

# Support Moms. Save the Nursing Pillow.



Breastfeeding  
Infant Development  
Support Alliance

**Women's rights are being gutted – and the ability for women and parents to choose how they feed their baby is next on the chopping block.** Nursing pillows are estimated to be used for breastfeeding more than 2.5 million times a day in America without incident and have supported countless moms and caregivers in the feeding and comfort of babies.

**The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is threatening to change or remove these essential products from the market.** Making a series of direct and indirect threats against nursing pillows that new parents and caregivers use so frequently, agency staff have shared that certain nursing pillows could be eliminated entirely by the CPSC. For example, the agency staff have been heard taking the position that the arms of the popular C-shape or U-shape pillow should be potentially removed. Based on our understanding, the resulting shape would resemble more of a yoga block or bolster than the curved shape so many moms find supportive when caring for their baby.

**Significant changes or regulatory actions like those proposed by the CPSC are expected to have unintended consequences.** Without effective support for breastfeeding moms, the important work by the World Health Organization (WHO) and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to promote and increase breastfeeding rates will suffer.

**Further, limiting the availability of these important products is an attack on maternal health,** making nursing, feeding and comfort more difficult, while decreasing the overall health benefits to babies, and mothers. Breastfeeding correlates with positive health outcomes for not only children but mothers. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data shows that breastfeeding can reduce the mother's risk of breast and ovarian cancer, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure.

**We know that safe sleep is a priority for the CPSC and the agency has warned parents not to use nursing pillows/feeding supports for sleep in the past.** We wholeheartedly agree with this warning and welcome the opportunity to collaborate on education campaigns about safe sleep, infant development and product safety. But we have serious concerns whether limiting the availability of nursing pillows will have a measurable impact on sleep-related incidents. Incidents caused by product misuse and unsafe sleep environments will not be remedied by eliminating necessary products like nursing pillows.

**According to data from the CPSC, soft bedding in general is responsible for an incident rate that is 64x higher than nursing pillows.** While product safety is critically important, we must ensure that mothers and caregivers have access to the support, resources and products that will guide their breastfeeding journeys.

**We must ensure these products remain effective and available for moms and caregivers.** The agency is seeking design changes to nursing pillows without providing reliable, independent data to support their position.

**Education can and does work if we meet people where they are.** We are calling on the CPSC to dedicate funds towards education on safe sleep and proper usage of existing nursing support products, instead of working to ban products that are not only safe, but incredibly beneficial to moms and babies when used appropriately.

**We are engaging moms, dads, caregivers, breastfeeding advocates, maternal health advocates and healthcare professionals for support in ensuring continued access to nursing pillows in the future.**

**We're ready to fight *for you* and *with you*.**

**Join the fight.**

**Follow along on our social channels!**

Visit [bfidsa.org/savethepillow](https://bfidsa.org/savethepillow) to take action now.

## Why is the CPSC targeting nursing pillows?

This question is best directed to the CPSC. We know that safe sleep is a priority for CPSC and the agency has warned parents not to use nursing pillows for sleep in the past. We wholeheartedly agree with this warning and welcome the opportunity to collaborate on education campaigns about safe sleep, infant development and product safety. But we have serious concerns whether limiting their availability will have a measurable impact on sleep-related incidents.

## Why are nursing pillows important?

There are many studies that show the use of infant feeding support products increases breastfeeding rates, which in turn correlates with a positive trend in health data and milestone achievement. The best solution combines a product safety standard with continued consumer education about infant safety and development.

*A study published in Pediatric Reports further found that “the use of a breastfeeding pillow significantly decreases maternal discomfort experienced during the breastfeeding process. Maternal comfort is expected to enhance the quality of breastfeeding by improving the position and attachment of the mother-baby during the breastfeeding process, increasing the baby’s sucking ability and the period of baby’s breastfeeding to ensure optimal nutrition or improve the baby’s suckling needs. A comfortable and relaxed condition can also suppress the release of stress hormones and increase the hormones that play a role in breast milk production. Thus, it is important to implement the use of a breastfeeding pillow among postpartum mothers.”*

Infant feeding support products, otherwise known as nursing pillows, provide ergonomic support for caregivers while nursing or bottle feeding. Many have cited nursing pillows as immensely helpful throughout the bonding process, including for moms holding their babies while recovering from a C-section, reducing pressure on the mother’s incision site. Creating comfort in these situations enhances the bonding experience for both baby and mom, dad, or caregivers.

It is estimated nursing supports are used for breastfeeding 2.5 million times a day.

## Are there any incidents or deaths associated with nursing pillows?

The CPSC stated in a 2020 public warning urging parents not to use nursing pillows for sleep. An “initial assessment of incidents shows deaths when children are left on or near pillows, and the child rolls over, rolls off, or falls asleep.” This breaks our hearts. Incidents caused by product misuse and unsafe sleep environments will not be remedied by eliminating necessary products including nursing pillows.

The National Center for Fatality Review & Prevention reviewed 28,110 sleep-related SUIDs from 2004 to 2019. That review found more than half (55%) of cases involved an infant placed to sleep in an adult bed or mattress. This is a prime example that demonstrates why we need to educate consumers about all aspects of safe sleep.

Also consider the AAP’s guidance that feeding infants human milk is associated with a reduced risk of SUID, and it is recommended that infants be fed human milk exclusively for the first 6 months, if possible. The chance that moms and babies meet this milestone will be negatively impacted by CPSC action.

## What do you recommend the CPSC do instead of regulating nursing pillows?

Consumer education and engagement are essential. We welcome conversations with the CPSC to collaborate on safety and education initiatives for parents and caregivers. This means safe sleep, infant feeding (including breastfeeding) and general product safety guidance. Parents and caregivers should always:

- Read all product instructions to ensure safe product use.
- Use nursing pillows ONLY during supervised awake time.
- NEVER use nursing pillows or any other infant feeding support product for sleep.
- Follow safety guidance offered in the American Academy of Pediatrics' Safe Sleep Guidelines and the CPSC's Bare is Best campaign.
- Ask every caregiver you know to do the same.

## Are nursing pillows safe?

Yes. Research supports the fact that infant feeding support products – lovingly called nursing pillows by moms, caregivers, and healthcare representatives – are safe and immensely beneficial when used as directed: *during supervised awake time only*.

In fact, studies and data show the use of nursing pillows increases breastfeeding rates, which in turn correlates with a positive trend in health data and milestone achievement.

## What can I do to help?

There are many ways to support based on your expertise and comfort level! Here are a few of the fastest, most important steps you can take:

1. Send a letter to your elected officials voicing support for nursing pillows and everything they stand for using our campaign page and materials at [bfidsa.org/savethepillow](https://bfidsa.org/savethepillow).
2. Share our content on your social media channels. Even better if you tag your elected officials and CPSC in those posts using the hashtag #supportmoms!
3. Share this information with moms you know, your pediatrician and healthcare representatives, and anyone in your community who has ever benefited from a nursing pillow – and encourage them to do the same!

You can also sign up to get involved with BFIDSA. When we have additional needs or specific calls to action, we will let you know. If you're willing to speak publicly or have your story shared broadly as part of our campaign, please contact us directly at [contact@bfidsa.org](mailto:contact@bfidsa.org).

## What is BFIDSA? Why should I join, and who are the current members?

The Breastfeeding Infant Development Support Alliance is a growing community of breastfeeding advocates, maternal health advocates, healthcare professionals, manufacturers and retailers committed to ensuring the safety and continued availability of products used by parents and caregivers in support of breastfeeding and infant development.

