

Babies' Care Routines

Sleep and Napping



Sleep is an essential part of a baby's day-to-day routine. For babies, **sleep offers the brain time to function intensively to support cognitive and emotional development**, as well as promoting a healthy immune system and preventing them from becoming overtired.

Developing Safe Sleep Routines

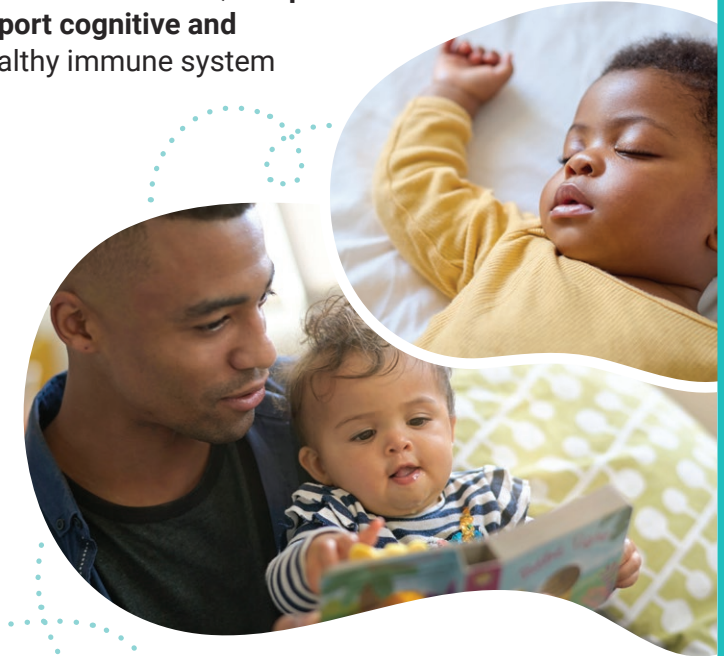
Establish **positive and supportive relationships with caregivers** to offer babies familiarity, mirror routines and approaches and to help gain a deeper understanding of babies' individual sleep cues.

Always follow **safer sleep guidance**. Ensure a safer sleep policy and procedures are in place in the setting to ensure babies' wellbeing.

Ensure **time is given to relaxing and calming babies** before they are expected to sleep. This could be through reading stories, singing gentle songs or playing music. It is important that babies are not overstimulated during this preparation time.

Consider how to **make babies aware of sleeping times**, maybe through lowering lights, minimising noise and using specific phrases that signify time to sleep.

Provide reassurance and comfort to babies as they prepare for their nap time (if needed), gently supporting babies' ability to self-settle. Tune into the different vocal sounds/cries of babies to ensure you are responding appropriately.



Consider timings in the day for sleep/nap times and reflect on what is happening leading up to this time. Establish a familiar/regular sleep routine to support babies with developing a positive association with sleep.

Try to **keep the time babies are awake between naps and length of naps consistent** from day to day. In addition, it is worth agreeing (with caregivers) on a cut-off time for sleeping. This will ensure that babies' bedtime routines aren't impacted.

Ensure sleep areas and arrangements provide a **safe environment** conducive to good sleeping behaviours. Consider **light levels** and **noise** and ensure the room does not get too hot or cold – the recommended **temperature** is 16–20°C.

Make a record of when babies sleep and for how long so that you can identify (with caregivers) any changes to their normal sleep pattern.