



Safe Sleep

Safe Sleep Conversations

Working with families to help keep children safe during sleep and rest

This document has been designed to be used as a guide to help educators have conversations with families about the importance of sleep safety.

Sometimes, issues can arise around this, largely due to a lack of awareness of the potential risks or, requests coming from parents and families that do not align with a service’s policies and/or procedures.

It all starts with a conversation....

When you hear/notice/suspect/are asked...	Try this... Always begin with “I understand”	Relevant Safe Sleep Recommendation	Relevant resources to read and share
<p>“My baby settles better on their tummy, could you please continue doing this so they have a good sleep?”</p>	<p>“Although your child may sleep better on their tummy, we know it’s not the safest way to sleep.”</p> <p>“The safest way for a baby under 1 year to sleep is on their back. Our service has done training on sleep safety with Red Nose and our policy states I need to follow their recommendations for sleep.”</p>	<p>Place baby on their back for sleep</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Why back to sleep is safest</p>

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When you hear/notice/suspect/are asked...	Try this... Always begin with “I understand”	Relevant Safe Sleep Recommendation	Relevant resources to read and share
<p>“My baby has reflux and needs to sleep on their side or with the cot tilted. Can you make sure this happens when you put them down for their naps?”</p>	<p>“Reflux sounds tricky and worrying for you but what is good to know is that from our Red Nose safe sleep training, we know that tilting a child or placing them on their side doesn’t reduce their risk of having reflux, and it can increase their risk of SUDI”</p> <p>“I can find other helpful ways to settle and soothe your baby to sleep without leaving them on their side or tilting the cot”</p> <p>“Just to be safe, have a chat with your GP or Paediatrician about sleeping your baby on their tummy. If they suggest you do this, they need to provide you with written direction on how to do this. Our service policy states that I must sleep babies on their back unless I have written guidelines by a medical professional for alternative sleeping positions”.</p>	<p>Place baby on their back for sleep</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Reflux Information</p>
<p>“Your beds and cots look a little bit hard. Could you please use this pillow for when my baby has a sleep?”</p>	<p>“I understand that you would like me to use a pillow in the cot but doing this will make the cot space unsafe and will increase the risk of danger to your baby”</p> <p>“That definitely looks like a comfy pillow but the recommendations from Red Nose advise that pillows are not used for babies under 2 years of age because of the safety risk they pose.”</p>	<p>Keep baby’s head and face uncovered</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Pillow use information</p>



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<p>“My baby gets cold easily and I would like him/her to wear a hat when they are asleep.”</p>	<p>“I understand that you don’t want your baby to get cold but it is very important that we keep his/her head uncovered while they are asleep to keep them safe.”</p> <p>“I will check your baby regularly and make sure that they are not cold. I will ensure the room is kept at a safe temperature and add an extra blanket if your baby is cold - please don’t worry.”</p> <p>“Can you please pack extra clothes that I can put on your baby for sleep time – this will help to keep them warm.”</p>	<p>Keep baby’s head and face uncovered</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Bedding amount</p> <p>Sleep Baby With Head and Face Uncovered Red Nose Australia</p>
<p>“I saw there was a product recall on port-a-cots that look like the ones you use. Have you checked that they are safe to use?”</p>	<p>“Thank you for letting me know and I will check online to make sure our cots are not subject to the recall.”</p> <p>“The cots and port-a-cots we use definitely meet the Australian Safety Standards and you can see that on the sticker.”</p>	<p>Provide a safe sleeping environment day and night</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Keeping Baby Safe Brochure.pdf (rednose.org.au)</p>
<p>“My 6-month-old baby won’t settle unless he/she is wrapped tightly. I’ve provided plenty of wraps for you so they can’t move too much and get a good sleep.”</p>	<p>“We know through our Red Nose sleep training that once a child reaches around 3 months of age we should stop wrapping because it isn’t safe anymore. This is also in our service policy. If they can roll, it is very dangerous to keep their arms in.”</p> <p>“Could you please bring a safe sleep bag and I will work with you and your baby to help find ways to settle and soothe your baby ready for sleep.”</p>	<p>Provide a safe sleeping environment day and night</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Safe wrapping</p>

