



# SOTERIA

## SAFE SLEEPING ADVICE

All children have the right to a safe sleeping environment

Issue 2

July 2018

A newsletter brought to you by Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice

Welcome to the **Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice Newsletter** for Education and Care Services

Soteria will keep you, and the families you care for, up to date with current media and safety issues, and how to improve your safe sleeping practices.

### This month's top story



#### [Nursery Products](#) – so many to choose from but just how safe are they?

Just because nursery products are being retailed in Australia, can we assume they all meet safety standards? [Find out more below.](#)



#### [Be aware and share ... Choice checks out portacots](#)

Choice magazine tested portacots currently on the market – [see how many passed...](#)



... and now for a little [quiz](#)...



### A little bit about Soteria

Named for the Greek goddess for safety and deliverer from harm, **Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice** provides child safe sleep advice based on scientific evidence-based information to health professionals, care-givers and the broader community. [Learn more here](#)



### Safe Sleeping Education for Education & Care Services

Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice runs on-site education sessions and half and full day workshops specifically aimed at the Education and Care Services. For more information, [click here](#)

## Nursery Products

Many people assume that all nursery products sold in Australia must be safe and meet a Mandatory Standard. Unfortunately, there are so many products on the market and very little formal research has been done to test the efficacy or the safety of the majority of these products.

Seeing all these products available to buy or use can be confusing – what is safe and what is not safe? For this reason, you need to consider:

- Is the product I am thinking of using, a safe product – are there any potential hazards?
- Am I using it in a safe way? Are there instructions or a manual to demonstrate this?
- What is my baby/infant doing in this product – does this create any potential hazards?

Some products may not be safe for infants and young children to sleep in and, at times, safety issues emerge after these products have been on the market. These safety issues can relate to the design of the product, its manufacture or how the product is used.

### So what products should we use to sleep infants in our service?

It is important we take time out as educators to reflect on questions such as:

- Are the products where we are sleeping babies, infants and young children the right ones to use?
- Are they safe to use?
- What are parents using at home?

Every year hundreds of babies and toddlers are taken to emergency departments for nursery related injuries. Injury was most common with infants less than 12 months old, and associated with sleeping environments such as prams, cots and bassinets and change tables. This relates to: 'Key Quality Area 3: 3.1.2 Physical Environment states Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained'.



Some products can be dangerous to sleep infants on and should not be used in child care settings, for example: beanbags, pillows and soft padded products, positioners and hammocks.

Car seats and capsules have been designed as restraints to be used in a car - they should not be used as a sleeping environment in a child care setting or in the home.

**The safest place to sleep an infant whilst in your” service is in a cot that meets the current Australian mandatory standard AS/NZ 2172:2003 for at least the first 12 months of age.** Family day care may alternatively choose to use a portable cot that meets the current mandatory standard AS/NZS 2195:1999.

The cot should be regularly checked to ensure that it meets the current Australian mandatory standard for cots. As a general guide, if you are using a household cot and it was purchased more than 10 years ago, it may not meet the current standard for cots. New products come with complete instructions and warnings on how to assemble and how to use the product **correctly** and **safely**. Over time cots can become wobbly or parts broken.

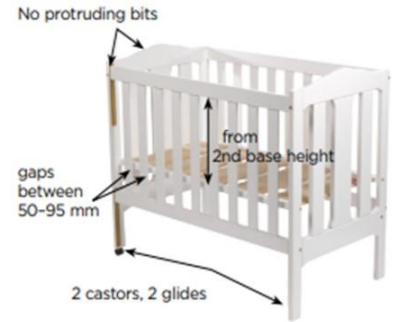


Image: Keeping Baby Safe - ACC

Look for missing or loose knobs, screws or sharp catches, peeling paint or splintered wood. Report any hazards.



Freeimages.com/Helmut Gevert

The pram has not been designed as a permanent place to sleep a baby. If a baby will only settle whilst in a pram, educators should remain with the baby until they settle and, when the baby is asleep, place them into a safe cot.

Some products can be dangerous to sleep infants on and should not be used in child care settings, for example: beanbags, pillows and soft padded products, positioners and hammocks. Car seats and capsules have been designed as restraints to be used in a car - they should not be used as a sleeping environment in a child care setting or in the home.

