

KEEPING BUBBA SAFE

SIDS & Kids Queensland
&
Queensland Health



KEEP BUBBA SAFE

Sleep Bubba on back.
Leave Bubba's head uncovered while sleeping.
No smoke near Bubba.

No smoking cigarettes, yarndi or gunga while pregnant.

Safe sleeping place for Bubba.

No smoking, grog, drugs, or soft bedding where Bubba is sleeping.

Logos at the bottom: Australian flag, SIDS & Kids Queensland logo, Queensland Government Queensland Health logo, and SIDS & Kids Queensland logo.

For the Presenter

This Session on Safe Sleeping is about creating a safe sleeping place for our kids to help reduce the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) / SUDI (Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infancy) and prevent fatal sleeping accidents

The Annual Report for the Queensland Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (2005-2006) stated that *“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants died suddenly and unexpectedly at 7 times the rate of non-Indigenous infants”* (p. 178).

As these statistics indicate an increase in the numbers of Indigenous infant deaths in the last year, SIDS and Kids Queensland and Queensland Health are working together towards the reduction of numbers of infant deaths within Queensland.

Our main messages

These are the main messages that you need to know to keep Bubba safe:

- sleep Bubba on back
- sleep Bubba with face and head uncovered
- keep Bubba smoke free
- Bubba needs a safe sleeping place, night and day.

What is SIDS?

- SIDS is..... Sudden Infant Death Syndrome previously called 'cot death'.
- It is when a Bubba dies and no-one knows the reason why.
- SIDS is a classification of exclusion when all other possible causes of death have been ruled out.
- Remains unexplained even after thorough:
 - autopsy
 - examination of circumstances of death including examination of scene of death
 - review of the clinical history.

What is SUDI?

- SUDI is.....Sudden Unexplained Death of an Infant.
- Major cause of infant death between 1 month and 12 months of age.
- Some are classified as unexplained (SIDS).
- Other explanations include sleep accidents, birth defects, genetic problems, illness.
- A few remain undetermined.
- All SUDI are associated with similar risk factors – therefore we need to follow the same ‘reduce the risk education’.

Queensland statistics (2005 - 2006)

- Infants under 1 year accounted for 73% of child deaths.
- SUDI accounted for 36 deaths. (Of these, 11 were classified as SIDS).
- In 15 of the 36 deaths, the infant was sharing a sleeping surface with one or more people at the time of death.
- 12 of the 36 infants were indigenous.
- Male babies died at a higher rate than female babies.

Statistics cited from Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian’s Annual Report for Deaths of Children and Young People: Queensland 2004-5.

To reduce the risk of SIDS, SUDI & fatal sleeping accidents

- Put Bubba on his or her back to sleep from birth.
- Sleep Bubba with face & head uncovered.
- Keep Bubba smoke free. This means during pregnancy too.
- Don't let anyone smoke near your Bubba.
- Since the 'Reducing the Risk of SIDS' program was introduced in Australia in 1991, SIDS deaths have dropped by about 84%.

Always sleep your Bubba on his or her back

- Sleeping on the back reduces the risk of SIDS.
- The chances of a Bubba dying from SIDS are greater if they sleep on their tummies or side.
- Put your Bubba on his or her back to sleep from birth.
- Healthy Bubbas placed on their backs to sleep are less likely to choke on vomit than those who are tummy sleeping.

Always sleep your Bubba on his or her back

- Sleeping Bubba on his or her tummy increases overall risk of SIDS x 3. Some studies up to 14 times.
- Side sleeping doubles the risk of SIDS. 39% of reported SIDS deaths found Bubbas prone/tummy sleeping after being placed to sleep on their side.
- Very high risks of SIDS occurring if Bubba normally sleeps supine (on his or her back) and is subsequently placed prone (on his or her tummy) to sleep. Therefore always tell the carer to sleep Bubba on his or her back.
- Only sleep Bubba on his or her tummy or side on written medical advice, due to a medical condition.

