

A photograph of five diverse babies of various ethnicities and ages, all smiling and peeking over a white horizontal banner. The background is a soft-focus image of green leaves and white flowers.

*Protect your little bundle...*

*from birth and beyond.*





# *Introduction*

Unintentional injuries in and around the home are a leading preventable cause of death and emergency hospital admissions for children, particularly those under 5 years.

This booklet is brought to you by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Child Death Overview Panel. It is designed to raise awareness of potential hazards and brings together advice from local and national campaigns.

We hope you find the following pages packed full of tips you can follow to keep your baby as safe and healthy as possible.

Remember, the best way to keep your little one safe is to properly supervise them at all times.

There were  
three in the bed  
and the little  
one said...

**nothing.**

Local Safeguarding Children Boards  
Working Together to Keep Children Safe



Reduce the risk of  
sudden infant death  
**Don't sleep in the  
same bed as your  
baby if you smoke,  
drink or take drugs  
or if your baby was  
low birthweight or  
born prematurely**

**NEVER** sleep on a  
sofa or armchair  
with your baby

# Safer sleep for babies

## Things you can do



- ✓ Always place your baby on their back to sleep



- ✓ Keep your baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth



- ✓ Place your baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as you for the first 6 months



- ✓ Breastfeed your baby



- ✓ Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in good condition



## Things to avoid



**X** Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby



**X** Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you smoke, drink or take drugs or if your baby was born prematurely or was of low birth weight



**X** Avoid letting your baby get too hot  
**X** Don't cover your baby's face or head while sleeping or use loose bedding

## You should follow the advice for all naps, not just for night time sleep

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of a baby for no obvious reason and although we don't yet know how to completely prevent SIDS, it is possible to significantly lower the chances of it happening by following the advice.

You can also talk to your midwife or health visitor if you have any questions or concerns or get in touch with us

**Email:** [info@lullabytrust.org.uk](mailto:info@lullabytrust.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 0808 802 6869

**Website:** [www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)

**NSPCC**  <sup>TM</sup>  
**Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.**

**What's wrong?**



**Babies cry to communicate that they need something particularly during the first few weeks after birth. In time, they can settle into a routine and parents can start to understand what their crying means. Sometimes you won't know why your baby is crying, and that is completely normal. It doesn't make you a bad parent. If the crying sounds unusual, or is outside the usual routine, it may be cause for concern. Babies should not be left to cry.**

## Why do babies cry?

The most common reasons are: tiredness, trapped wind, wet/soiled nappy, being too hot/cold, hunger, thirst, loneliness (wanting contact or attention), boredom, being uncomfortable, being over-stimulated or frightened and colic.

If you have ruled out all of these common causes, but your baby continues to cry, you may want to try:

- swaying or talking softly to your baby.
- holding your baby close to you so that they have contact with your body, and perhaps gently playing some music or singing a song to your baby.
- take your baby to a quiet place and let them have some quiet still time, as some babies cry because they are over stimulated.
- attracting your baby's attention with something like a toy or a rattle.

- giving your baby a sterilised (clean) dummy or letting them suck their thumb.
- giving your baby a warm bath.
- getting some fresh air – like taking your baby out in the car or in their pram.

Talk to your midwife or health visitor if you have any concerns or questions.

If none of the soothing methods have worked, the cause is not obvious, and the crying is excessive you may want to consider if your baby is teething or has a health problem. You can find out more information about when to seek medical advice on NHS choices, alternatively, call NHS 111 by telephoning 111, or speak with your doctor.

## How to cope

A crying baby can be exhausting and stressful. However, the last thing you should do is lose your temper. Shouting at or



getting rough with your baby, who won't stop crying, will only make matters worse. Whatever your feelings or thoughts, never shake your baby. Shaking moves a baby's head violently, which can cause bleeding and brain damage.

Remember, this difficult time won't last forever.



If you feel you can't cope and need a break it's important not to overreact from frustration.

- Give yourself time to think through the options above to stop your baby crying.
- If you are losing your temper, put your baby down safely in the cot or pram and leave the room. Take a break from the sound and calm down for a few minutes.
- Ask someone you trust to look after your baby if you need a break.