Remember: products that comply with a mandatory Australian standard still need to be set up and used correctly to reduce the risk of injury for children.

There are some great resources out there to help you know what to look for, including the CHOICE Website [www.choice.com.au](http://www.choice.com.au) and the ACCC's [Keeping Baby Safe – A Guide to Infant and Nursery Products](#)

**Remember: Safe Practice, Safe Place, Safe Product, Safe Policy for every sleep for every child**

**Be aware and share ...**

“Portacots fail mandatory and voluntary standards” – *Choice* magazine, May, 2018



In recent testing by *Choice*, ten out of 12 portacots failed to meet mandatory Australian safety standards, posing suffocation and injury risks to babies, and all 12 failed the stricter voluntary standard.

Choice estimated that these 12 portacots represent approximately one-third of models currently available through major stores.

You can read the *Choice* article and check the portacot test results here:  
<https://www.choice.com.au/babies-and-kids/baby-transport/portable-cots/articles/portacots-fail-mandatory-and-voluntary-australian-standards>

**Remember: Safe Practice, Safe Place, Safe Product, Safe Policy for every sleep for every child**

**And now a little quiz...**

**How long does a new born baby sleep for each day?**

- A. up to 8 hours in a 24 hour period
- B. up to 12 hours in a 24 hour period
- C. up to 18 hours in a 24 hour period

Answer: C. Up to 18 hours a day. That's a long time in a sleep environment. Young children up to the age of two spend more time asleep than awake!

Are you ready? Does your service provide a safe place for children to sleep? Do your families have a safe place at home for their young children to sleep?

**Remember: Safe Practice, Safe Place, Safe Product, Safe Policy for every sleep for every child**

## **Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice**

### ***Our Vision and Mission***

Our vision for ***all children to have the right to a safe sleeping environment*** will be achieved through building knowledge and understanding of safe sleeping practices for all caregivers to protect children from harm. Our mission is to support professionals and their practice, particularly in the context of their knowledge and understanding of Safe Sleeping practices.

### ***Our guiding principles***

Our approach to undertaking this work rests on the following understandings:

- The content will be based on current evidence based research
- The content will align with current National Standards, policy and best practice

### ***Our credentials***

Our principals possess a very strong background in developing safe sleeping guidelines based on scientific evidence-based information, in collaboration with researchers and other key players in this field. These guidelines form the basis for national standards for education and practice as well as informing community health campaigns.

Between them, they have over thirty years of safe sleeping knowledge garnered through their work with Red Nose, renowned for its successful Safe Sleeping health promotion campaign. With a history in nursing to underpin this knowledge, they have been instrumental in developing policy which is embedded into maternal child health practice and other national standards.

They are influential in developing resources for professionals and families, advocating for changes in policy and practice, in both the safe sleeping and bereavement support spheres.

## Education Sessions

Our professional development sessions provide early childhood education and care services with clear evidence-based information and guidelines on how to create a safe sleeping environment and deliver safe sleeping practices for all infants and young children.

Topics include:

- the Triple Risk Theory;
- care of a sick or unsettled infant;
- why the back position is the safest position;
- what to do when an infant starts to roll;
- swaddling/wrapping;
- prevention of plagiocephaly (flat head);
- effective supervision;
- when to move a young child from a cot to a bed or mattress; and
- dealing with conflict/handling parents' concerns.

To discuss how Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice can meet your Centre's specific needs, email [education@soteriasafesleepingadvice.com.au](mailto:education@soteriasafesleepingadvice.com.au) or call Jill Green on 0417 332009

## Workshops

### WORKSHOP 1

**"Safe Sleeping for Infants and Young Children"** has been designed specifically to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the importance of employing the safe sleeping principles in their own practice
- ensure all those who care for infants and young children are aware of the best practice guidelines to reduce the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) including SIDS and sleeping accidents  
and
- to support a consistent and national approach and to create a safe sleeping environment for all infants and young children

### WORKSHOP 2\*

**"From Regulation to Our Practice- developing a healthy Safe Sleeping policy and implementing best practice"**\* has been designed specifically to:

- develop confidence in planning and developing a safe sleeping policy document and tools for practice
- build your capacity to implement and deliver effective safe sleep policy and tools into your practice
- explore challenges and opportunities and the ways in which these influence legal and ethical responsibilities, including reporting and documentation requirements

Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice

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