

Save a Baby Month: May 2007

FSID's baby sleep product advice tips for parents:

Cots

- The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a crib or cot in a room with you for the first six months. This advice applies to day-time naps as well as night-time sleeps.
- Ensure your baby's cot is in good condition, particularly if it's second-hand or old.
- Check that the gaps between the bars are less than 6.5cm, and the space between the mattress and cot is no more than 4cm.
- If you use a Moses basket, it should only have a thin lining.
- Never sleep your baby on a pillow, cushion, beanbag or waterbed.
- Recent research has shown that cot bumpers have neither good nor bad effects. Take cot bumpers out when your baby can get up on their hands and knees so they can't climb out.
- Never sleep together with your baby on a sofa or armchair.

Mattresses

- It is very important that your baby's mattress is kept clean and dry.
- Ideally you should buy a new mattress for each new baby.
- If you are not able to do this, use the one you have, as long as it was made with a completely waterproof cover and has no tears, cracks or holes. Clean and dry it thoroughly.
- Check that the mattress is in good condition; is firm, not soft; fits the cot without any gaps; and doesn't sag.
- 'Ventilated' mattresses with holes are not recommended as it is not possible to keep the inside clean.
- Never sleep your baby on a pillow, cushion, bean bag or waterbed.



Bedding

- Use lightweight clothing and one or more layers of light blankets or a baby sleeping bag.
- If you use a baby sleeping bag it needs to be without a hood, lightweight and the correct size around the neck so that your baby won't slip down inside the bag. On rare occasions you might need to add extra clothing or a light blanket but never use with a duvet or quilt.
- Babies do not need hot rooms. About 18°C (65°F) is comfortable. When you check your baby, if he or she is sweating or their tummy feels hot to the touch, take off some of the bedding. Don't worry if your baby's hands or feet feel cool, this is normal. See thermometer below.
- Remember, a folded blanket counts as two blankets.
- In summer, if it is very warm, your baby may not need any bedclothes other than a sheet.
- If your baby is under a year old, don't use a duvet, quilt, pillow, electric blanket or hot water bottle.
- If you use a sheepskin, take it away as soon as your baby starts trying to roll on to their tummy.

