In our Western societies, more and more parents are choosing to return to the natural practice of co-sleeping.

Simply defined, this practice is consciously choosing to sleep with your infant to provide him or her with the essential physical, emotional, nutritional, neurological, and nurturing benefits of continued contact from womb and throughout infancy. The numerous benefits are well documented, although not well known by most parents and certainly practiced by far too few parents.
Facts About Co-Sleeping and SIDS

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There are those who remain ignorantly adverse to the practice of co-sleeping and their efforts to discredit it—even announce it as dangerous cause parents to form, fear based judgments, and erroneous conclusions about it. Probably the greatest misrepresentation about co-sleeping has been the charge that it causes SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

A recent study in Pediatrics, the official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has raised controversy about sleeping with infants. Parents who co-sleep are being criticized and other parents who are looking into the benefits of co-sleeping may be led to erroneous conclusions and, therefore, choose not to initiate the safe and beneficial practice of sleeping with their newborn.

Sensational headlines such as: “Bed Sharing Increases the Risk of SIDS” and warnings from the Consumer Product Safety Commission, such as, “Don’t sleep with your baby or put the baby down to sleep in an adult bed. The only safe place for babies is in a crib that meets current safety standards and has a firm, tight-fitting mattress. Place babies to sleep on their backs and remove all soft bedding and pillow-like items from the crib,” tend to initiate waves of fear and doubt about co-sleeping rather than present the facts so parents can make informed, safe choices for their babies. It is important when reading the sensational headlines, we as parents look deeper into the research to determine the reality of the situation.

The study referred to as the “Chicago Infant Mortality Study” and the recent AAP recommendation (Fall 2005) based on this study has raised significant discussion about this issue. The authors of the Chicago study concluded, “It seems prudent to discourage bed-sharing among all infants.