

Policy: Child safety

Applicable to: All licensed personnel, parents and caregivers at a Baby Café USA site or Baby Café USA event

Date agreed: 4/5/2014

Date for review: 4/5/2016

1. Background

This policy lays out the guidelines for ensuring child safety at any Baby Café USA site or Baby Café USA event by minimizing or preventing risk of injury. It complements the organizations Child Protection Policy.

General principles are outlined, with more specific guidelines given regarding a ‘hot drinks’ policy.

2. General principles

At any Baby Café USA site or Baby Café USA event the following must be considered:

- (a) A Baby Café USA environment needs to be safe for all those attending, including young children.
- (b) Parents and caregivers are responsible for their children at all times and efforts will be made by Baby Café USA staff to ensure they are aware of this, e.g. posters displayed.
- (c) A Baby Café USA site has a role to play in educating parents and caregivers about child health and safety.
- (d) A Baby Café USA site offers information and support, enabling parents to make their own choices. It does not dictate lifestyle choices.
- (e) This policy may need to be implemented alongside relevant policies of your local Baby Café site.
- (f) Risk assessments are to be undertaken and appropriate strategies implemented (see section 4).
- (g) Adequate insurance is to be in place.
- (h) First Aid kit will be available.
- (I) Any incident or accident will be recorded and submitted as part of Baby Café USA annual national statistics and feedback.

3. Potential incidents

Staff need to be aware of potential risks within each environment. Incidents and/or accidents may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Scalding from hot drinks, milk in baby bottles or water used to warm bottles.
- b) Inadequate fire safety precautions, e.g. no smoke alarm/ fire exits blocked by strollers or car seats.
- c) Child escaping from venue.
- d) Child injuring a baby, other children or themselves.
- e) Injury from playing with toys.
- f) Toddler choking on toys or food.
- g) Baby falling off changing table or baby scale.
- h) Child injuring self on electrical sockets, equipment, radiators.

4. Risk assessment

Baby Café USA sites or individuals are not expected to eliminate all risk, but there is a requirement to protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'. At any Baby Café USA site or event risk assessment procedures will be implemented.

Risk assessment involves:

- a) Identifying the risk, who it affects and how
- b) Evaluating the chance of the risk occurring and potential seriousness
- c) Deciding on strategies to reduce the risk
- d) Recording your findings and implement the strategies
- e) Reviewing and updating as necessary. <http://cfoc.nrckids.org>

5. Hot liquids

Part of running a Baby Café USA site is that a comfortable, café environment is created where women, and those supporting them, can relax with each other and receive any necessary help and support with breastfeeding. A café environment involves the serving of refreshments including hot

drinks, e.g. tea and coffee. Parents/caregivers and those supporting them attend the Baby Café USA site out of choice.

Hot drinks are also served at Baby Café USA events, e.g. trustees meetings and conferences, where babies and children may be present. There are also situations where hot liquids may be used in the warming of a bottle of milk.

Baby Café USA recognizes that:

- a) Hot liquids cause 50 per cent of all thermal injuries to children
- b) Babies and toddlers are particularly at risk when they grasp cups and mugs containing hot liquids.
- c) A drink can remain hot enough to scald for up to 15 minutes after it has been poured
- d) Warming milk in baby bottles also carries a known risk of scalding.

Baby Café USA offers guidance to staff in implementing strategies to ‘protect people as far as reasonably practicable’ regarding hot liquids.

Suggested measures include, but are not limited to:

- a) Have a designated area for preparing refreshments, preferably a separate kitchen, where toddlers and babies are not permitted to be without adult supervision.
- b) Have an area where no hot drinks are permitted, e.g. created with safety gates; mothers can then make their own choice about where they sit with their baby.
- c) Have a designated toddler play area, where no hot drinks are permitted.
- d) Encourage children to walk, not run, at a Baby Café USA site or event
- e) Encourage adults to use lids, sit down when having a hot drink, and place drinks away from the edge of tables.
- f) Actively manage the arrangement of furniture at the venue, i.e. tables and seating in place where the risk of hot drinks being knocked over is reduced
- g) Keep hot liquids out of reach of babies and children at all times
- h) Secure tablecloths to tables, e.g. Velcro, corner protector
- i) Avoid passing hot drinks over babies and children or being carried by children
- j) Avoid warming baby bottles in a microwave

k) Keep baby bottles that are warming in hot water out of reach of babies and children; shake the bottle and check the temperature before giving to baby.

l) Display signs and posters and/ or information leaflets reminding parents about how to avoid potential hazards within the environment.

Refusal to serve hot drinks, or insisting mothers consume refreshments in a separate room from where their babies are, do not constitute appropriate strategies as they entail other risks. These include:

a) Those associated with mother-infant separation

b) Unmonitored children at Baby Café USA sites or events.

c) Mothers choosing to no longer attend the Baby Café USA and therefore not accessing the available help and support; possibly resulting in cessation of breastfeeding.

d) A lost opportunity to educate parents about how to safely handle hot liquids around children; this may result in a scalding injury occurring in the home or in another public venue

e) Possible sex discrimination since only women can breastfeed and this necessitates a mother being with her baby; any policy that only affects one gender risks being deemed as discriminatory.

Policy and information revised with permission from Catherine Pardoe.
Baby Café USA- child safety policy.