



Safe Sleep Essentials

Training report for
the Child, Youth
and Family Service

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Prepared by Change for our Children Limited
www.changeforourchildren.co.nz

Training Report: Safe Sleep Essentials

Training provided by Change for our Children Limited (CCL) to Child, Youth and Family (CYF) staff

Background

Sudden infant death is 8.5 times more likely for Infants living in deprived circumstances (NXDEP 9-10) compared to infants living in the least deprived settings (NZDEP 1-2)ⁱ.

This training was developed from discussions with Nicola Hastie and colleagues and as a response to the death of a baby in the care of a CYF approved carer during 2011. It was identified that social workers and others in the CYF team did not feel confident in their knowledge and understanding of sudden infant death, nor in their ability to discuss infant sleep safety with carers and families.

Change for our Children Limited (CCL) holds a national contract with the Ministry of Health for education to reduce sudden infant death and has done since 1994. In consultation with Child Youth and Family, Change for our Children designed an education programme for the Child Youth and Family service. It was based on that provided to health professionals, but customised for the specific practice realities of Child Youth and Family workers.

Two approaches were delivered:

- ▶ a foundation session for staff across the service
- ▶ a train the trainer session for a core group who will act as Safe Sleep Champions

Expectations

Expectations of the programme were that participants would become ...

- ▶ More knowledgeable about sudden infant death
- ▶ More understanding of infant development
- ▶ More current about what is, and is not, safe infant care
- ▶ More aware of hazards for babies when they sleep
- ▶ More able to assess the safety of a sleeping environment
- ▶ More accountable for protecting babies
- ▶ More purposeful in your discussions with carers
- ▶ More supportive of whanau
- ▶ More empowered to take safe action
- ▶ More confident in promoting safe care for babies

Foundation Programme

Purpose: Called *Safe Sleep Essentials*, the programme was designed to prepare social workers and carers with the knowledge, understandings and skills to promote the safe care of babies within the CYF scope of influence. Specifically the focus was on preventing deaths from accidental suffocation in younger and older babies, and developing the confidence of participants to assess and discuss sleep safety with colleagues, carers and families.

Approach: The programme took a 'first principles' approach, being that babies need to sleep on their backs and be able to breathe. The content was stripped back to bare essentials, acknowledging the primary role of the Child Youth and Family service as 'care and

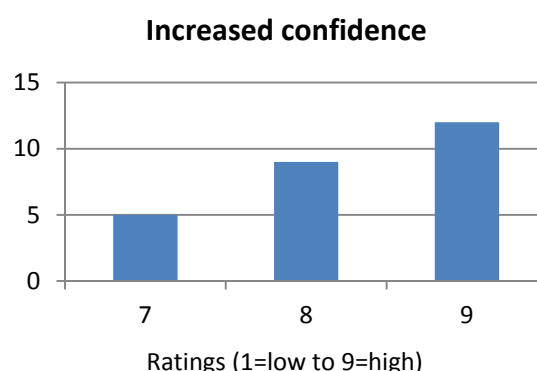
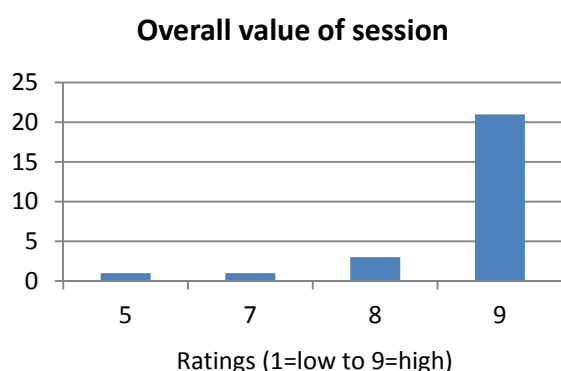
protection' in a social sense, yet aligning this with 'care and protection' in a developmental sense when it comes to infant sleep. The session was highly interactive after a beginning presentation of the evidence behind safe sleep recommendations.

Format: There were three modules: knowing (and the presentation of information), understanding (and small group work to examine 'old' thinking) finishing with practice in shaping a variety of 2 minute discussions on safe infant sleep with carers and whanau. The safe way to wrap babies and carry babies was demonstrated and the session ended with teams of participants putting safe sleep principles into practice with the making up, and placement of a baby in, a bassinet. The session was two and a half hours.

Resources: Participants received a resource pack with an A4 laminated talk card to facilitate focused discussions, a small information leaflet on what the social worker needs to know about safe sleep, and various other safe sleep related materials.

