

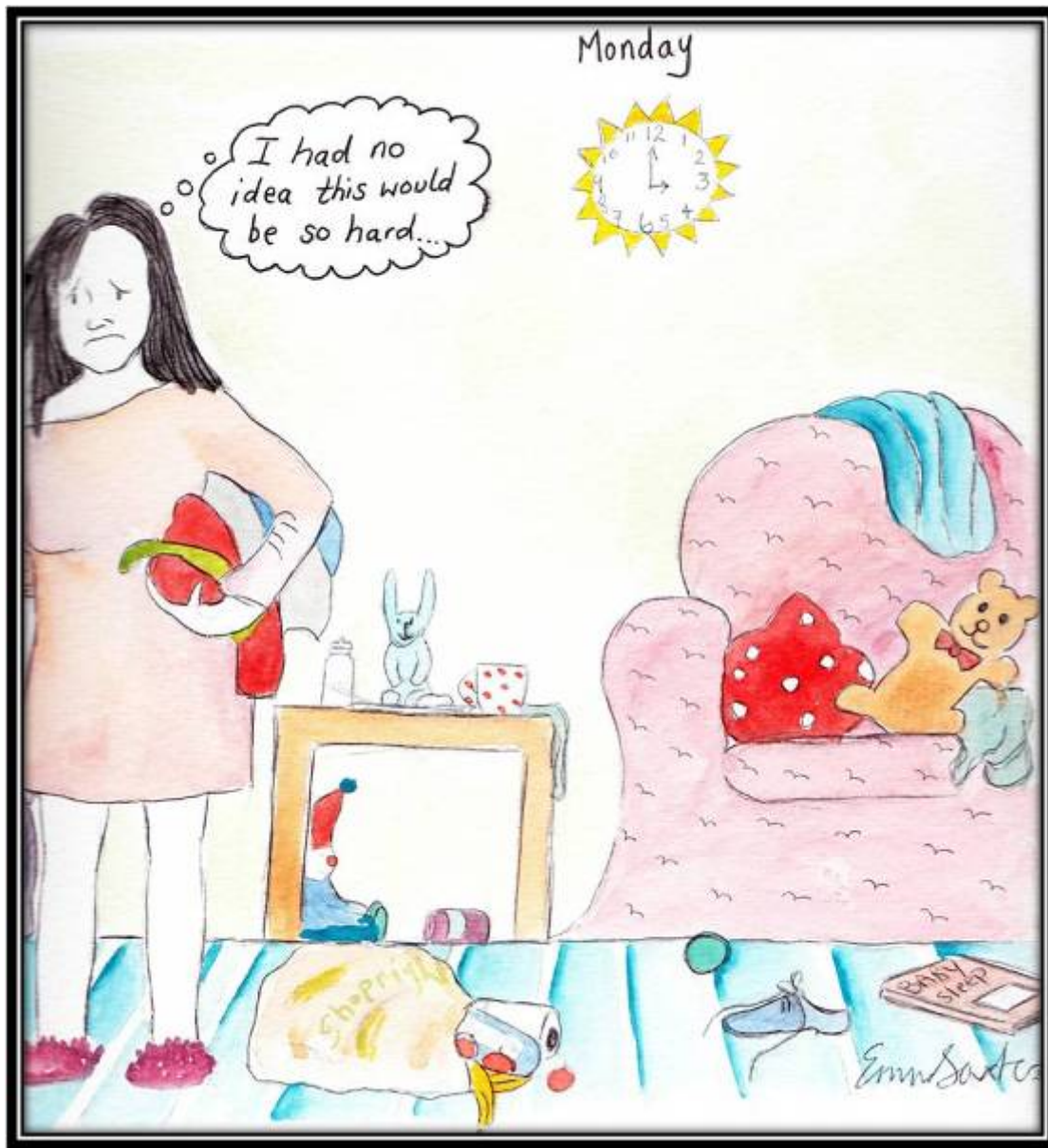
North London Fostering Consortium
Parent and Child Fostering Scheme

BABY AND CHILDCARE INFORMATION



**NORTH LONDON
ADOPTION
AND
FOSTERING
CONSORTIUM**

There will be good days and bad days when you are looking after your baby and all the professionals understand that it can be difficult, especially if this is your first baby. Therefore your foster carer and the professionals should encourage you to ask for advice when you feel things are too much.



