

Baby Essentials

education for all on protecting babies' lives

Brought to you by Devotion, Vaiuli, Chen, Katie and
Change for our Children (2009)


www.changeforourchildren.co.nz



My name is Devotion

Please make sure everyone **knows** the information that follows. If we could speak, this is the protection all babies, everywhere would ask for. Fa'afetai.

Knowing



Protecting babies is everyone's business.

Babies do die

Total infant deaths
(NZ 1994-2005)

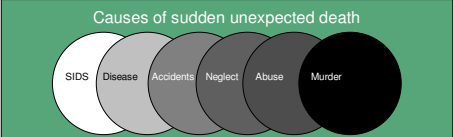
- ▶ 2072 (all causes, 1-12 months)
- ▶ 990 (SIDS)

Ref: NZHIS

SUDI deaths include:

- ▶ Explained
(e.g. suffocation or accidental asphyxia)
- ▶ Unexplained
(e.g. SIDS or cot death)

Causes of sudden unexpected death



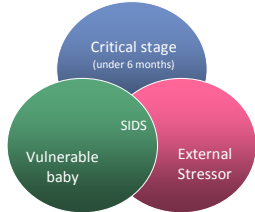
SUDI is the term for all sudden unexpected deaths in infancy.

Which babies die?

Babies are at risk if:

- ▶ Under six months
- ▶ More vulnerable due to
 - smoking in pregnancy
 - born before 36 weeks
 - birth weight < 2500 grams
 - influence of alcohol / drugs
- ▶ In unsafe sleeping situations

Triple Risk



Most SUDI deaths are preventable.

Ref: Guntheroth et al PEDIATRICS Vol. 110 No. 5 2002

Sleep factors trigger death for most SUDI babies.

How do babies die?

Babies have a natural drive to breathe or **arousal response**. This fails for SUDI babies. They stop breathing in their sleep.

Breathing may stop due to

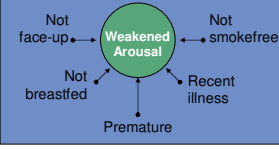
- ▶ things that weaken arousal
 - smoking in pregnancy, being premature, low birth weight, bottle fed or unwell.
- ▶ hazards in the sleeping environment
 - pillows, unsafe positioning, people in the bed, loose covers, soft bedding, the influence of alcohol and drugs, or partying
- ▶ a mix of these

Sleeping babies need to breathe.

Why is arousal important?

- ▶ It is a baby's defense for life-threatening events
- ▶ It 'resets' a baby's vital functions e.g. heart rate, blood pressure, breathing.
- ▶ The same factors that weaken arousal, increase SUDI risk.
- ▶ Their effect on arousal is greatest at 2-3 months, the peak age for SUDI.

Factors that weaken the arousal response



Ref: Horne R, Paediatr Child Health Vol 11 Suppl A 2006

Arousal is a baby's wake-up call.

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Where do babies die?



- ▶ In any place that babies sleep
- ▶ Lower rates in beds designed for babies
e.g. cots, bassinets ...
- ▶ Higher rates in other places
e.g. couches, adult beds or mattresses, make shift beds, armchairs ...



A 'baby bed' is a bed designed for babies.


Ref: Carpenter et al. The Lancet. Vol 363, 2004

Babies need a protected space wherever they sleep.

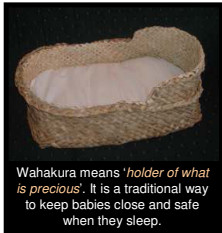
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The co-sleeping debate



- ▶ Some support a universal ban on babies sleeping in the same bed as parents
- ▶ Others support a 'remove hazards and make it safe' approach
- ▶ All agree
 - 'in same room as sleeping parent'
 - 'in own bed' (a bed designed for babies) for high risk situations:
 - Smoking in pregnancy
 - Premature or low birth weight
 - Alcohol, drugs or partying



Wahakura means 'holder of what is precious'. It is a traditional way to keep babies close and safe when they sleep.

No place guarantees safety. It needs to be made safe.

Ref: Paediatr Child Health Vol 11 Suppl A 2006

Disagreement is a sign that more research is needed.

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Believing



My name is Vaiuli


Please help everyone **believe** the information about safe sleep. Just knowing it may not be enough. Ka pai.

Knowing may not be enough.

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Reality Check



Circumstances

- healthy baby girl, 7 weeks old, normal birth at 38 weeks weighing 2890 grams, formula fed, smokefree mother
- in portacot in parents' room on three mattresses, top one covered by a sheet, with a top sheet and 3 blankets all tucked in firmly. No pillows.
- baby wrapped tightly in fleecy blanket, her arms tucked in, placed on her tummy, as usual, with head to one side.
- mother knew tummy risky, tried back in first 2 weeks, but baby settled better on tummy
- mother found her baby with her face down into mattress
- **Verdict:** possible suffocation from sleeping on the tummy

Death is a cruel consequence for a parent acting with love.

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Coroner's findings




Table 1: Accumulation of risks for the seven Wellington SUDI babies

Baby	Unsafe position	Unsafe wrapping	Smoking	Pillows	Formula fed	Smoking & bed sharing	Total risks
A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
B	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
C	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5
D	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5
E	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	4
F	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	3
G	Yes	No	?	Yes	Yes	No	3

We have the knowledge to prevent such deaths.

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Why people don't believe



Healthy adopters

Practices that are high risk in some situations are widely adopted.

Gone away

Compared to 250 SUDI deaths a year 60 seems not many.

Windows of risk

Babies develop their way *into* and then *out of* periods of risk.