Participants: Twenty six people attended the education session which was held in the Waimakariri Room in Winston Ave, Christchurch. Some people had travelled from sites outside of Christchurch, including Timaru. Their feedback suggests that the main objectives of the training were met in that the session was rated highly (7 to 9 out of 9) for:

- ▶ overall value of the session (by 96%)
- ▶ increased confidence to discuss safe infant sleep (by 100%)



Feedback comments: Participants were asked "What words describe your experience of this education?". Responses were analysed with word find using MSWord to establish the main themes. These included:

- ▶ Informative (16)
- ▶ Confident (8)
- ▶ Excellent (7)
- ▶ Useful (6)
- ▶ Practical (5)

A full record of comments is included in Appendix A, with examples below.

"Excellent. It was really good to hear why those practices are the most safe, challenging old ways I practiced when my babies were born (1980's). Succinct, pertinent, good value and I

will definitely check and talk more confidently when working with caregivers and parents of vulnerable infants. Thank you."

"Excellent, sharp, succinct and clear. One of the best trainings I've had over the last year."

"Very important and useful for my learning and development as a student social worker. I now feel much more confident and knowledgeable when going out into the community. Thank you very much."

Train the Trainer programme

Purpose: This workshop prepared a dedicated team from within the Child, Youth and Family team to deliver 'Safe Sleep Essentials' education to colleagues and carers.

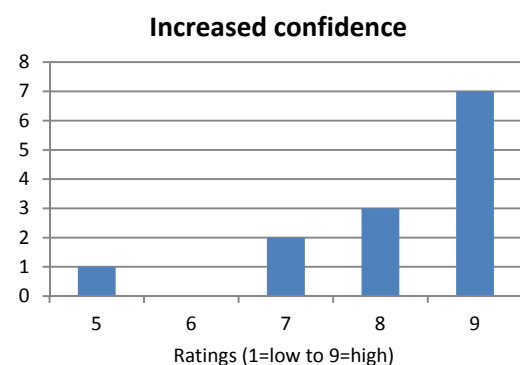
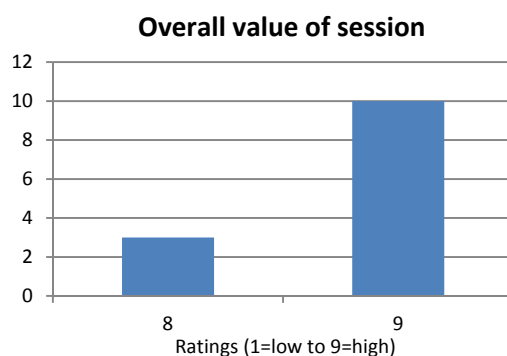
Approach: The approach was highly practical in that it prepared participants for the delivery of both the information and skill development aspects of the programme. As well, it was an orientation to the administrative support and reporting expectations that make the programme standard and accountable.

Format: The session followed the base programme for preparing health colleagues as safe sleep champions: Delivery of education, skill development using resources and administration and systems support. Time was allocated to a range of infant care 'topics', and how to address them, that are likely to be raised in participants' own sessions e.g. dummy use, positioning devices, flat heads ...

Resources: Participants received a Train the Trainer resource pack with a Safe Sleep Essentials facilitator's guide, to support them in their safe sleep champion role, a 'just imagine booklet with stories from 11 people who became smokefree in pregnancy and various other materials.

Participants: Thirteen people took part, 12 of whom had attended the foundation training earlier in the week. The training was held in Change for our Children offices at 132C Victoria Street, Christchurch. Feedback from participants suggests that the main objectives of the training were met in that the session was rated highly (7 to 9 out of 9) for:

- ▶ overall value of the session (by 100%)
- ▶ increased confidence to discuss safe infant sleep (by 92%)



Feedback comments: Again, participants were asked “What words describe your experience of this education?”. Responses were analysed with word find using MSWord to establish the main themes. These were similar to the Tuesday training and included:

- ▶ Informative (10)
- ▶ Confident (6)
- ▶ Excellent (3)
- ▶ Clear (3)

A full record of Train the Trainer participant comments is included in Appendix B, with examples below.

“Great having the information taught in such a concentrated way, which has made me confident. I will remember the information and then be able to deliver it confidently.”

“Informative, practical, valuable. Good depth of explanation. Well presented.”

“Helpful, in-depth information that makes it feel easy to present and explain. It is clear and relevant training. Thank you.”

Facilitator’s appraisal

These two training sessions were exciting. Participants of both training days engaged fully in the purpose and spirit of this training. There were lots of questions and interest was high in both the information presented and the activities to embed learning. Some people were disturbed by the awareness of the responsibilities they have had for the care of babies in the past without knowing the ways in which babies are vulnerable. People were generous in admitting what they had *not known* and had *not done* in relation to the care of their own babies and embraced the new knowledge with relief and appreciation.

