



## **Newborn Nest training materials**

This packet contains the materials and resources for Newborn Nests. The following documents are included:

- Newborn Nest one page overview
- Newborn Nest assembly instructions
- Newborn Nest tip sheet (English and Spanish)
- Newborn Nest frequently asked questions



## Newborn Nests

Each week, at least one Wisconsin infant dies in an unsafe sleep environment. In order to address this preventable tragedy, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin has created a pilot project to distribute Newborn Nests (otherwise known as baby boxes). Families engaged in home visiting services through Children's Hospital of Wisconsin will be offered a Newborn Nest if they are pregnant and/or have an infant younger than 2 months old. The pilot will be evaluated to measure change in behavior, attitudes of staff and families served, and utilization of the Newborn Nest.

### Why a Newborn Nest

Alternatives to the traditional crib have been around for a very long time, such as a drawer or wash basket, and were used to meet the needs of families. These alternatives allow for sleeping near their baby while keeping him/her safe. Today, a common crib alternative is the Pack 'n Play; however, access, space and convenience often remains a barrier for families.

Although research is limited in the United States on the use of baby boxes, experience from other countries is promising. In 1937 Finland had an extremely high infant mortality rate of 65 deaths for every 1,000 births. The government passed the Maternity Grants Act to help decrease the high rate. Originally for families in poverty, the grant provided prenatal care and other services to families, including a baby box, so every newborn infant would have the same start and chance at life as other infants in higher economic classes. The baby box includes other necessities such as clothes, diapers, etc. After the implementation of the Maternity Grants Act, the infant mortality rate in Finland dropped to 3.38 deaths for every 1,000 births. Today, Finland has one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the world.



### Highlights of a Newborn Nest

- Used for baby's first few months of life, allowing baby to establish sleep behavior by sharing a room but not a bed.
- Lightweight and compact, making it easy to move around the house.
- Portable and can be taken to other places, such as grandma's house or childcare provider, to ensure baby always has a safe place to sleep.

## Newborn Nest tip sheet

### Using your Newborn Nest safely

- **Place on the ground/floor.** Do not place on a table, couch, or bed. The Newborn Nest can fall off and hurt your baby. Make sure nothing could fall into the box while baby is inside.
- **Keep at least two feet away from heaters.** The Newborn Nest is made of cardboard and can start on fire.
- **Keep pets away.** Small pets may want to sleep with your baby. This is not safe.
- **Never cover the Newborn Nest with baby inside.** Your baby needs air to breathe.
- **Do not carry the box with baby inside.** Your baby can fall out.
- **Keep the Newborn Nest dry.** If the Newborn Nest gets wet, throw it out and ask for a new one.
- **Use the Newborn Nest for only the first few months of baby's life.** Move baby to a crib or Pack 'n Play when he or she begins rolling.
- **Only use the Newborn Nest with the mattress and sheets given.** Never put a pillow or blanket into the Newborn Nest. Babies sleep safest on a firm, flat surface.

### Remember the ABCs of safe sleep

- Babies sleep safest **A**LONE, on their **B**ACK, in a **C**RIB and in **S**MOKE-FREE air
- Share the safe sleep message with everyone who cares for your baby
- Use the Newborn Nest to keep baby close
- Give baby plenty of tummy time while awake to support development and bonding

## Hoja de consejos sobre el nido del recién nacido

Use su nido del recién nacido de forma segura

- **Colóquelo en el suelo o piso.** No lo ponga sobre una mesa, sofá ni cama. El nido del recién nacido puede caerse y lastimar a su bebé. Asegúrese de que nada caiga en la caja mientras el bebé esté adentro.
- **Mantenga al menos dos pies de distancia de los calentadores.** El nido del recién nacido está hecho de cartón y puede incendiarse.
- **Mantenga a las mascotas alejadas.** Las mascotas pequeñas pueden querer dormir con su bebé. Esto no es seguro.
- **Nunca cubra el nido del recién nacido con el bebé adentro.** Su bebé necesita aire para respirar.
- **No cargue la caja con el bebé adentro.** Su bebé puede caerse.
- **Mantenga el nido del recién nacido seco.** Si el nido del recién nacido se moja, deséchelo y pida uno nuevo.
- **Use el nido del recién nacido sólo durante los primeros meses de vida del bebé.** Mueva al bebé a una cuna o Pack 'n Play cuando ya esté grande para el nido del recién nacido.
- **Sólo use el nido del recién nacido con el colchón y las sábanas proporcionadas.** Nunca ponga una almohada ni una manta en el nido del recién nacido. Los bebés duermen de la manera más segura en una superficie firme y plana.