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<p>“It’s really important that my baby sleeps with their amber necklace/religious jewellery on. I need to know that they are safe when they are not with me”</p>	<p>“I understand how important these are to families, so thank you for letting me know. At our service, we know the serious risks of having things around a baby’s neck during sleep time, so we take these precious items off and keep them safe to put back on when your baby has woken back up. I know you will understand why we do this. Your child’s safety is very important to us as well.”</p>	<p>Provide a safe sleeping environment day and night</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Is it OK for Babies to Wear a Necklace or Beads? Red Nose Australia</p>
<p>“My baby has just fallen asleep in his/her pram. Could you just let them sleep in the pram for a while? I don’t want them to wake up – it’s important they get enough sleep”</p>	<p>“I understand you would like your baby to have an uninterrupted sleep. The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot, therefore I will do my best to transfer them gently into a safe sleep space.”</p> <p>“The safest way for a baby under 1 year to sleep is on their back. Our service has done training on sleep safety with Red Nose and our policy states I need to follow their recommendations for sleep.”</p>	<p>Provide a safe sleeping environment day and night</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Safe sleep practices in Family Day Care settings Red Nose Australia</p>
<p>“My mother will be dropping my son/daughter off at care and she smokes. I’m worried but don’t know how to talk about it with her. Can you help?”</p>	<p>“This is very hard, but I have some resources I can share that may make her understand why keeping smoke away from the baby is so important.”</p> <p>“Cigarette smoke can make it hard for babies and young children to wake up from sleep – waking up from sleep helps keep their airways clear which is really important.”</p>	<p>Keep baby smoke free before and after birth</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>What is cigarette smoke doing to your baby? Red Nose Australia</p>



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<p>“Is your residence smoke free? I just want to make sure...”</p>	<p>“Definitely. I know that babies that are exposed to cigarette smoke have trouble keeping their airways clear and open because they find it difficult to rouse from sleep and are often unwell.”</p> <p>“The residence is most definitely smoke free.”</p>	<p>Keep baby smoke free before and after birth</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>What is cigarette smoke doing to your baby? Red Nose Australia</p>
<p>“I read that babies need to sleep in the same room as an adult caregiver until they are 12 months of age. Can you stay with them at all times when they are asleep please? I’m so worried!”</p>	<p>“I know that being with a baby or child all the time when they are asleep is the safest option. I also know that being able to see and hear the baby while they are asleep is best practice, and I will try to do that whenever I can. But this can be very hard to do with older children around who have different sleep or rest times who need to be supervised too.”</p> <p>“I still do very frequent checks to make sure that all children are safe when they are asleep. If you decide to use our overnight service, then your baby will be sleeping in a cot in a shared room where I will be also.”</p>	<p>Sleep baby in their own safe sleep space in the parent or caregiver’s room for the first 6 months.</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Room sharing with baby</p> <p>Why your baby should sleep in your room with you Red Nose Australia</p>
<p>“How often are you checking the children and what do you look for?”</p>	<p>“I do very frequent checks (once every 10 minutes) to make sure that all children are safe when they are asleep. I make sure the children are breathing and that their skin colour looks normal and healthy. I also look at their position in the bed as well as the bedding.”</p> <p>“I always check the children in person. I don’t rely on monitors to do these checks because I want to make sure I am doing quality checks properly and do not miss anything.”</p>	<p>Sleep baby in their own safe sleep space in the parent or caregiver’s room for the first 6 months.</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Room sharing with baby</p> <p>Why your baby should sleep in your room with you Red Nose Australia</p>



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<p>“I’d like to enrol my child at your service but I need to wean them off breastfeeding first.”</p>	<p>“Please don’t do that just to enrol. I support all families wishing to continue their breastfeeding journey and am well equipped to store your breastmilk and can prepare it safely to give to your baby.”</p>	<p>Breastfeed baby</p>	<p>Resources and Factsheets Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Breastfeeding Red Nose Australia</p> <p>Chief Midwife Jane Wiggill speaks to the Australian Breastfeeding Association Red Nose Australia</p>

You can order resources here – translated resources are available online

[Resources and Factsheets | Red Nose Australia](#)



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