

True and False Cards



Attached to this document you will find a series of statements in squares. Simply print off the sheets, and ask parents/carers to separate the cards into piles of 'true' and 'false'. You could laminate them so they are more durable. Once the cards have been sorted you can go through them and have a discussion about each one.

<p>1</p> <p>Babies only need to sleep on their backs at night - they can sleep on their fronts during the day</p>	<p>1</p> <p>False </p> <p>Babies should be placed on their backs for every sleep, day and night. Babies can be put on their front for supervised tummy time when they are awake to play. This will help strengthen their upper body muscles.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>It is best if a baby's cot is in a room of its own</p>	<p>2</p> <p>False </p> <p>Sleeping babies in a separate room from their parents during the first six months is known to increase the risk of SIDS.</p>

Swaddling can increase the chance of SIDS

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Whilst we do not advise for or against swaddling, we do urge parents to follow the advice below:

- Never put a swaddled baby to sleep on their front or side.
- Never swaddle when bed-sharing
- Never swaddle when a baby has an infection or fever
- Stop swaddling (with arms wrapped inside the material) when a baby shows signs of rolling as they could roll onto their tummy and won't be able to roll back.



More info

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Babies could choke on their vomit if they're slept on their backs

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It is often thought that sleeping healthy babies on their back puts them at a greater risk of death through aspiration of vomit and choking, the evidence on this does not show an increased risk of choking for babies asleep on their back.

The practice of sleeping a baby on its back has led to a fall in the rate of SIDS deaths and no increase in the rate of aspiration deaths.

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Premature babies are at a higher risk of SIDS

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Research has shown that babies born with low birth weight, those born preterm are at an increased risk of SIDS. Babies should never be slept on their front at home unless they have specific medical advice to do so. You shouldn't co-sleep with a premature baby.

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It doesn't matter what kind of mattress you use in a baby's cot

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A baby's mattress should be firm, flat, and have a waterproof cover. It should be in good condition and fit the cot or Moses basket correctly with no gaps. The surface of the mattress should be firm enough that when your baby is placed on it, their head does not sink in more than a few millimetres. Do not use a sheepskin in a cot or Moses basket or other sleep space, as it can reduce firmness and risk overheating.

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A room temperature of 18 degrees is too cold for a baby

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The recommended optimal room temperature is between 16 - 20°C for a sleeping baby.

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It is safe for parents to bring their baby into their bed at night for feeding

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Bringing a baby into the parental/adult bed for a cuddle or feed is fine, but they should be put back into their own cot or Moses basket afterwards. The safest place for a baby to sleep is in their own cot, in the parents' bedroom, for the first six months.

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Babies should always be put down to sleep in the 'feet to foot' position

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Every time you lay your baby down to sleep, make sure that you lay them feet to foot. This means laying them with their feet at the bottom of the cot / Moses baskets so they can't wriggle down under the blankets. Check everyone understands the term 'feet to foot'

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Using a dummy may increase the risk of SIDS

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Regular use of a dummy during sleep is associated with a lower risk of SIDS, but only if used consistently. Though it's worth knowing that inconsistent dummy use doesn't increase the risk of SIDS more than for a baby who never uses a dummy. Both have the same risk during sleep periods where a dummy is not used.

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Babies need to be kept very warm at night

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A room temperature of 16 - 20°C, combined with lightweight bedding, offers a comfortable environment for sleeping babies. While it is important to ensure that a baby does not get too cold, it is also important to avoid letting a baby get too hot. Thick bedding such as duvets or quilts should not be used, and parents should check how warm their baby is by feeling their chest or the back of their neck. If their skin feels hot or is clammy/sweaty, one or more layers should be removed.

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It is especially dangerous for babies to sleep with an adult on a sofa or armchair

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Parents/carers should never sleep with a baby on a sofa or armchair. The risk of SIDS is 50 times higher for babies when they sleep on a sofa or armchair with an adult. They are also at risk of accidental death as they can easily slip into a position where they are trapped and can't breathe.

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We would advise having a Moses basket or travel cot available in the daytime to avoid napping with the baby on a sofa or armchair. If you feel you may doze off you should put the baby in their own sleep space.

As long as parents don't smoke in bed, it's ok for their baby to share their bed to sleep

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Taking a baby into the parental/adult bed to sleep is dangerous if either parent/carer smokes, whether or not they smoke in the bedroom. Parents should also not share a bed if they have consumed alcohol, drugs or medication that makes them sleepy. Parents should not share a bed if their baby was born prematurely, of a low birth weight, or the baby was exposed to smoking in pregnancy.

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Sleeping a baby on their side is okay

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Sleeping a baby on their side increases the chance of SIDS, compared with sleeping on the back. Products to keep a baby in one sleeping position such as wedges or straps should not be used.

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It's okay if the dad smokes as long as the mum doesn't



The Lullaby Trust's advice to parents is not to smoke during pregnancy or after birth; this applies to fathers too. It is advised that babies are kept out of smoky atmospheres to reduce their exposure to smoke.

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Adult beds are just as safe for babies as cots



The safest place for a baby to sleep is in their own cot, in the parents' bedroom, for the first six months. Parents should not share a bed with their baby to sleep if they have consumed alcohol, drugs or medication that makes them drowsy, or if their baby was born prematurely or of a low birth weight or the baby was exposed to smoking in pregnancy. Babies should not be slept on pillows or under duvets.

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Even if a baby seems just a little unwell, it is better to ask for medical advice



Medical advice should be sought if a baby shows significant signs of illness. Parents could consider using the The Lullaby Trust's Baby Check app, or they should call their GP or 111.

