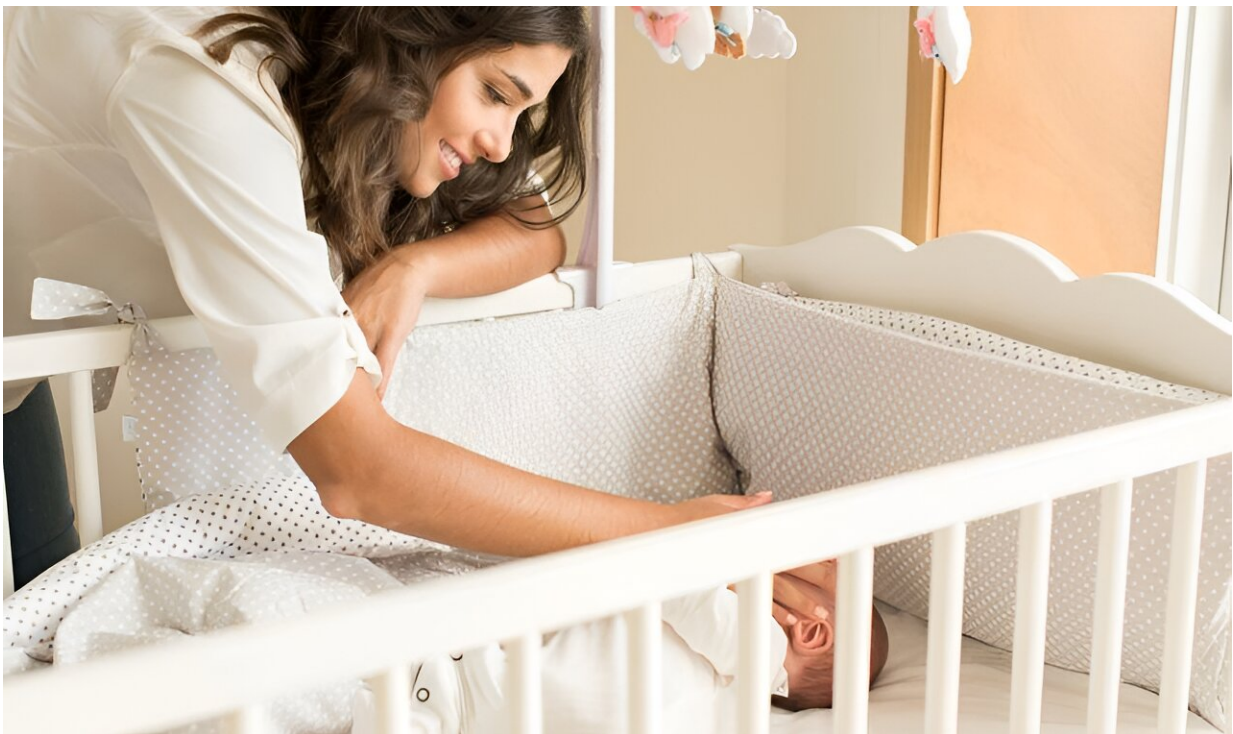


# Mothers often engage in nonrecommended practices for infant sleep

March 26 2024, by Elana Gotkine

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Mothers often engage in nonrecommended practices to improve their infant's sleep, according to a study [published](#) in *Pediatrics*.

Rachel Y. Moon, M.D., from the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville, and colleagues conducted [surveys](#) and focus groups from November 2022 to March 2023 with 25 English-speaking [mothers](#) of infants younger than 6 months of age who reported a nonrecommended sleep position and/or location two or more times in the previous week.

The researchers found that 80% of mothers reported holding or rocking their infant to sleep, while 76% fed their infant to sleep. Almost all participants were aware of the Alone, Back, Crib (ABCs) of safe sleep; before delivery, they intended to follow the ABCs. However, many felt that the ABCs were unrealistic and used nonrecommended locations or positions that were perceived as more comfortable and helpful for infants falling asleep and staying asleep.

Nonrecommended practices were more likely to be used when the mothers were awake or sleeping nearby, and the mothers believed they could monitor their infant closely. Other safety concerns (e.g., [fall prevention](#)) were prioritized over prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and sudden unexpected infant death by some mothers. In general, mothers expressed confidence about getting their baby to sleep, but were less confident doing this while following guidelines.

"Interventions that teach parents about developmentally appropriate sleep patterns and strategies to promote infant sleep and self-soothing may increase adherence to safe sleep guidelines," the authors write.

**More information:** Rachel Y. Moon et al, The Tension Between AAP Safe Sleep Guidelines and Infant Sleep, *Pediatrics* (2024). [DOI: 10.1542/peds.2023-064675](#)

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