

HOW TO RESPOND

when a caregiver says...

“It will never happen to me.”

Almost all sleep-related deaths are in an unsafe sleep environment. Is it really worth the risk? Your baby needs to sleep alone, on their back, and in a clean, clear crib.

“Why can’t I leave my baby in the car seat to sleep?”

Car seats are designed for travel in a moving car and not as a sleep surface. If a baby is left in a car seat for extended periods of time, he or she can move into a dangerous position that blocks their breathing. Babies should always be removed from the car seat when arriving at your destination.

“We used to do it this way.”

We used to do a lot of things before we learned they were dangerous. In the past, many babies died in car collisions because they weren’t secure in a car seat. Now, we don’t think twice about using car seats, and infant deaths from motor vehicle collisions are rare. Babies are more likely to die in a sleep-related death than in a vehicle collision.

“The ABCs are too hard to follow/remember all the time.”

The ABCs refer to the simple steps of placing your baby alone, on their back and in a crib. A little planning is all it takes to protect your baby. Babies sleep a lot, so if you are going to be anywhere for naps or night time, just think

ahead about where your baby can sleep safely. The planning is no different than remembering to pack diapers and an extra outfit.

“Breastfeeding in bed promotes bonding.”

There is nothing wrong with breastfeeding in bed, but once you are ready to go back to sleep or are feeling drowsy, your baby needs to go back to his or her own Safe Sleep Space, alone and on their back, in a crib.

“Co-sleeping is bonding. What’s wrong with that?”

Bonding does not occur while your baby is sleeping or when you are sleeping. Bonding happens when you and the baby are awake and are interacting during normal everyday activities like feeding, bathing and playing. Co-sleeping (bed-sharing) places your helpless baby at the mercy of an unconscious adult who moves around in bed without realizing it.

“The doctor prescribed this medication.”

Taking medication as prescribed by your doctor or even some over-the-counter medications can cause drowsiness. If combined with alcohol or other medications, the effects can be even more dangerous. Because medications can have different effects on different people and cause different levels of impairment, it is even more important to follow the ABCs of Safe Sleep when taking medication, even when prescribed by your doctor.