Basic Care

In order to bring up a child successfully you need to understand a lot of new information to keep your child safe and well. Here is some information to talk about with your foster carer:

How to change your child's nappy

1. Lay your baby on a flat, secure surface, preferably on the floor.
2. Remove the nappy by lifting the adhesive tabs, and then fold the adhesive strips back onto themselves so they don't stick to your baby. Next, using a wipe or cotton wool dampened with water, clean the genital area by wiping from front to back. Boys should be cleaned around the testicles and penis, but there is no need to pull back the foreskin.
3. Fold the dirty nappy onto itself and move it to the side.
4. Place a clean nappy under your baby and pat your baby dry.
5. If your baby already has a nappy rash, choose a nappy cream that soothes the skin.
6. Secure the clean nappy by fastening the adhesive strips from the back of the nappy to the front panel. Make sure you are using the correct size nappy for your baby's size and weight. It should be snug, but not tight.

7. Finally, dispose of the dirty nappy (but never put it in the toilet-wrap the nappy in a plastic bag and put in an outside bin) and wash your hands.

Nappy Rash

Most babies get nappy rash at some time in the first 18 months.

Nappy rash can be caused by:

1. Prolonged contact with urine (wee) or stools (poo)
2. Sensitive skin
3. Rubbing or chafing
4. Soap, detergent or bubble bath
5. Baby wipes
6. Diarrhoea or other illness

There may be red patches on your baby's bottom, or the whole area may be red. The skin may look sore and feel hot to touch and there may be spots, pimples or blisters.

The best way to deal with nappy rash is to try to prevent your baby getting it in the first place. These simple steps will help:

1. Change wet or soiled nappies as soon as possible. Young babies need changing as many as 10 or 12 times a day; older babies at least six to eight times.
2. Lay your baby on a towel and leave the nappy off for as long and as often as you can in order to let fresh air get to the skin.

3. Use a barrier cream, such as Sudocrem or zinc barrier cream.

If the rash doesn't go away or your baby develops a persistent bright red, moist rash with white or red pimples that spread to the folds of the skin, s/he may have a thrush infection.

You'll need to use an anti-fungal cream, available either from the pharmacist or on prescription from your GP. Ask your pharmacist or health visitor for advice.

Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:



Topping and Tailing

For the first weeks you may find that 'topping and tailing' is the easiest way to bath your baby. 'Topping and tailing' simply means carefully washing your baby's face, neck, hands and bottom, morning and night, plus cleaning the nappy area as and when necessary.

Preparing

Always make sure the room is warm and free from draughts (ideally 18 degrees centigrade).

You will need:

- A bowl of warm water
- A towel
- Cotton wool
- A fresh nappy
- Clean clothes

Topping

1. Wipe each eye by using a piece of cotton wool dipped in cool, boiled water and gently wiping across your baby's eye, from the nose outwards.
2. Use a new piece of cotton for each eye.
3. Wipe the ears with a damp cotton wool pad/ ball but do not clean inside them and never use cotton buds.

4. Remember to wipe behind the ears as milk often drips there and can become sore if the area is not cleaned and kept dry.
5. Finally, use fresh pieces of damp cotton wool to wipe your baby's face, neck creases and hands, ensuring that creases are dry, to avoid chaffing from damp skin.

Tailing

1. Wash your baby's genitals and bottom, ensuring all creases have been cleaned and patted dry.
2. With baby girls, always wipe from front-to-back as they are prone to urine infection.
3. There is a white, cream-like substance in baby girls' vaginas at birth. This is the remains from the vernix (the protective covering that protected the skin in the womb). Try not to remove it during cleaning as it will eventually be absorbed and act as an excellent barrier cream.
4. If your baby is a boy, his penis will self-clean to some extent. Don't try to pull back his foreskin to clean.
5. Always use fresh cotton wool balls when cleansing the separate areas to avoid cross infection.
6. Another advantage of 'topping and tailing' is that you'll be able to keep your newborn baby's umbilical stump dry.

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed



How to give your child a bath



If you top and tail your child regularly s/he will only need a bath two or three times a week, but if your child really enjoys it, you can bath her/him every day.

Some babies hate having a bath. If your child hates bathing, don't panic; just get the job done as quickly as you can.

Don't bath your child straight after a feed (s/he may be sick) or when s/he is hungry or tired. Make sure the room is warm.