Recuerde los puntos básicos del sueño seguro

- Los bebés duermen más seguros **SOLOS, BOCA ARRIBA**, en una **CUNA** y **SIN HUMO** de cigarro.
- Comparta el mensaje del sueño seguro con todos los que cuidan a su bebé
- Use el nido del recién nacido para mantener al bebé cerca
- Dele al bebé suficiente tiempo boca abajo mientras esté despierto para apoyar el desarrollo y el apego.

## Newborn Nest frequently asked questions

Below are frequently asked questions and suggested answers.

### 1. Mom says, "I am not putting my baby in a box..."

You say, "I know this is a new concept and may seem odd to you. I want to share the history of the Newborn Nest and why Children's Hospital is encouraging our families to utilize them. The Baby Box, which we call the Newborn Nest has been used in Finland the past 80 years to keep babies safe. After implementing the program, Finland lost many fewer babies from sleep-related death. The Newborn Nest allows you to keep baby close, but in their own sleep space. What other worries do you have?"

### 2. Mom says, "We have pets in the home, I am worried...."

You say, "Pets are a wonderful part of families. It is recommended that you keep pets away from any sleeping infant – no matter what the baby is sleeping in. This can be accomplished by using a baby gate or closing a door to keep animals away from a sleeping infant. You can put the lid on the Newborn Nest only when it is not in use. What other questions do you have?"

### 3. Mom says, "I slept with all of my other children..."

You say, "Women whose babies died from an unsafe sleep space have said that they 'didn't think it would happen to them'. Death in this way isn't common but when it happens, it is tragic to that family. Many women think that when they sleep, they won't roll over onto their baby. This is also what many women who lost their baby have said. If we think about this a different way, many of us survived not wearing a seat belt as a child. But based on what happened to thousands of other children we now have better knowledge and ways to keep children safe in cars....like wearing seat belts. We have found the same for putting babies to sleep. "

### 4. Mom says, "How am I going to explain that my baby sleeps in a box..."

You say, "Some of your family might think it is weird for your baby to sleep in a box. However, you can share with them that this program has helped keep babies alive in Europe and we are bringing this here to help babies in the United States. Also, you can share the videos that we watched."

### 5. Mom says, "I don't need a Newborn Nest because I have a..."

You say, "It is great that you have a safe sleep plan for baby while you are at home. Where is baby going to sleep at daycare? When baby visits his father, does he have a safe place to sleep? What about other family members? What about vacation?"

## **6. Mom says, “It looks like a coffin...”**

You say, “The Newborn Nest comes with a cover to keep the extra things from falling out. Other than a box, many families will put babies in a dresser drawer, laundry basket or wicker basket for the first couple months so they can keep them close, but also safe. Think of this as a special small cozy place for your baby. A coffin has a cover and the cover should never be used with your baby so they have air to breathe. This is an important point to tell anyone you give the Newborn Nest for your baby.”

## **7. Mom says, “How long can I use the Newborn Nest for...”**

You say, “The Newborn Nest is intended for the first few months until your baby grows too long to be comfortable in the Newborn Nest. When your baby is too long, you should move your baby to a crib or Pack N Play and we can help you find one if you don’t already have one. We can continue to talk about how baby is developing and work together to move your baby to his/her next sleep space.”

## **8. Mom says, “Can I carry my baby in the Newborn Nest...”**

You say, “No. Even though the instructions say you can carry a baby until they are 15 pounds, I don’t recommend you carry the baby in the Newborn Nest at all. When you carry a baby, they can move or shift their weight fast and it can be easy to drop them by accident when they are in the box. It is easier to move the Newborn Nest and then move your baby separately and safely. You also never know when you might trip or fall, and it will be easier to see your way if you only have a baby and not the Box in your way.

## **9. Mom says, “What about using the Newborn Nest in the car or bus...”**

You say, “The Newborn Nest cannot keep babies safe in a car and should not be used as a car seat. If you need a car seat, we can work together to find one.”

## **10. Mom says, “Can I put the Newborn Nest in bed between my partner and me...”**

You say, “The safest place for your baby is alone, on his/her back, in a separate sleep environment, like a Newborn Nest and in smoke free air. Many mothers want to be as close as possible to their baby. Women may be tempted to put the Newborn Nest on the bed. However, a bed isn’t a firm, flat surface like the floor or ground. This means the Newborn Nest can be pushed during sleep, can tip over, or can fall off the bed. Can I show you what I am talking about?

If mom says yes, place doll (or baby – baby is best, because their center of gravity is more realistic than a doll) inside of Newborn Nest and take to bedroom. Demonstrate how sitting or rolling next to the Newborn Nest can result in the baby moving around in the Newborn Nest.

