**2. National awareness promotes Local action to ‘prevent and protect’:**

Between June 2018 and August 2019 the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel were notified of 40 babies that had died whilst co-sleeping with a parent, making this the largest group of children notified.

Key themes noted in [this review](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/901091/DfE_Death_in_infancy_review.pdf) were linked to risks also raised by the Lullaby Trust on:

-co-sleeping

-sleeping in ‘out of routine’ environments

-parents had consumed alcohol or drugs

-wider vulnerabilities

**1. Background**

Over 200 babies and young children still die every year from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in the UK.

National research coordinated by the [Lullaby Trust](https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/co-sleeping/) have established some key modifiable factors associated with an increased risk of SIDS.

The Lullaby Trust uses this evidence base to focus the advice given to parents to support with raising awareness on safer sleep. This briefing can help frame important conversations to engage parents and ensure as professionals we continue to make every contact count and harness opportunities to reduce the risks by providing consistent messages around safer sleeping.

The [Lullaby Evidence base](http://lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Evidence-base-2019.pdf) factsheet outlines further information.

**Safeguarding: 7 Minute Briefing**

**Safer Sleep Briefing**

 

**3. Share the key messages: Give baby a clear, safe space to sleep:**

-Always put baby on their back for every sleep (day and night): [back to sleep factsheet](https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/fact-sheet-back-to-sleep.pdf)

-The sleeping space should have a firm, flat mattress with no raised or cushioned areas

-Make sure baby’s head is kept uncovered so they don’t get too hot

-Never use pillows, duvets, cot bumpers, pods, nests or sleep positioners.

-Share the safer [sleep guide for parents](https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Safer-sleep-for-babies-a-guide-for-parents-web.pdf)

**7. Action to promote safer sleep and additional resources:**

**-**Continued promotion of breastfeeding and smoking cessation

-Consistent robust advice on safer sleep, utilising these additional resources:

*-* [*Video on Co-Sleeping*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFNTGXY8fCA&feature=youtu.be)

-[*Safer sleep messages for 'dads'*](https://liftthebaby.org.uk/?dm)

-[*Video on Safer sleep advice / positioning*](https://youtu.be/YQ0g3YwL8do)

*-*[*Easy read guide for safer sleep*](https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Easy-read-card-English-web.pdf)

***Never sleep on a sofa or armchair: risk of SIDS is 50 times higher!***

**6. Pre-disposing factors that increase risk;Maintain awareness on:**

**-**Smoking, alcohol/drug use in pregnancy

-deprivation and poverty indicators, overcrowding

-adverse childhood experiences / impact on key messages being understood

-late booking and poor antenatal/postnatal engagement

-parental mental ill-health

-evidence of neglect, domestic violence and parental criminality

**4. The focus on Co-Sleeping:**

Some parents choose to share a sleep space with their babies, the ‘sleep guide for parents’ highlights how to do this in a safer way.

**However it is very dangerous to co-sleep in the following circumstances:**

-parents smoke or have consumed alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication that may have a drowsy effect)

-baby was born before 37 weeks or had a birth weight less than 2.5kg

**5. Situational risk and ‘Sleeping out of routine’**:

A key role for professionals is to support parents to apply safer sleeping practice where situational risk or ‘out of routine sleeping’ may be a factor. Key examples being:

-temporary housing

-Altered sleeping arrangements (holidays, family occasions, staying with relatives, illness, fleeing domestic abuse)

-Planned use of alcohol and prompting arrangements to maintain safer sleep practices