Get ready:

- A baby bath or washing-up bowl filled with warm water
- Two towels
- Baby bath liquid (unless your baby has particularly dry skin)
- A clean nappy
- Clean clothes
- Cotton wool.

Step by step:

1. Undress your baby, leaving her/him on the nappy.
2. Wrap your baby in a towel.
3. The water should be warm, not hot. Check it with your wrist or elbow and mix it well so there are no hot patches.
4. Hold your baby on your knee and clean her/his face, as for "Topping," above
5. Next, wash her/his hair with water or a liquid soap or shampoo that's designed for babies. Rinse carefully, supporting her/him over the bowl.
6. Once you've dried her/his hair gently, you can take off the nappy, wiping away any mess.
7. Lower your baby gently into the bowl or bath using one hand to hold the upper arm and support the head and shoulders.

8. Keep your baby's head clear of the water. Use the other hand to gently swish the water over your baby without splashing.
9. Never leave your baby alone in the bath, not even for a second.
10. Lift your baby out and pat her/him dry, paying special attention to the creases in the skin.
11. This is a good time to massage some oil or cream (not aqueous cream) into your baby's skin. Don't use anything that contains peanut oil as some babies are allergic to it. Lots of babies love being massaged, and it can help them relax and sleep. It's best if you lay your baby on a towel on the floor as both the baby and your hands can get slippery.
12. If your baby seems frightened of bathing and cries, try bathing together. Make sure the water isn't too hot. It's easier if someone else holds your baby while you get in and out of the bath.

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed

Sleep routine

Some babies sleep much more than others. Some sleep for long periods, others in short bursts. Some soon sleep through the night and some don't for a long time. Your baby will have her/his own pattern of waking and sleeping, and it's unlikely to be the same as other babies you know.

It's also unlikely to fit in with your need for sleep. Try to sleep when your baby sleeps. If you're breastfeeding, in the early weeks your baby is likely to doze off for short periods during a feed. Carry on feeding until you think your baby has finished or until s/he is fully asleep. This is a good opportunity to try to get a bit of rest yourself.

If you're not sleeping at the same time as your baby, don't worry about keeping the house silent while s/he sleeps. It's good to get your baby used to sleeping through a certain amount of noise.

How can I get my baby used to night and day being different?

It's a good idea to teach your baby that night time is different to daytime from the start. During night feeds you may find it helpful to:

- keep the lights down low
- not talk much and keep your voice quiet
- put your baby down as soon as s/he's been fed and changed
- not change your baby unless s/he needs it

Where should my baby sleep?

For the first six months your baby should be in the same room as you when asleep, both day and night. Particularly in the early weeks, you may find that your baby only falls asleep in your arms, or when you're standing by the cot. For the first few months a baby will feel more secure in a Moses basket (see below), which you can move around to be close to you.



You can start getting your baby used to going to sleep without you comforting them by putting her/him down before s/he falls asleep or when s/he just finished a feed. It may be easier to do this once your baby starts to stay alert more frequently or for longer.

Is it important to have a routine from the beginning?

Newborn babies will sleep on and off throughout the day and night. It can be helpful to have a pattern, but you can always change the routine to suit your needs. For example, you could try waking your

baby for a feed just before you go to bed in the hope that you'll get a long sleep before s/he wakes up again.

Establishing a bedtime routine

Getting your child into a simple, soothing bedtime routine when s/he's a baby can help prevent sleeping problems later on. The routine could consist of having a bath, changing into night clothes, feeding and having a cuddle before being put to bed.

Your baby will learn how to fall asleep in the cot if you put her/him down when s/he's still awake rather than getting her/him to sleep by rocking or cuddling in your arms. If s/he gets used to falling asleep in your arms, s/he may need nursing back to sleep if s/he wakes up again.



As your child gets older, it can be helpful to keep to a similar bedtime routine. Too much excitement and stimulation just before bedtime can wake your child up again. Spend some time winding down and doing some calmer activities, like reading.

An example of a routine could be:

- a bath, then put on night clothes
- supper or a milky drink
- brush her/his teeth
- go to bed
- bedtime story
- put her/his comforter (dummy, cuddly toy or security blanket) nearby, then
- a goodnight kiss and cuddle

How much sleep is enough?