Call the Cry-sis helpline on

**08451 228 669**

Young babies should not be left to cry regularly as repeated exposure to high stress levels can be damaging to their developing brains. However on rare occasions this can be the best thing for their parents to do. Keep your baby safe by educating every caregiver you leave your child with about the

vulnerability of young children to inflicted injury, and the importance of having a coping plan for those inevitable moments of frustration.

## Remember

If you're losing your temper, put your baby down safely in the cot or pram and leave the room for a few minutes to calm down.

**Whatever your feelings or thoughts, never shake your baby.**



# How safe am I from a serious fall?

We're always falling over our feet. But sometimes, when we fall further and hit something hard, we can be badly hurt. Falling downstairs or out of windows can hurt our brains as well as our bodies.



Every day, 45 children under five, like me, are admitted to hospital because we have fallen and hurt ourselves at home.



child accident  
prevention trust

## Why do we fall so much?

- We love to explore and try new things.
- As we grow up we surprise you, and sometimes us too, with what we can do.
- We are not scared of trying new things and have no sense of danger.
- If we see a chance to do something you have told us not to, because we could get hurt, we might still try to do it because we don't understand what can go wrong.

## What can you do to keep me safer at home?

- Once I start crawling, fit safety gates to stop me climbing the stairs or falling down them.
- When buying me a highchair, check it has a five point harness, like the one in my buggy, strap me into my highchair everytime.
- Fit safety catches or locks to our window.
- If you fit window locks, put the keys

somewhere you can find them easily, so we can get out if there is a fire.

- Keep furniture, like my bed or the sofa, away from the windows, to stop me climbing up.

## In an emergency

If I am knocked unconscious when I fall, call 999 right away and ask for an ambulance.

The ambulance will be on its way straight away, and the call taker will ask a series of questions until it arrives

- tell them how long I have been unconscious or, if I'm waking up, how I am – they will tell you what to do while we wait for the ambulance.
- If I wake up, tell me to stay as still as possible, just in case I have broken anything.

**Considered doing a first aid course?  
It could save my life in a crisis.**

West Midlands Ambulance Service



NHS Foundation Trust

# Blind cords and chains can kill children

**Looped blind cords and chains are dangerous. They can strangle a child, and have led to the deaths of children.**

**Act now to ensure that all cords and chains are kept securely out of the reach of babies and children.**



**make it  
safe**

**For further safety advice for your area please contact:**

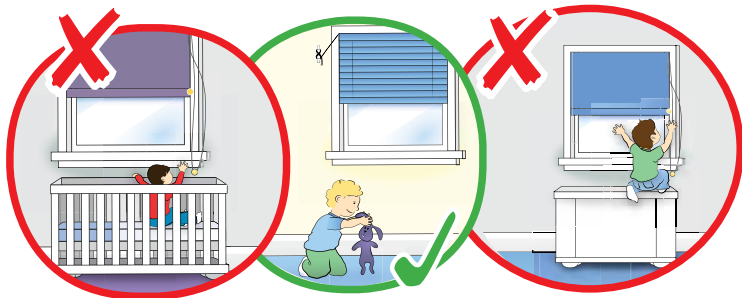
**Staffordshire Trading Standards  
on 0300 111 8045 or**

**Stoke-on-Trent Trading Standards  
on 01782 232 065**



**PLEASE ACT NOW** to help to keep your children safe and prevent any further tragedies.

Window or door blind cords and chains can pose a real risk for babies and children. Five young children have already tragically died in Staffordshire as a result of blind cord strangulation and many more children have died or been seriously injured across the UK.



Move beds, cots, highchairs and playpens away from window covering cords and chains.

Make sure all cords and chains are always secured out of reach of babies and young children. Do not tie cords or chains together. Make sure cords or chains do not twist and create a loop.

Move furniture away from window covering cords and chains as children love to climb.

**Be aware of strangulation hazards around the home like bag straps, scarves and baby monitor cords lying on the ground.**

Messages from Staffordshire parents who have tragically lost their children.