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Cot bumpers should not be used in a baby's cot

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Cot bumpers have not been found to increase the risk of SIDS, but they can increase the risk of accident. It is safest to keep their cot as clear as possible.

Clear sleep space means:

- No bumpers, pods, nests or sleep positioners. Soft or raised sleep surfaces can increase the chances of SIDS by making it difficult for babies to breathe or cool down.
- No pillows, quilts or duvets.

Ensure that the sleep space is kept clear of all items and there is nothing within reach of the space e.g. blind cords, nappy sacks and soft toys.

Breastfeeding helps to protect babies against SIDS

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Research has shown that any breastfeeding is protective against SIDS. Breastfeeding, either exclusively or in combination with formula milk, is associated with a reduced rate of SIDS.

Breastfeeding for at least two months halves the risk of SIDS, but the longer a parent breastfeeds, the more protection it will give the baby.

Using a sling to transport a baby can increase the chance of SIDS

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There is no evidence to suggest slings can increase the chance of SIDS, but there have been fatal accidents in them. Therefore parents should use them carefully, especially with young babies.

The risk appears to be greatest when a baby's airway is obstructed either by their chin resting on their chest or their mouth and nose being covered by a parent's skin or clothing.

Babies should not have pillows for sleep

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Pillow use can increase the chance of SIDS by up to 2.5 times. Soft bedding such as pillows and duvets should not be used until babies are at least 12 months old.

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It's okay for babies to sleep in car seats for long periods of time

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Babies should sleep on a firm, flat, waterproof surface for all sleeps. Car seats are designed to keep babies safe while travelling, not as a main sleeping place. Car seats should only be used for transport and not as an alternative for cots or highchairs. It's okay for your baby to fall asleep in a car seat when travelling, but they should be taken out as soon as you get to your destination, and placed onto a firm, flat surface to sleep.

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If your trip involves driving for long periods of time, you should stop for frequent breaks. This will allow you to check on your baby, take them out of the car seat and let them stretch and move around.

Babies do not need to wear hats indoors

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Babies need to be able to release heat from their heads if needed. Hats should be removed when going indoors including when going into supermarkets or shops or on buses/cars. Premature babies often wear hats whilst in special care baby units. But by the time baby is strong enough to go home, they should not need a hat indoors.

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You should avoid using soft and bulky bedding such as quilts, pillows and duvets

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It is recommended to use firmly tucked in sheets and blankets (not above shoulder height) or a baby sleep bag for a baby to sleep in. Be sure to remove any soft toys from the cot before each sleep period. Baby sleep bags should be well-fitting. Use the correct tog value for the temperature and don't use any other bedding.

Sleep your baby in the feet-to-foot position and avoid using soft or bulky bedding such as quilts, pillows and duvets. Weighted swaddles, weighted blankets and weighted sleeping bags are not recommended for babies under one year due to risk of overheating and head covering.

It's okay for a baby to fall asleep in a bouncy chair for naptime

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Babies should sleep on a firm, flat, waterproof surface for all sleeps -day and night. . Your baby's airway can fold if their chin touches their chest when sleeping in a sitting position.

We advise against letting babies sleep in:

- Anything that keeps them in a seated or inclined position such as, bouncy chairs, swings, hammocks, and beanbags.
- Sleep positioners or anything that restricts a baby's ability to roll.

It's okay for friends and family to visit a new baby

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It's fine to visit a new baby. However, it can be helpful to check with any potential visitors that they are feeling well and that they have not recently been ill. This includes active cold sores, diarrhoea and vomiting illnesses.

It can feel a difficult thing to ask, but explaining to visitors that new babies are vulnerable to infections can help. Having these conversations can make a big difference in helping to keep babies safe as their immune systems are developing.

All babies will sleep through the night by three months old

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Between 3-6 months a baby may sleep for longer periods now as they need fewer night feeds. Some babies may sleep for eight hours or longer at night, but not all will. Parents/carers might feel that they should try to help their baby to sleep for longer or through the night. However, it is normal for babies under one (or sometimes older) to wake during the night, and young babies will wake frequently to be fed.

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Ways to use the cards

There are a few ways you could use these cards with parents/carers. Maybe you already have an idea of how this will fit into your work, but for those who don't, we have a few suggestions:

1. An ice breaker: Use the cards at the beginning of a session to assess the level of parental knowledge. Then as you talk through the answers, you will be giving the parents/carers the right advice. You could introduce the session as a game rather than a 'test'. This could also be used in a one-to-one session.
2. A reminder: After a talk or another type of training on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) or safer sleep, use the true and false cards as a reminder of what's been learned. To avoid it looking like a 'test', say that there are a few difficult questions that parents/carers regularly ask
3. A competition: You may choose to introduce a small prize or reward for the group that gets the most correct answers, if it feels appropriate.

Important points

- Ensure you are familiar with the statements and the correct answers before the session. Detailed information about each statement is provided below.
- Have back-up resources available for parents to take away if they don't feel comfortable remembering the answers (you may like to use The Lullaby Trust Parent's Guide or Safer Sleep Card).
- Use other picture-based resources with the cards to reiterate messages in different ways, for example the Make a Room game/Spot the Risk.
- Ensure plenty of time for discussion and questions.
- Don't force people to give their answers to the whole group if they are not comfortable doing so.
- Remember that for each statement on a card, there is plenty of additional information you can give parents about each piece of advice.
- Please refer to The Lullaby Trust's evidence base for further information on any of the points