Just as with adults, babies' and children's sleep patterns vary. From birth, some babies need more sleep or less sleep than others. This list shows the average amount of sleep that babies and children need during a 24-hour period, including daytime naps:

- **Birth to three months:** Most newborn babies are asleep more than they are awake. Their total daily sleep varies, but can be from eight hours up to 16-18 hours. Babies will wake during the night because they need to be fed. Being too hot or too cold can also disturb their sleep.
- **Three to six months:** As your baby grows, s/he will need fewer night feeds and be able to sleep for longer. Some babies will sleep for eight hours or longer at night. By four months, s/he

could be spending around twice as long sleeping at night as s/he does during the day.

- **Six to twelve months:** At this age, night feeds should no longer be necessary, and some babies will sleep for up to 12 hours at night. Teething discomfort or hunger may wake some babies during the night.
- **12 months:** Babies will sleep for around 12-15 hours in total.
- **Two years:** Most two-year-olds will sleep for 11-12 hours at night, with one or two naps in the daytime.
- **Three to four years:** Most will need about 12 hours sleep, but this can range from eight hours up to 14. Some young children will still need a nap during the day.

In some very rare cases a baby can forget to breathe while asleep, so take these precautions:

- Place your child **on her/his back** to sleep.
- The safest place for your child to sleep is in a cot in a room with you for the first six months.
- **Do not smoke** in the same room as your child, and do not let anyone else smoke in the same room as your child.

- **Do not share a bed with your child**, particularly if you have been drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
- Never sleep with your baby on a sofa or an armchair.
- Do not let your baby get too **hot**. Use sheets and lightweight blankets as bedding in the cot or Moses basket. These are better than a duvet as you can add and remove layers as you need to. You can check whether your child is too hot or too cold by feeling the back of her/his neck.
- Don't be guided by your child's hands or feet, as they usually feel cool. Keep the room at a temperature of about 18 degrees C. Put the baby down to sleep on her/his back with her/his feet at the end of the cot. That way s/he can't wriggle too far down under the blankets and become too hot.
- Keep your **baby's head uncovered**. The blanket should be tucked in no higher than her/his shoulders.

Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

Feeding Routine - Should I Bottle Feed or Breast Feed?

Breast feeding is a good choice for your baby because:

- It is the only natural food designed for your baby.
- Breastfeeding protects your baby from infections and diseases.
- It's free.
- It's available whenever and wherever your baby needs a feed.
- It's the right temperature.



If you would like to breast feed it is important that the baby learns to latch on properly at the beginning and that the baby is feeding in a good position. So if you did not get advice on this in hospital, ask your health visitor or midwife after you leave. Your health visitor can also advise you on “expressing” milk, which is a way of extracting milk in order to store it in the fridge and bottle feed your baby later, for example if you would like to go out and do not want to breast feed.

Breast feeding is not for everyone and some babies and mothers find it difficult. Formula milk is full of nutrition also, and therefore is also a good choice for your baby. But it is important to make sure that the bottles are properly made and the right temperature.

Signed:.....

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

How do I make up powdered baby milk?

1. Fill the kettle with at least one litre of fresh tap water (don't use water that has been boiled before).
2. Boil the water. Then leave the water to cool for no more than 30 minutes so that it remains at a temperature of at least 70 degrees C.
3. Clean and disinfect the surface you are going to use.
4. Wash your hands.
5. If you are using a cold water steriliser, shake off any excess solution from the bottle and the teat, or rinse the bottle with cooled boiled water from the kettle (not the tap).
6. Stand the bottle on the cleaned surface.
7. Keep the teat and cap on the upturned lid of the steriliser; avoid putting them on the work surface.
8. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and pour the correct amount of water that you need in to the bottle. Double check that the water level is correct. Always put the water in the bottle first, while it is still hot, before adding the powdered infant formula.

9. Loosely fill the scoop with formula according to the manufacturer's instructions, and level it off using either the flat edge of a clean, dry knife or the leveller provided. Different tins of formula come with different scoops. Make sure you use only the scoop that is enclosed with the formula you are using.
10. Holding the edge of the teat, put in on the bottle. Then screw the retaining ring on to the bottle.
11. Cover the teat with the cap and shake the bottle until the powder is dissolved.
12. It is important to cool the formula so it is not too hot to drink. Do this by holding the bottom half of the bottle under cold running water. Make sure that the water does not touch the cap covering the teat.
13. Test the temperature of the infant formula on the inside of your wrist before giving it to your baby. It should be body temperature, which means it should feel warm or cool, but not hot.
14. If there is any made-up infant formula left after a feed, throw it away.

