

Signs of Safe Sleep in Child Care

*Safe sleep environments help protect children from harm.
Here's what you need to know about what child care
providers should be doing to keep your tiny dreamer safe and
sound.*



What to look for in child care settings:

(adapted from Brighter Futures Indiana at www.brighterfutureindiana.org)

☁️ Is the child care program licensed or registered?

All programs working with infants that are licensed and registered have to comply with safe sleep practices. These programs have oversight from the state of Indiana to make sure they are providing safe places for infants to sleep. Family child care homes that care for five or fewer, non-related, children don't have to be regulated or licensed. If a program is not licensed, they aren't getting visits from external parties to check on their practices. Illegally operating facilities are less likely to practice safe sleep. The vast majority of infant deaths in child care happen in those unregulated settings.

☁️ Does the program have a safe sleep policy?

Licensed and registered providers are required to have a safe sleep policy that is part of both their family handbook and their staff handbook. One way to know if your provider's safe sleep policy is good is by comparing it to the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations and guidelines for safe sleep. These can be found at: <https://www.healthychildren.org>

☁️ Is the staff trained in safe sleep?

Safe sleep training is now required for all staff in child care programs that work or might work with infants, and there should be a Safe Sleep Certificate in their files. During a safe sleep training, child care and early education learn the ABCs of safe sleep. Infants 12 months of age and younger should always sleep **A**lone, on their **B**acks, and in **C**ribs without any blankets, pillows, or stuffed toys. There is a free online safe sleep training module that you can take to learn more at: <https://www.in.gov/health/cfr/safe-sleep/safe-sleep-program/>

☁️ What do the cribs look like?

Infants should never sleep in adult beds or on couches. They should always be placed to sleep in a crib or bassinet. Take a look around and see if the cribs are in good condition. Make sure the sheets are not loose. They should fit tightly on the crib mattress. Observe there are no items, toys, pillows, or blankets in the crib.

Infants should never sleep in car seats, swings, or bouncers. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, allowing an infant to sleep in these inclined or upright positions is a safety hazard, as the baby's head can fall forward and cut off their airway.

☁️ Ask about tummy time

Tummy time is essential for many developmental reasons. Ask your provider how they support and supervise children in tummy time. Because infants should be put to sleep on their backs, they need to spend significant awake time on their stomachs. Their muscles will develop differently if they don't get enough tummy time. Providers need to make sure that they're getting on their stomachs every day.

☁️ Tour the Child Care Facility/Home

While you are doing the tour, watch an infant get laid to sleep and observe that they're placed back on their back in a crib. The crib should have no soft objects.

Summary: What does a safe infant sleep environment look like?

1. Sleep happens on a firm sleep surface, such a mattress in safety-approved crib or bassinet. Never share a bed with your baby. Having your baby sleep in the same room, but on a separate sleep surface, is recommended. Infants should not share a bed with other children. Child care centers should have separate sleep surfaces for each infant.
2. Baby is placed on his or her back for all sleep times -- naps and at night.
3. Baby sleeps in a crib or bassinet for every sleep. There are no soft objects in the crib. Babies can suffocate on toys, blankets, pillows, and bumper pads. Babies should never sleep on adult beds or couches.

If you need more information, please contact:

Indiana Department of Health Infant Safe Sleep Program at
safesleep.health.in.gov or
Brighter Future Indiana at brighterfuturesindiana.org



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**Fatality Review &
Prevention**