Why is back sleeping safer than tummy sleeping?

MEDICAL INFORMATION

- One theory that has a substantial evidence base, is the activation of the laryngeal chemoreflex (LCR).
- The LCR reflex is activated by direct fluid stimulation of receptors in the laryngeal mucosa, located above and around the larynx.
- The reflex is age related and confined to the young infant.
- The LCR activation can lead to a complex series of (physiological) responses by the body including apnoea (stop breathing), bradycardia (heart rate too slow), swallowing, startle, hypertension (high blood pressure) and regional redistribution of blood flow.
- Studies have shown that apnoea induced by LCR stimulation may be fatal, especially if the mechanisms that protect the airway, such as swallowing, arousal and expiratory reflexes are depressed (don't work as well).
- Studies have shown that when the infant is prone (tummy), swallowing and arousal are significantly (greatly) reduced.
- When supine (back) the piriform fossae (small pockets in the back of the throat, as indicated on the diagram) are available for pooling of fluid and this helps to protect the airway from any inflow of fluid and from stimulation of the LCR receptors.
- When prone (tummy) these fossae (or pockets) are unavailable for fluid entry as gravity causes the fluid to flow in the opposite direction. This increases the risk of LCR stimulation and aspiration (choking), and may trigger bradycardia, apnoea and death.
- In addition, infants who are unaccustomed to prone sleep, and placed prone for the first time are at an increased risk.
- In the supine position, swallowing and arousal are not impaired, allowing the infant to clear and protect their own airway.

TUMMY AND BACK DIAGRAM (Simply put)

- When on the tummy the food pipe is higher than the airway, allowing food and fluid to more easily enter the baby's airway, particularly if baby posits or vomits
- On the Back, the baby's airway is above the food pipe.
- If baby posits or vomits, gravity draws food and fluid down and away from the airway.
- In the supine position, the baby's swallowing and arousal mechanisms also help to protect the airway.
- In the prone position, these protective mechanisms are depressed (don't work very well).

Healthy infants can and do protect their airways when placed supine – they are not at increased risk of choking, providing that swallowing and arousal are intact

Keep Bubba's head and face uncovered while sleeping

- Keep Bubba's head and face uncovered while sleeping, day or night.
- SIDS is very rare in supine (back) position with head uncovered.
- 60% of babies who have died were found with head covered, having facial obstruction or from overheating.
- Bubbas lose excess heat through their head, so it is important to leave Bubba's head uncovered to prevent overheating.
- Do not sleep Bubba with pillows, doonas, lambs wool, soft toys and cot bumpers.
- Wrap Bubba firmly (not too loose or too tight). Always wrap from below his or her neck.

Smoking

- Smoking while you are pregnant or smoking around your Bubba increases the risk of SIDS.
- If a mother smokes the risk of SIDS doubles and if the father smokes the risk doubles again.
- Don't smoke cigarettes, yarndi or gunga near Bubba as this can increase the risk of SIDS.
- Don't let anyone smoke near your Bubba.
- Smoking less can reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Smoking and bed sharing with Bubba increases the risk of SIDS.
- Ask your health worker or contact Quitline for help to reduce or stop smoking 131 848.

Preventing flat spots on Bubba's head (Plagiocephaly)

Why do some Bubbas' develop flat spots on their heads?

- Bubbas' skulls are very soft and the bones can be affected by pressure. Bubbas also have weak neck muscles. Because of this, they tend to turn their heads to one side when placed on their backs.
- If Bubba always turns his or her head to the same side, the skull may flatten. The medical term for this is positional plagiocephaly.
- Most flattening goes away on its own.
- If your Bubba still develops flat spots, talk to your health worker.

Flat heads can be prevented

- Change the position of the Bubba's head each day.
- Put Bubba to sleep at either end of the cot or reposition cot to face different direction.
- Bubbas should also have supervised 'tummy time' when they are awake, several times a day.
- Never leave Bubba unattended at any time or allow Bubba to fall asleep on the tummy.
- If your Bubba still develops flat spots, talk to your health worker.