How do I bottle feed my child?

Get everything you need ready before you start feeding. As with breast feeding, find a comfortable position to hold your child while you're feeding. You may need to give them time. Some babies take some milk, pause for a nap, then wake up for more. Remember, feeding is a chance to feel close to, and get to know baby.

Keep the teat full

When feeding, keep the teat full of milk, otherwise your baby will take in air. If the teat becomes flattened while you're feeding, pull gently on the corner of your baby's mouth to release the vacuum. If the teat gets blocked, replace it with another sterile teat.



Holding your child

Hold your child fairly upright for feeds, with her/his head supported so that s/he can breathe and swallow comfortably.

Your child and wind

S/he may need short breaks during the feed and may need to burp sometimes. When s/he does not want any more feed, hold her/him upright and gently rub or pat her/his back to bring up any wind. This may be a very small amount.



Throw away unused formula

Don't forget to throw away any unused formula or expressed breast milk after the feed.

Go with the flow

Babies differ in how often they want to feed and how much milk they want to take. Feed your baby when s/he is hungry and don't try to force her/him to finish a bottle.

Don't leave your child

Never leave your child alone to feed with a propped-up bottle, as s/he may choke on the milk.

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed



How do I sterilise my child's bottles, teats, dummies and soothers?

Make sure your bottles, teats, dummies and soothers are sterilised.

You can sterilise your bottles, dummies and soothers by:

- Using a cold water sterilising solution.
- Steam sterilising.
- Sterilising by boiling.

Ask your carer or follow the instructions for the equipment carefully.

Before sterilising, always:

- Clean the feeding bottle and teat in hot, soapy water as soon as possible after a feed, using a clean bottle-brush.
- Rinse all your equipment in clean, cold running water before sterilising.
- Wash your hands thoroughly. Clean and disinfect the surface where you will put together the bottle and teat.

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed.....

Weaning your Baby

At some point, milk alone won't be enough to satisfy your baby's developing nutritional needs. That's when it's time to start thinking introducing a variety of foods such as smoothly pureed or mashed potato, yam, sweet potato or carrots and parsnips. Avoid **sugar, salt, nuts and eggs.**

Weaning isn't just about filling them up. Around this stage, your baby is extremely adaptable and learns fast. Introducing them to lots of new tastes means they'll enjoy a greater variety of foods later on, which will help you to give them a balanced diet.



Weaning is also about getting your baby used to the new and very strange feeling of food in her/his mouth! Over the next few months, the experience of eating from a spoon and introducing new textures to your baby will develop her/his swallowing and chewing skills so s/he'll gradually be able to manage lumpier textures.

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed.....

Emotional Warmth

Crying

1. All babies cry sometimes. It's perfectly normal. Healthy newborn babies may cry for between one and three hours each day, or even more.
2. As a baby, your child cannot do anything for her/himself and relies on you to provide the food, warmth and the comfort that s/he needs. Crying is her/his way of trying to tell you that s/he needs something. It is sometimes hard to work out what babies are telling you. Are they hungry, cold, thirsty, bored or just needing a cuddle? When you are not sure what your child needs, this crying can be upsetting. You may even think that something is wrong with her/him.



3. But in time you will learn to recognise crying patterns and know what s/he needs. And as s/he grows, s/he will learn other ways of letting you know what s/he needs.
4. Perhaps your baby is crying purely because s/he gets fed up easily. This may be because s/he is taking a while to adjust to being in the world. A calm approach and not too much stimulation at any one time may help.
5. Even so, if s/he has been fed and is comfortable, but is still crying, you may worry that s/he is ill or in pain.
6. Look for changes in your child. If s/he is unwell, s/he'll probably cry in a different tone to her/his usual cry. It may be weaker, more urgent, continuous or high pitched. S/he may be particularly fretful and difficult to soothe. If your baby usually cries a lot but has become unusually quiet, it may be a sign that s/he's not well.
7. Many babies find it hard to get to sleep, particularly if they are overtired. You will soon become aware of the signs that your baby is tired. Whining and crying at the slightest thing, staring blankly into space, and going quiet and still are just three examples.
8. If there have been lots of visitors or your baby has been in a noisy place, s/he may become over stimulated. Then when it comes to sleeping, s/he will find it hard to switch off and settle. Take

your baby somewhere calm and quiet to help her/him to settle down.