***“You never think it will happen to you.”***

(Parents of Lillian)

***“Ban corded blinds”***

(Parents of Harrison)

***It's the law***

In 2014 the standards regarding the manufacture, supply and professional installation of internal window blinds changed significantly. It is now illegal to supply or professionally install an internal window blind which does not comply with the child safety requirements of BS EN

13120:2009+A1:2014

# Babies can suffocate on nappy sacks

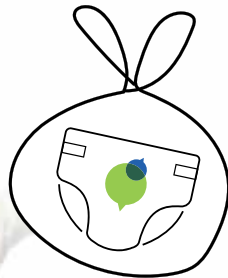
– at least 17 babies in England and Wales have already died.

## Don't:

**X** Place nappy sacks in or near a baby's cot or pram.

## Why do nappy sacks pose a suffocation hazard to babies?

- Babies can suffocate or choke on nappy sacks.
- Young babies naturally grasp anything and put it in their mouths, but they find it more difficult to let go.
- Nappy sacks are flimsy and are small enough to fit in little mouths.



## Do:

- ✓ Always keep nappy sacks, plastic bags and other wrapping away from babies and young children.
- ✓ Be aware of suffocation hazards around the home. Keep animals, particularly cats out of babies bedrooms.

**ROSPA**

accidents don't have to happen


**cap**  
child accident  
prevention trust

# car seat Safety

Baby car seats are designed to keep your baby safe and secure for the car journey **ONLY** and should not be used as an alternative place for babies to sleep/nap - avoid as much as possible.

'Positional asphyxia' can occur when a baby slouches down or forward in a car seat or infant rocker and their airway closes. Newborns and young infants don't have the neck strength to lift their heads and breathe.

Research suggests supervision by another adult and frequently breaks to car journeys as premature, small and low birth weight babies have a greater risk.

A baby is sitting in a red and black car seat, looking towards the camera. A thought bubble above the baby's head contains text.

Take me out of the car seat when the journey is over... even if I'm sleeping

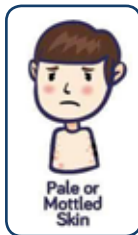
## **IMPORTANT:**

Take regular breaks when travelling distances, this gives your baby a chance to move out of their car seat and helps keep the driver alert.

**Don't let your baby get too hot in the car**

# Sepsis Awareness

Over the last 8 years, 11 children in Staffordshire have suffered a sudden death related to an infection from Staphylococcus or Group A Streptococcus.



Sepsis is a life threatening condition that arises when the body's response to an infection injures its own tissues and organs. Children, particularly premature babies and infants, can be more susceptible to developing sepsis.

## What are the early signs and symptoms of sepsis?

- Flu-like illness, chest infection
- Fever, hypothermia (low body temperature), or seizures
- Not eating, drinking, sucking poorly, or vomiting
- Fast or slow heart rate
- Pale or discoloured skin
- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Urinating very little or not at all
- Weakness, irritability, drowsiness, and harder to wake than normal
- Localised muscle tenderness, severe muscle aches

## What should I do if these symptoms develop:

- Contact your GP or seek medical advice immediately



# Loads...

A young girl with pigtails is looking into the circular opening of a washing machine. The machine is filled with laundry, including a yellow patterned cloth and a red item. In the foreground, two bright blue detergent pods are prominently displayed, partially obscuring the view of the machine's interior.

## of temptation?

Liquitabs may look like sweets, toys or teething products to young children. They are highly toxic and can cause severe problems if swallowed, or if the contents come into contact with skin or eyes.

Store all household cleaning products out of reach. Safety caps and lids slow children down but don't rely on them.

In the event of an accident follow advice on the product pack and seek urgent medical advice.



# Be one step ahead

Put away painkillers, medicines, e-cigarettes and air fresheners – they are very poisonous to children and can be fatal. Discourage children from eating any plants or fungi when outside.

In the event of an accident follow advice on the product and seek **URGENT** medical attention.

Check the battery compartment on toys, remote controls and other electric devices is secure. Lock away spare batteries, and seek immediate advice if swallowed.

Lithium batteries are found in phones, games, watches and toys but can be fatal if swallowed.