Your Bubba needs a safe place of its own

- Safest place for Bubba to sleep is beside the parents' bed for the first 6-12 months.
- Sleep Bubba in a cot that has a firm, clean, well-fitting mattress or on a firm sleeping surface.
- Make the cot up with Bubba's feet at the bottom of the cot. This reduces the risk of Bubba slipping under the covers.
- Tuck in all bedclothes so bedding is not loose.
- Leave your Bubba's head uncovered while sleeping.
- All new and second hand cots must meet Australian Safety standards

Go to Queensland Office of Fair Trading www.consumer.qld.gov.au/ 1300 658 030.

This is the safest place for your Bubba

- Place Bubba on his or her back to sleep, in his or her own sleeping place, keep smoke free and head uncovered.
- Keep quilts, doonas, pillows, cot bumpers, sheepskins and soft toys out of Bubba's sleeping place as these may cover Bubbas face.
- Safe sleeping bags for Bubbas have fitted neck and arm holes and can be used instead of blankets.

Wrapping Bubba may help to keep Bubba on his or her back

- Wrap Bubba firmly, not too loose or too tight.
- Make sure Bubba's head is not covered – wrap from below the neck.
- Use lightweight wraps like cotton or muslin.
- Make sure Bubba does not get too hot under the wrap.
- Do not wrap if Bubba is bed-sharing.

Don't sleep with Bubba if:

- You are a smoker, as it increases the risk of SIDS.
- You are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- There is a soft mattress.
- Pillows or doonas are near Bubba as Bubba can get caught / become covered by them.
- Bubba is between two people.
- Bubba can fall out of bed or become trapped between bed and wall.
- Too many people in the bed can be dangerous – no kids or pets.
- Never sleep Bubba on a couch ,waterbed, bean bag or pillow.

Adult sleeping places can be unsafe for Bubba

- Many adult sleeping places are unsafe for infants and may increase the risk of SIDS and fatal sleeping accidents.
- Bubbas can become caught between the bed and the wall or fall off the bed.
- Doonas and pillows are used in adult beds and are unsafe for Bubba.
- **Bubba must never be left alone on an adult bed or put to sleep on a sofa.**

(NB: Reinforce that in all these photos the doll is in an unsafe sleeping place.)

Don't sleep with Bubba on soft surfaces

- Don't sleep with Bubba on couch, chairs, waterbeds, beanbags or cushions.
- There is a very high risk of a fatal sleeping accident if an adult falls asleep with a Bubba on a soft surface. This is because Bubba may become wedged in cushions or in the back of the couch or other soft surfaces and the sleeping person may not notice.
- Put Bubba back into his or her own sleeping place before you doze off.
- Bubba must never be left alone on an adult bed or put to sleep on a sofa.

Unsafe sleeping places for Bubba

- Unsafe sleeping places for Bubba can lead to sleeping accidents.
- Bubba can become trapped under pillows and doonas.
- Bubba can become trapped under toys or soft bedding.
- Bubba can become trapped between the bed and wall.
- Bubba can become trapped under another person.
- If Bubba is placed to sleep on a bed he or she can become caught in between the bedrails
- Bubba can roll off unsafe surfaces.
- Bubba can become tangled in curtains or other cords attached to furnishings.

Re-enforce the main messages

- Sleep Bubba on back.
- Sleep Bubba with face and head uncovered.
- Keep Bubba smoke free.
- Safe sleeping place, night and day.

References

- Kidsafe: website: www.kidsafe.com.au Phone: (07) 3854 1829
- Queensland Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian: website: www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au Phone: 1800 688 275 (free call)
- Queensland Health: website: www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/childhealth
- Queensland Office of Fair Trading: website: www.consumer.qld.gov.au Phone: 1300 658 030 (Local call)
- Quitline 131 848 (Local call)
- SIDS and Kids: website: www.sidsandkids.org Phone: 1300 308 307 (Local call)