Nobody knows your child as well as you do:

If you feel that there may be something wrong with her/him, call your GP, midwife or health visitor. They will always take your concerns seriously.



Your Child

Does s/he have different cries and how do you tell the difference?

Does your baby tend to cry at particular times in the day?

When s/he cries, what soothes her/him?

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed.....

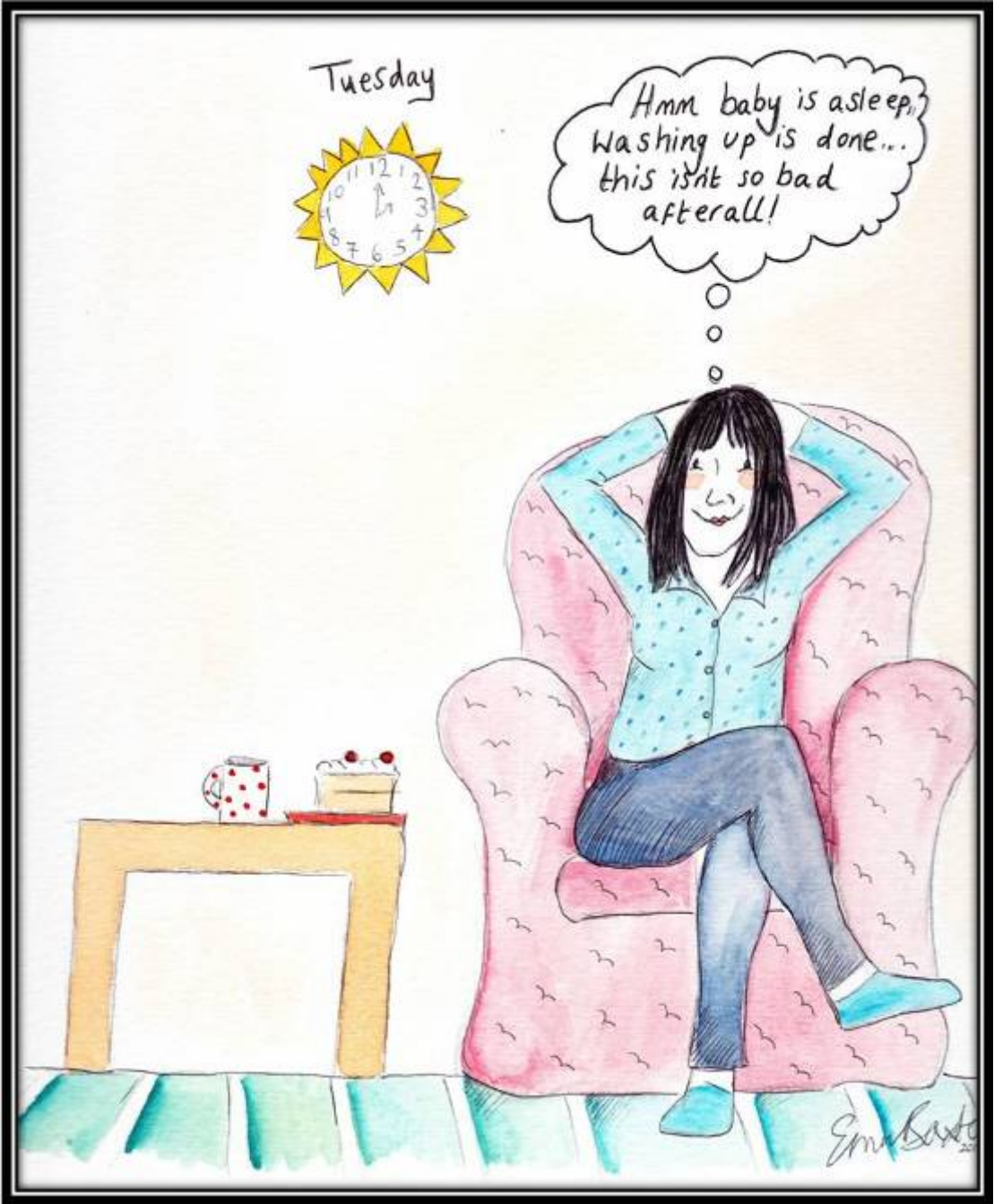
My child is still crying – what can I do?