**Take action and  
put them away**

# Choking



- Babies can choke very easily, even on their milk.
- Remember to keep small objects out of reach.
- Choose toys designed for the age of your child.
- Be aware of clothing with cords, dummies on ribbons or chains.
- Be aware of bag straps and baby monitor cords that could be lying round on the floor.
- Avoid teething necklaces as children can choke on the small beads. They also pose a strangulation risk.
- Don't leave children unsupervised with balloons as they can bite them. Small pliable balls – such as foam marbles, coins, safety pins can all be choking hazards.

## ~~X~~ Choking on foods: So - what are the culprits?

Sweets (including lollipops)  
 Popcorn, Grapes/Cherries  
 – round shape heightens this risk (and the pip can also get stuck further down in the throat)  
 Hard fruit like apples/pears  
 Hard vegetables  
 – especially peas, celery and carrots



Hot dogs / frankfurters / sausages – round shape heightens this risk, burgers, chunks of cheese, meatballs  
 Banana (when cut round shaped or if too soft can mould to the airway like peanut butter)  
 Peanuts and large nuts and seeds (peanut butter also can cause a risk as it can mould to the airway and obstruct it)



# ✓ What can we do?

Children need fruit and vegetables in their diets, so cutting food into small lengths, like sticks, rather than rounds can help minimise risk.

Cut grapes and cherries etc. into quarters. Grate fruit and vegetables or stew until soft rather than raw pieces can ensure healthy eating whilst avoiding choking hazards.



Explain to older siblings, that their younger brothers and sisters may not be able to chew well enough to eat the same foods they do. Make sure your child is in an upright seated position when they are eating.



# Drowning

**Babies can drown in as little as 25mm of water**



- ✗ Never leave a baby or child in the bath unsupervised, not even for a minute.
- ✗ Never leave a baby or child alone in a bath seat.
- ✓ Constantly supervise and stay with children in swimming pools.
- ✓ Empty paddling pools and store them away when not in use.
- ✓ If you have a pond always supervise closely, fence it or fill it in!!
- ✓ Be careful when children visit gardens or parks that have ponds or lakes.

**The sea and shorelines are unpredictable with waves, tides and hidden currents that can drag you out in seconds. Respect the Water.**



# Preventing Burns and Scalds

- Never let children play with fireworks of any type. View from a safe distance of at least 8m for garden fireworks, 25m for display fireworks.
- Guard heated areas like radiators and pipes. Do not place beds against radiators.
- Keep matches and lighters out of sight and reach of children.
- Before bathing your baby/child check the water isn't too hot a good test is your elbow. Put cold water in the bath first before running the hot.
- Turn off electrical equipment you are not using – especially at night.
- Ensure a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide monitor is fitted.
- Hair Straighteners can cause serious burns to children
  1. Switch off after use
  2. Put in a heat resistant bag
  3. Put straighteners and flex out of reach of children



# A child's skin is far more sensitive than an adults

- Switch off heated appliances immediately after use, and place them out of reach.
- Always place hot drinks out of children's reach.
- Don't drink anything hot with a child on your lap or in your arms.
- Use a cordless kettle.
- Use the back rings on the cooker and keep saucepan handles away from the edge.
- If possible, keep young children out of the kitchen.





# Contacts

*For further information about the dangers highlighted ask your midwife/health visitor or contact:*

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board  
[staffsscb.org.uk](http://staffsscb.org.uk)



Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board,  
[safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk](http://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk)



Trading Standards Staffordshire:  
**0300 111 8045**  
[hqtsrecept@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:hqtsrecept@staffordshire.gov.uk)



Trading Standards Stoke-on-Trent:  
**01782 232 065**  
[publicprotection@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:publicprotection@stoke.gov.uk)



NHS Direct is now known as NHS **111**  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



The Lullaby Trust: Safer Sleep for babies – support for families



**020 7802 3200** [lullabytrust.org.uk](http://lullabytrust.org.uk)

ROSPA: Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents



**0121 248 2000** [help@rospa.com](mailto:help@rospa.com)

CAPT: Child Accident Prevention Trust  
**020 7608 3828** [safe@capt.org.uk](mailto:safe@capt.org.uk)



NSPCC: Cry-sis Helpline  
**08451 228 669** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)



The Child Death Overview Panel **01785 232724**