Hidden in ordinary


Sleep hazards are not seen in ordinary situations.

Safety advice needs to make sense to people.

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Some parents say



- I'm scared she will **choke** on her back.
- He's on his side so he won't get a **flat head**.
- I **prop** her on pillows to help her **wind**, but she is on her back.
- I know back is best, but she **settles better** on her tummy.
- We all **sleep together** to **keep warm**. Our house is freezing.
- When my baby is **sick** he always sleep in bed with me.
- I thought that was a **pakeha thing** – sleeping on the back
- We fall asleep together feeding **on the couch**, never in our bed.
- You can't use **patches** when you're **pregnant**. That's why I'm still smoking.
- Can't see what **breastfeeding's** got to do with **cot death**. They just say what they like.
- The crying gets to you. I'll do **what works**. Better than throwing him out the window.

The realities of the moment can compete with what is essential. 13

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My name is Chen

Please help everyone to **act** on the information in this presentation. Believing it may not be enough. Xie xie ni.

Supporting Action



People expect professionals to help them do what is best. 14

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Some professionals say



- I don't waste my time on this if they are **low risk**.
- Too much to cover. You have to **pick and choose** your topics.
- I did it all wrong with my kids, smoked, on the tummy, in our bed, but they are 'healthy as'.
- I don't agree with babies sleeping in their own beds. No wonder women struggle with breastfeeding.
- It's about **whakamā** for me.
- Some of these people have very difficult lives. We are there to **support them not judge them or tell them what to do**.
- Everything keeps changing - cot death, SIDS, SUDI. It just confuses everyone. I've stopped listening.
- I prefer the traditional ways - tightly wrapped, on the side with the bassinet propped.
- Not an issue, now. Used to be.

Attitudes of professionals show in their practice. 15

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Aligning with protection


from → to

optional	essential
informing	transforming
messages	principles
usually	always
knowing	understanding
fear	confidence
single issues	in context
avoiding risk	pursuing protection

The language of protection helps create the change. 16

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Focus on the face



The Carpenter Study

A large study of **745 SUDI babies** and **2411 healthy comparisons** found:

62% of deaths were due to:

- Being placed on the tummy (39% vs 11%; risk ↑ by **13**)
- Turning from side to tummy (12% vs 2%; risk ↑ by **45**)
- Getting a covered head (25% vs 3%; risk ↑ by **12**)

Positioning risks change with age.

Ref: Carpenter, et al. The Lancet, Vol 363, 2004

"Face-up, face clear" saves lives. 17

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Why smokefree matters



Te Whare Tangata
- a child's first home -



Babies cannot open a window or escape from harm - they are trapped.

- Smoking builds vulnerable babies** (more than 15000/year in NZ)
 - takes oxygen, delivers poisons
 - makes placenta struggle and it may 'give up' early (premature birth)
 - weakens vital systems as they develop
 - makes babies weak, sick and die
- Is a highly significant risk for SUDI**
 - As is 'smoking + bed sharing' combo (15% vs 2%; risk ↑ by **18**)
 - smoking is involved in most bed sharing deaths (77%)
- Is the main cause of preventable death and disease for babies**

Ref: Carpenter, et al. The Lancet, Vol 363, 2004

Smokefree from the start builds resilient babies. 18

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Protection beyond sleep



- 
Breastfeeding
 Around the world breastfeeding saves lives. It strengthens every aspect of development: breathing, learning, growth, immunity ... It helps prepare a child for independent life.
- 
Closeness
 Human babies need a parent close by, day and night. The parent must be close enough and able to respond when their baby, or a situation, alerts them to a need.
- 
Gentle handling
 Survival depends on gentle handling. Rough handling can tear blood vessels inside the head and cause brain damage or death. A stressed parent needs support.

A baby's care must match the demands of their development. 19

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My name is Katie

You have influence. Please use it to protect us. Thank you.

Influencing



Through children we influence the future. 20

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Safe Sleep Blitz



Can we build a culture of **safe sleep for every baby** in New Zealand in the next 12 months?

No, if we

- don't aim to
- keep doing what we do


Yes, if we

- think it matters
- work together
- do things differently

Vision: safe sleep for every baby, in every place, at every sleep. 21

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What can you do?



- Do what you can
- The strategy is simple
 - korero
 - talk
 - pecha kucha (chatter)
- Be systematic
 - E.g. build a guided 'baby essentials check' into your practice with every family.
- Seize opportunities

Ideas for conversations		
✓ affirm safe sleep practices	✓ advise against pillows near a sleeping baby	✓ refer for smokefree support
✓ stress 'in own bed' for more vulnerable babies	✓ explain safe swaddling (only when face-up)	✓ address side sleeping when you see it
✓ advise on safe ways to settle babies	✓ help balance closeness and safety	✓ stress 'every' time, place and sleep
✓ stress dangers of falling asleep with babies on sofas	✓ guide a 'baby essentials' check	✓ be clear about risks for prem and low birth weight babies

Remember the babies. 22

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The partnership



Support people to create the change

- From the very start, make babies as strong as possible
 - Smokefree, breastfed ...
- For every sleep make breathing as easy as possible
 - Face-up, face clear ...
- Make every place a baby sleeps in as safe as possible
 - Designed for babies, checked for hazards ...


Development demands a triple response to the triple risk

safe sleep = face-up + face clear + smokefree

A baby essentials 'safe sleep' check is practical support. 23

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Six principles for protecting a baby's life



Face-up, Face clear, Smokefree, Breast fed, Close to a parent, Handled gently

The SUDI story is about to change. Thanks to you. 24