If you have tried all the suggestions above and your child is STILL crying, try:

- Playing gentle music to her/him or singing a lullaby.
- Walk around while rocking her/him.
- Sit with her/him in a rocking chair.
- Sit her/him securely in a baby swing.
- Let her/him suck on a sterilised dummy.
- Take her/him out for a ride in your car.
- Take her/him out for a walk in her/his pushchair.
- Try a massage or a tummy rub. Using massage oils or cream and gently rubbing her/his back or tummy can help to soothe her/him. Ask your health visitor about local baby massage classes. Gentle tummy strokes in a clockwise direction encourage trapped wind and poo to move the right way and help ease the distress.
- Try a different feeding position; perhaps in a more upright position.
- Give her/him a warm bath.

If you've met your child's immediate needs and tried everything you can to calm them but nothing has worked, its time to take care of yourself by having a bath or playing some music; it is OK to put your baby down for a few minutes while you take some time out. Crying

may lessen over time as your child learns to communicate in other ways, plus, for every day where your baby cries a lot, there may be better days to come.



Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

Ensuring Safety

Safety is very important for infants and their safety needs change frequently according to their developmental stage. For example, around age four to six months, infants may begin to roll over. Therefore, be very careful while your baby is on the changing table.

Consider the following important safety tips:

- **Be aware of poisons** (household cleaners, cosmetics, medications, and even some plants) in your home and keep them out of your infant's reach. Use drawer and cupboard safety latches.
- **Do not allow babies to crawl or walk around in the kitchen while adults are cooking.** Block the kitchen off with a gate or place the infant in a playpen, highchair, or crib while others cook.
- **Do not drink or carry anything hot while holding the infant** to avoid burns. Infants begin waving their arms and grabbing for objects at three to five months.
- **Do not leave an infant alone with pets.** Pets, even though they may appear to be gentle and loving, may react unexpectedly to an infant's cries or grabs, or may actually smother an infant by lying too closely.
- Do not leave an infant alone on a surface from which the child can wiggle or roll over and fall off.

- For the first five months of life, always place your infant on her or his back to go to sleep. This position has been shown to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Once a baby can roll over by her/himself, the maturing nervous system greatly reduces the risk of SIDS.
- Use gates on stairways, and block off rooms that are not "child proof" -- remember, infants may learn to crawl or scoot as early as six months.
- Never leave small objects within an infant's reach -- infants explore their environment by putting everything they can get their hands on into their mouth.
- **Know how to handle a [choking](#) emergency in an infant.**
Discuss with your foster carer and health visitor and always call 999 if you are worried.

Here is some advice:



Dislodge the blockage

1. Hold your baby so that s/he is lying face down along your forearm with her/his head lower than her/his bottom and her/his back and head supported.
2. Use the heel of your hand to give up to five blows between your baby's shoulder blades. (Effective back blows cure the majority of choking incidents).
3. Check your baby's mouth and remove any obvious obstructions. Do not use your finger to sweep inside her/his mouth. This could push the obstruction further into her/his throat.



4. If your baby is still unable to breathe, turn her/him onto her/his back and give up to five chest thrusts:
 - a. Use two fingertips to push inwards and upwards (towards her/his head against her/his breastbone, one finger's width below her/his nipple line).
 - b. Try to dislodge the object with each thrust. Don't automatically do all five.
 - c. Check your baby's mouth after each thrust and remove the obstruction.

5. Even if your baby seems to be fully recovered from the choking episode, take her/him to your doctor that day.

If the obstruction does not clear after three cycles of back blows and chest thrusts, dial 999 (or 112) for an ambulance. Continue giving your baby back blows and chest thrusts until help arrives.

Car Safety

Place your baby in a proper car seat for **every** car ride, no matter how short the distance. Use a car seat that faces backwards until your baby is at least one year old AND weighs 20 pounds, or longer if possible. Then you can safely switch to a forward-facing car seat.

The safest place for the baby's car seat is in the middle of the back seat. It is very important for the driver to pay attention to driving -- not playing with the baby. If your baby needs assistance, safely pull the car over to the road-side and park before trying to help your baby.

