

# Safe Infant Sleep Discussion Guide for Professionals

Strategies to support people with creating and following a safe sleep plan for their baby to reduce risk of sudden unexpected infant death (SUID), including sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

## Prepare

### Create a supportive environment.

- Build the relationship with a welcoming presence and respectful, open communication.
- “Would you like anyone else like relatives, babysitters, or others who will be caring for the baby to be part of this conversation about how the baby will sleep?”

## Learn

### Understand their needs and priorities.

- Help facilitate a connection between the baby’s needs and the parent or caregiver’s goals. Respect and acknowledge what is shared.
- “There’s a lot of focus on the baby, but I want to hear about you. Would you help me understand more about your goals, schedules, cultural experiences, and family background?”

## Share

### Provide evidence-based information.

- Use an educational handout, video, or both while discussing current safe infant sleep recommendations.
- “As you’re making a sleep plan for your baby, there’s some safety information you should know.”
- Spend more time discussing factors that increase SUID risk when bedsharing using an educational handout, video, or both.
- “Sleeping on the same surface as your baby is not recommended because it increases risk of SUID. I’d like to make sure that everyone knows about the things that make this risk much higher because, in a safe sleep plan, it’s best to focus on reducing your baby’s risk of SUID in all scenarios, expected and unexpected.”

## Support

### Acknowledge challenges and create pathways for safer choices.

- Provide information, resources, or strategies to reduce risk associated with identified challenges.
- “Parenting is hard. Sometimes when these recommendations aren’t followed, it’s unintentional. What potential challenges might you experience related to keeping your baby safe during sleep?”

## Ask

### Discover needs for information, plans, and supports.

- “What questions has this brought up about keeping your baby safe during sleep?”
- “What would help you use this information to make and remember a safe sleep plan for your baby? What would help you share the plan with others?”
- “Is there anyone who can support you and if so, what type of support could they provide? What other types of support might you need?”
- Provide information about relevant resources such as cultural groups, mental health care, and childcare.



Scan  
or visit

[srhd.org/SUID](https://srhd.org/SUID) to find  
additional tools to  
support your SUID  
prevention work,  
including:

- Professional training webinar.
- Safe infant sleep educational videos and handouts available in multiple languages.



Healthy Living Program  
1101 W. College Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509.324.1538 | [srhd.org](https://srhd.org)

Spokane Regional Health District assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. To file a complaint or to request more information, reasonable accommodations, or language translations, contact 509.324.1501 or visit [srhd.org](https://srhd.org).