

Bathing

Bath time can be fun for a child. Following these tips will help you and your child have fun and stay safe.

- Never leave your baby alone in a bath, even if they are in a bath seat – not for a second
- Don't let an older child look after your baby
- Avoid burns or scalds by:
 - Keeping the hot water thermostat turned down
 - Running cold water first into the bath
 - Using a bath thermometer or testing the water temperature with your arm.

Cars

Protect your child by using a properly fitted baby car seat that is the right size for your baby's weight. Never put your baby in the front of a car where there are passenger air bags. When fitting a child car seat in your car, always follow the manufacturer's instructions thoroughly and allow plenty of time. The same applies when it comes to strapping your baby or child into the seat.

Don't leave your child alone in a car for any amount of time; even just to pop into a shop, you can never be sure that your child will remain seated and safe in your car. There are many ways children can seriously injure themselves, the danger is increased if they also have access to car keys.

Fire safety

If a fire breaks out extra seconds can make a real difference. Here are some useful tips:

- Test your smoke alarms every week to check that they're working
- You need a working smoke alarm on every floor of your home – upstairs as well as downstairs – to warn you quickly if a fire starts
- Don't let children play with matches or lighters
- Plan how you would escape a fire with your baby
- Keep your route to get out clear
- Keep babies away from fires, heaters, radiators and hot water pipes
- Use fireguards
- Contact your local fire service for information on fire prevention.

Leaving children alone/with others

If you are leaving your baby or child(ren) with another person, make sure this is some one you trust and is capable of taking care of your child. It is important that you as a parent ensure this person is appropriate and suitable to provide adequate care for your child(ren). Remember to leave your contact details in case you need to be contacted.

Never leave your baby or young child home alone, not even for a few minutes, regardless of whether they are sleeping or awake, the risks and dangers are too great.

Even when leaving older children alone, make sure that they are happy about the arrangement and that they know how to contact the emergency services. Keep your mobile phone with you and make sure they know your number so they can call you if you're needed.

If you have any questions or would like any further advice regarding the contents of this leaflet please speak to your health visitor or GP.

This leaflet has been compiled from information gained from accidents that have led to injury or death of children in Coventry. The aim is to share learning to reduce the risk of these accidents happening again.

This leaflet has been produced by Coventry Safeguarding Children (CSCB).

Child Safety Parent Guide



Your job as a parent is one of the most difficult there is – it can be both challenging and rewarding. It is a job where very little training is given to prepare parents for what lies ahead.

Every family can experience difficulties from time to time. This leaflet is to help guide you through some of those experiences and provide you with some helpful tips.

Sleeping

If you can, have your baby sleep in a cot next to your bed for the first 6 months. Place your baby so that the baby's feet are at the foot of the cot in the 'feet to foot' position with the covers no higher than their shoulders. Experience has shown that if your baby sleeps in the same bed as you, you could suffocate your baby, s/he could roll out and be injured or the baby could get caught between the bed and the wall. This is even more dangerous if you or your partner:

- Are smokers, even if you don't smoke in bed or in the house
- Have been drinking alcohol
- Have taken medication or drugs that make you drowsy
- Feel very tired
- Use non prescribed drugs.

Try not to fall asleep with your baby on a sofa or in an armchair for similar reasons. Whatever your baby's age always place them to sleep on their backs. This is safer and healthier for them.

If your baby is under a year old use one to three layers of a light blanket or use a baby bag to keep your baby warm and comfortable – ask your health visitor for more advice on this.

Getting the temperature right

As a baby is not able to tell you when s/he is too hot or cold it is important that you take some simple steps to maintain the right temperature for your baby.

- 18 C or 65 F is the ideal temperature for your baby's room
- Remember to take off outdoor clothes and hats when indoors
- After the age of 1 month babies do not need more clothes than their parents
- If your baby is unwell, don't let them get too hot.

Crying

Babies communicate their distress or discomfort by crying. This is usually related to being hungry, thirsty, having a wet nappy or being too hot or too cold. If none of these are the reason try:

- Try rocking or cuddling your baby
- Take your baby for a walk or a drive
- Consider using a dummy
- Ask another responsible family member or friend to take over
- Talk to your health visitor.

Remember never shake your baby, this can lead to serious injuries or even death. Often but not always, babies and children are shaken when a parent or carer is really frustrated when they will not stop crying. Shaking a baby can cause death or serious and long-lasting brain damage. If a baby is shaken his/her head wobbles back and forth causing blood vessels connected to the brain and skull to tear. If you need help or advice contact:

Your GP or local health visitor
CRY-SIS (7 days a week, 9am–10pm)
08451 228 669
NHS Direct 24 hours 0845 4647
Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Smoking

Babies are healthier if they are kept smoke-free. Babies exposed to cigarette smoke are at an increased risk of cot death. It is best if nobody smokes in the house including visitors.

If for some reason this is not possible, it is important that the room is well ventilated and windows are opened.

For practical and friendly advice on giving up smoking call the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Arguing/fighting in front of your baby/child

Consider the effect it may have on your child if you are involved in any arguments of either a verbal or physical nature. Your baby or child(ren) can be seriously affected by what they see and hear. Remember children will learn how to act from what their parents do.