Using a buggy safely

As long as the weather is not too bad, it is a good idea to try to get out and about at least once each day. All the new things that your child sees whilst you are out are things s/he is learning about.

- Always check that the buggy is properly unfolded and the latches safely locked before you put your child in it.

- Make sure your child is dressed for the weather:
- When it is cold, this should include: warm clothes, a coat or all-in-one, a hat and mittens and a blanket or cosy-toes.
- When it is warm, lighter clothes and a sunhat. Never leave your child in the sun and use a sunshade when you need to.
- Whilst your child is a newborn s/he requires a buggy seat the supports him/her comfortably. (Later on s/he will be able to sit up).
- Always use the harness.



- Always use the brake when you are not pushing the buggy.

- When you are waiting to cross a road DO NOT push the buggy into the road ahead of you.
- Never let your child play with the buggy (lots of children are hurt by buggies folding on their fingers).
- Do not hang heavy bags on the handles – this could tip the buggy over.
- Do not use a buggy that is broken.
- Never give your child a bottle propped in the buggy.
- When out NEVER let your child and the buggy out of your sight.

And REMEMBER – it is OK to put your child into her/his buggy at home for ten minutes while you are doing chores, **BUT** if you leave her/him there too long and too often s/he will be bored and not learning the things s/he needs to, like rolling over, crawling, walking, how to use her/his hands and about the world around her/him.

Today's task is to taken your child out in her/his buggy with the foster carer and for the carer to give you advice when she thinks you need it.

Signed.....

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed.....

Stimulation

Is play necessary for development?

1. Absolutely. Play is crucial for your child's social, emotional and physical, and cognitive growth. It's your child's way of learning about her/his body and the world, and s/he will use all five senses to do it, especially in the first year.
2. For example, when a baby plays with toys it will help her/him to learn: What does this feel like when I touch it? What does this sound like when I squeeze it? What will happen if I push this or pull that? Crawl over there? Pull myself up on this?

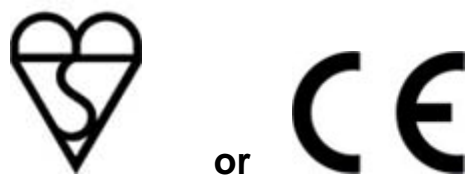


7. Exploration is the heart of play, and in your child's mind any experiment counts, even throwing a bowl of cereal off the highchair tray.

8. As your child moves into the toddler years, her/his play will become more imaginative and complex. Through play, s/he will exercise key skills and qualities, such as independence, creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving.
9. Play can also be an important way to explore feelings and develop social skills. Long before your child feels comfortable sharing her/his favourite toy with her/his sister or brother, s/he may offer it to a doll.

**But it is important to check that toys are suitable and safe:
Which toys are right for your child now?**

- Most toys have written on their packaging the age of the children that they are designed for.
- When buying look for these marks:



These mean that the toy has been properly made and is safe for children of the age written on the box.

- If the toys have pieces that are too little for her/him, s/he could put them in her mouth and choke.

- Always check that the toy is not broken so that bits are sharp or small bits could be pulled or chewed off.
- If the toy is too complicated your child won't be able to work out how to use it.
- The most popular toys for young babies include toys for looking, listening, sucking or fingering.
- Make sure the toy is not too big or too heavy.
- Babies like bright colours.

Signed:

Signed foster carer.....

Dates discussed:

Stability

Stability is the feeling that your basic needs for shelter, food and safety are being met and that you are loved by the people who are most important to you – your mother, father or carers. Babies and children spend most of their time in the home and so it is very important that they feel safe and cared for there.

A child's personality starts to form in the first few months of life and so even though it seems that babies are very small and will not understand what is going on they can feel if their care-giver is very stressed, for example. Therefore it is important for your baby to try to be calm as much as possible. Your child needs you to focus on meeting their needs; for instance with nutritious meals, safety, comfort, love, nurturing, attention and mental stimulation.

Children also need to have parents who are dependable and who usually respond to them in the same way. This way a child will not have to behave in an attention-seeking way – such as by throwing things or having a tantrum in order to get attention from you.

Also important is how the adults in the child's life treat one another; children don't enjoy seeing the adults in their lives shouting and arguing as it makes them worry about the future.

Signed:

Signed foster carer:

Dates discussed:

