



Perinatal
Services BC
Provincial Health Services Authority

Perinatal Services BC (PSBC) announces the 2023 release of the updated *Honouring Our Babies Toolkit* for Health-Care Providers.



The updated resource includes important information and recommendations on how to facilitate conversations with Indigenous parents/caregivers on safer sleep options. It encourages informed shared decision making on safer sleep with a focus on the strengths of Indigenous knowledge, cultural values and practices using a two-eyed seeing approach. Indigenous People refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. The updated resources were informed by Indigenous family members, Elders, and a variety of health-care providers including midwives, registered nurses, birth workers and Doulas.

This updated toolkit aligns with best practice recommendations and current clinical guidelines. One of the key improvements of this revised toolkit is taking a targeted approach to provide key messages for infants at increased risk of sleep-related infant death.

This toolkit replaces the 2017 Honouring Our Babies facilitator guide and toolkit. This update aligns with PSBC's *Safer Infant Sleep* resource, which was updated in 2022. The 2023 toolkit consists of 20 illustrated cards, 4 of which have been newly developed, and a facilitator's guide.

Please direct any questions about the toolkit or request for print copies to: psbc@phsa.ca

WHAT'S NEW?

UPDATED INFORMATION

Gender inclusion and language

Throughout this document the terms 'women/individuals' and 'breast/chest' feeding are used as gender-inclusive terms embracing cisgender, transgender, gender non-binary, gender non-conforming, and Two-Spirit peoples. These terms are used to acknowledge that people who do not identify as women can also become pregnant, give birth and breast/chest feed. Chest feeding is a term that is becoming more commonly seen and may be used by parents to describe their approach to feeding and nurturing their baby. Some parents may prefer using the term nursing, or human milk feeding. 'Parent/caregiver' is also used to acknowledge the diversity of family structures and caregiving relationships.

Key terms section

A key terms section has been added. This section describes terms including accidental death, bedsharing, co-sleeping, room sharing, informed shared decision making, and sleep related infant death.

Change in Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/ (SIDS) terminology

Sudden, unexpected infant death during sleep is an umbrella term used by the British Columbia Coroner's Service to refer to all unexpected infant deaths that occur during sleep as the result of undetermined causes (formerly referred to as SIDS), accidental causes, and natural causes. Throughout this resource the term 'sleep related infant death' will be used.

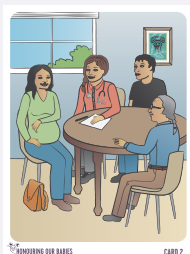
Informed Shared Decision Making: Having the conversations with families

Additional emphasis has been placed on how to engage conversations with Indigenous parents/caregivers on safer sleep options. It encourages informed shared decision making on safer sleep with a focus on the strength of Indigenous knowledge, cultural values and practices.

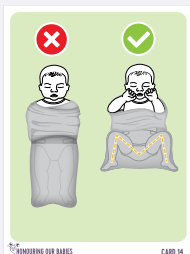
NEW INFORMATION Four new cards have been added to the pack – cards 1, 2, 14 and 15.



Card 1 When we discuss safer sleep with our families it is important to understand and accommodate the needs of Indigenous people. The use of the 4 R's framework and the 6 key principles of cultural safety will guide cross-cultural dialogue and create an accommodating space to discuss safe sleep.



Card 2 The theme of this card is informed shared decision making. It is important for the family and provider to explore the risks and protective factors when discussing safer sleep options. Infant sleep conversations structured in an informed shared decision framework engages families to make decisions that takes into account their knowledge, values and beliefs along with evidence-based information. Having family member present is important as they provide knowledge and experience. It is a shared responsibility among family members and health-care provider for safer infant sleep.



Card 14 This card focuses on swaddling. Swaddling is not recommended in most circumstances. However, some populations, such as preterm and substance-exposed newborns may require swaddling as part of developmentally appropriate care. Nonetheless, the practice of swaddling should be discontinued prior to hospital discharge, due to the increased association with a higher risk of sleep-related infant death. Routine swaddling in the early days may lead to less breast/chest feeding, which may be associated with greater weight loss, more jaundice and a delay in milk production. Health-care providers are encouraged to have open discussions with families about swaddling their infants to empower them to make informed decisions that meet their cultural preferences, values and needs. For families who have made the informed decision to swaddle, the toolkit provides a list of recommendations on how to swaddle as safely as possible.



Card 15 This card concentrates on commercial sleep products – blankets and sleep sacks. Weighted sleep sacks and weighted blankets are not safe for children under two years old. This card offers families safety information if family decides to use commercial products e.g. if a sleep sack is used a blanket is not needed. Frequent night waking is a normal part of infant sleep, parents/caregivers should be encouraged to look after their health and well-being to better adapt to their baby's sleep patterns

The updated resource should be used in combination with:

PSBC's Safer Infant Sleep: *Practice Resource for Health-care Providers*

The provincial companion parent resource: *Safer Sleep for my Baby*

PSBC's *Honouring Indigenous Women's and Families' Pregnancy Journeys Practice Resource*

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