this affects child care providers, go to <http://www.healthychildcare.org/CribRegulations.html>*

### Did you know?

- About one in five sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) deaths occur while an infant is being cared for by someone other than a parent. Many of these deaths occur when infants who are used to sleeping on their backs at home are then placed to sleep on their tummies by another caregiver. We call this "unaccustomed tummy sleeping."
- Unaccustomed tummy sleeping increases the risk of SIDS. Babies who are used to sleeping on their backs and placed to sleep on their tummies are 18 times more likely to die from SIDS.

**A**ll caregivers should develop a written policy that explains to parents the practices that will be used to promote safe sleep when children are napping or sleeping. These practices are to reduce the risk of SIDS or suffocation death and other deaths that could occur when an infant is in a crib or asleep. Make sure all staff, volunteers, parents, and others who are approved to be in the infant room are familiar with these practices.

### Safe sleep practices include:

- ♥ **Back to sleep**—Babies up to 12 months should be placed on their backs for sleep, unless the child's health provider has completed a signed waiver indicating that the child requires an alternate sleep position.
- ♥ **Safe Sleep Environments**—A firm crib mattress covered by a tight-fitting sheet in a safety approved crib, no monitors or positioning devices should be used unless required by the child's health provider, and no other items in a crib except a pacifier.
- ♥ **Cribs are for Napping**—If an infant falls asleep in any other place other than their crib (i.e. a car seat, bouncy seat, etc.) they should be moved to their crib right away.
- ♥ **One at a time**—Only one infant in each crib.
- ♥ **Swaddling is not necessary**—Swaddling infants when they are in a crib is not necessary or recommended, but rather one-piece sleepers should be used.

♥ **Keep it tidy**—Keep toys, mobiles and play equipment should be kept away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments.

♥ **Comfort**—Make sure that the temperature in the room is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult, check the infants to make sure that they are comfortably clothed and that bibs, necklaces, and garments with ties or hoods are removed.

♥ **Sight and Sound**—Infants should be directly observed by sight and sound at all times, including when they are going to sleep, are sleeping, or in the process of waking up.

♥ **Keep it clean**—Bedding should be changed between children, and if mats are used, they should be cleaned between uses.



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### **What are the 2 most important things to remember about safe sleep practices?**

1. Healthy babies are safest when sleeping on their backs at nighttime and during naps. Side sleeping is not as safe as back sleeping and is not advised.
2. Tummy time is for babies who are awake and being watched. Your baby needs this to develop strong muscles.

**Remember...Back to Sleep, Tummy to Play**

### **Pacifiers:**

If pacifiers are allowed, facilities should have a written policy that indicates:

- a) Rationale and protocols for use of pacifiers;
- b) Written permission and any instructions or preferences from the child's parent/guardian;
- c) If desired, parent/guardian should provide at least two new pacifiers (labeled with their child's name using a waterproof label or non-toxic permanent marker) on a regular basis for their child to use. The extra pacifier should be available in case a replacement is needed;
- d) Staff should inspect each pacifier for tears or cracks (and to see if there is unknown fluid in the nipple) before each use;
- e) Staff should clean each pacifier with soap and water before each use;

- f) Pacifiers with attachments should not be allowed; pacifiers should not be clipped, pinned, or tied to an infant's clothing, and they should not be tied around an infant's neck, wrist, or other body part;
- g) If an infant refuses the pacifier, s/he should not be forced to take it;
- h) If the pacifier falls out of the infant's mouth, it does not need to be reinserted;
- i) Pacifiers should not be coated in any sweet solution;
- j) Pacifiers should be cleaned and stored open to air; separate from the diapering area, diapering items, or other children's personal items

**Caring for our Children, Standard 3.1.4.3**



### **Swaddling:**

In child care settings, swaddling is not necessary or recommended.

**RATIONALE:** There is evidence that swaddling can increase the risk of serious health outcomes, especially in certain situations. The risk of sudden infant death is increased if an infant is swaddled and placed on his/her stomach to sleep (4) or if the infant can roll over from back to stomach. Loose blankets around the head can be a risk factor for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) (3). With swaddling, there is an increased risk of developmental dysplasia of the hip, a hip condition that can result in long-term disability (1,5). Hip dysplasia is felt to be more common with swaddling because infants' legs can be forcibly extended. With excessive swaddling, infants may overheat (i.e., hyperthermia) (2).

**COMMENTS:** Most infants in child care centers are at least six-weeks-old. Even with newborns, research does not provide conclusive data about whether swaddling should or should not be used. Benefits of swaddling may include decreased crying, increased sleep periods, and improved temperature control. However, temperature can be maintained with appropriate infant clothing and/or an infant sleeping bag. Although swaddling may decrease crying, there are other, more serious health concerns to consider, including SIDS and hip disease. If swaddling is used, it should be used less and less over the course of the first few weeks and months of an infant's life.

**Caring for our Children, Standard 3.1.4.2**

## **Resources**

### **Websites**

**Healthy Child Care America**  
[www.healthychildcare.org](http://www.healthychildcare.org)

**Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition**  
<http://nrckids.org/>

**Healthy Children**  
[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

**CPSC Guide to New Crib Standards**  
<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/5023.pdf>

**CPSC Frequently Asked Questions**  
<http://www.cpsc.gov/onsafety/2011/03/the-new-crib-standard-questions-and-answers/>