



<b>Policy number</b>	P6
<b>Policy name</b>	Child safety
<b>Applicable to</b>	All adults and parents at a Baby Café drop-in centre or event
<b>Date agreed</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2007 Reviewed and approved May 2010
<b>Date for review</b>	May 2011

### 1. Background

This policy lays out the guidelines for ensuring child safety at any Baby Café drop-in centre or event by minimising or preventing risk of injury. It complements the charity's Child Protection Policy.

It is written in accordance with health and safety guidelines (Health and Safety Executive 2006) and in consultation with the Children's Burns Trust.

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

### 2. General principles

At any Baby Café drop-in or event the following must be considered:

- (a) A Baby Café environment needs to be safe for all those attending, including young children.
- (b) Parents and carers are responsible for their child/ren at all times and efforts made by Baby Café staff to ensure they are aware of this, e.g. posters displayed.
- (c) A Baby Café drop-in centre has a role to play in educating parents and carers about child health and safety.
- (d) A Baby Café drop-in centre 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 a local Baby Café centre's funding body, e.g. Sure Start, NHS.
- (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 the charity's annual national statistics and feedback.



### 3. Potential incidents

Staff need to be aware of potential risks within each environment.

Incidents and accidents may include, but are not limited to, the following:

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

### 4. Risk assessments

Organisations 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 drop-in centre or event risk assessment procedures will be implemented.

Risk assessment involves:

- Identifying the risk, who it affects and how
- Evaluating the chance of the risk occurring and potential seriousness
- Deciding on strategies to reduce the risk
- Recording your findings and implement the strategies
- Reviewing and updating as necessary.

Health and Safety Executive (2006) *Five steps to risk assessment*. [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### 5. Hot liquids

Part of running a Baby Café breastfeeding drop-in centre 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 and people attend the drop-in out of choice.

Hot drinks are also served at other Baby Café events, e.g. trustees meetings and conferences, where babies and children may be present. There will also be situations, such as a mum who is mixed feeding, where it may be necessary to warm a bottle of milk.



The Baby Café Charitable Trust recognises that:

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

The charity 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, the following:

- Have a designated area for preparing refreshments, preferably a separate kitchen, where toddlers and babies are not permitted to be
- Have an area where no hot drinks are permitted, e.g. created out of considered placement of furniture or safety gates; mothers can then make their own choice about where they sit with their baby
- Have a designated toddler play area, where no hot drinks are permitted
- Encourage children to walk, not run, at a Baby Café venue
- Encourage adults to sit down when having a hot drink and to place drinks away from the edge of tables
- Actively manage the arrangement of furniture at the venue, i.e. tables and seating sited where the risk of hot drinks being knocked over is reduced
- Keep hot liquids out of reach of babies and children at all times
- Secure tablecloths to tables, e.g. Velcro, corner protector
- Avoid passing hot drinks over babies and children or being carried by children
- Avoid warming baby bottles in a microwave
- 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.
- 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:

- Those associated with mother-infant separation
- Mums choosing to no longer attend the drop-in and therefore not accessing the available help and support; any resulting cessation of breastfeeding carries its own risks for both mum and baby
- 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 other public venue



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- 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.