Significant was the respect shown for the simplicity of the communication challenge – babies must breathe so how do we ensure that when they sleep. Also significant was the acceptance of the two pronged goal of the education: to reduce infant deaths and to reduce mortality inequality. People were empowered by the notion of sharing information for two reasons, one to be sure the client, carer or colleague understands safe sleep principles, and two, to invite the client, carer or colleague to help spread the information and understandings to others. In this way there is leverage from every discussion and a mechanism to grow networks of confidence and awareness within vulnerable communities.

Infant deaths now cluster in the very communities served by the Child, Youth and Family service. Because of this, the potential to empower vulnerable families and contribute to reducing preventable infant deaths is maximised for Child, Youth and Family staff. We are delighted to have our social work colleagues in Canterbury part of the safe sleep effort and champion network across New Zealand.

Reflective practice stories

Participants were encouraged to write reflective practice summaries demonstrating how they applied this education to day to day practice. We look forward to receiving these and providing

feedback. This will be acknowledged with a Certificate of Completion of the Safe Sleep Essentials education.

Case study 1: One participant of both sessions used her Talk Card resource to shape a safe sleep conversation with a client immediately following the first session. She spoke of using the card to explain about breathing and why certain conditions are essential for protection, ending with both social worker and client going through a formal safe sleep check, together. At the end of the discussion the client asked if she could have a copy of the card.

Case study 2: A participant of the first training session saw an opportunity to add a piece to a newsletter being sent out to the Child, Youth and Family network of carers, colleagues and families. She called Change for our Children to ask for a paragraph on safe sleep checks. This suggests that the issue is a priority and that staff now have ways to take meaningful action.

Next steps

Child Youth and Family now has a core of 26 social workers trained in carrying safe infant sleep understandings into communities most at need and a strong team of 13 safe sleep champions to extend the awareness and responding across the Canterbury service. Change for our Children has made training tools available online, and is available to support further as needed, but the tools to take this work forward now rest with the service.

Discussions within the service will be needed to ensure that policy is strong, training is embedded, role expectations are clear, and systems are in place for documentation and recording, to ensure a standard of care and protection is achieved.

We wish the service well.

Stephanie Cowan
Director

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the following individuals from the Canterbury Child and Youth and Family service for their different and important parts in the development of this project: Bronwyn Kay, Nicola Hastie, Paula Smith, Jan Gillandes and Jan Qusted.

Appendix A:

Responses to: What words describe your experience of this education?

- Confident, knowledgeable, excellent information, excellent facilitation, style, approach and personality.
- Energetic, informative, thought provoking.
- Excellent – informative.
- Excellent!!!!
- Excellent information. Useful
- Excellent, sharp, succinct and clear. One of the best trainings I've had over the last year.
- Excellent. It was really good to hear why those practices are the most safe, challenging old ways I practiced when my babies were born (1980's). Succinct, pertinent, good value and I will definitely check and talk more confidently when working with caregivers and parents of vulnerable infants. Thank you.
- Food for thought, very informative and will now use in my social work practice with families
- Gave the background information to why SUDI messages are given - face-up, face clear, smokefree. Enjoyed!
- Good to keep updated with all the changes.
- I don't have any children and my knowledge around the subject was limited. I found the session informing and practical. I feel more confident to pass on the message to my clients and friends.
- Informative, educational and well presented.
- Informative, practical, valuable. Good depth of explanation. Well presented.
- Interesting, common sense, I learned new information.
- It was great information based on research and stats. Really worthwhile.
- Learned a lot, practical information.
- Practical, succinct.
- Useful and informative.
- Very factual, very interesting, very useful.
- Very good
- Very good
- Very important and useful for my learning and development as a student social worker. I now feel much more confident and knowledgeable when going out into the community. Thank you very much.
- Very informative, empowering
- Very informative, practical and useful
- Very informative. Thanks for the scones with cream.

Appendix B:

Responses to: "What words describe your experience of this education?"

- Confidence-building, clear information.
- Excellent delivery and engagement by facilitators.
- Excellent, professional, feel ready!
- Good getting further information, makes me more confident to pass this onto others,
- Great beginning regarding the actual presentation, felt we lost our way after morning tea.
- I like the tools and feel confident using them. Thank you.
- Great having the information taught in such a concentrated way, which has made me confident. I will remember the information and then be able to deliver in confidently.
- Great information and resources.
- Great. I now need to use the information. I will probably have more questions after that.
- Helpful, in depth information that makes it feel easy to present and explain. It is clear and relevant training. Thank you.
- I think it was great to have the chance to start thinking of ways to pass on the knowledge. In my opinion, the information is clear, concise ideas to approach our caregivers.
- Informative, confident, impressed.
- Professional, empowering, excellent information.
- Really informative. Really quite powerful stuff!! It is actually foundational, but incredible how there has been so much information learned.

ⁱ Child and Youth Mortality Review Committee (CYMRC) Special Report March 2013