

Making Memories



Little Things & Co.
The baby bereavement charity



Making memories

If you are reading this booklet it is likely that you or a loved one has recently lost a precious baby. Nothing can prepare you for these most tragic of circumstances.

When a child dies it goes against the natural order of things. The future you had imagined has been taken from you and all the plans you made now have to change.

This booklet is designed to offer advice on the things you, or the health professionals looking after you can do, to make precious memories. It is these memories that will help you to heal and rebuild.

Sadly, when a baby dies the time between birth and the funeral is relatively short and once the funeral has taken place we cannot go back.

This limited period is the only time possible to make certain memories. We urge you to do as many as possible. You may not feel that you want or need them all now but it is better to take them, rather than look back and regret not doing so.

In the coming pages, based on research taken from other bereaved parents, we make suggestions on things that can be done to create lasting memories and keepsakes. These are purely suggestions and some may not be suitable for you. Do what you feel is right for you, whilst also remembering there's alas, only one chance.

If you feel you like some of these ideas but cannot face doing them yourself ask your Midwife, Funeral Director, a trusted family member or friend.



Seeing your child

It may seem like the hardest decision to make, however, seeing your child can alleviate some of the unanswered questions you may have.

Questions such as 'does he have Dad's nose?' or 'Does he look peaceful?' and 'What colour is his hair?'. These questions can all be answered by seeing your child.

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Photographs of your child

When seeing your child is not something you can face then ask for photographs to be taken. That way you can come back to these photographs when and if you feel ready.

Even if you have seen your baby, taking photographs means you have a lasting keepsake.

Holding your child

When your child dies it can seem as if all you want to do is hug them and hide away from what is happening.

This is the time to hold them, touch them and cuddle them. Wrap your child up tightly and spend some special time taking in their features and smell.

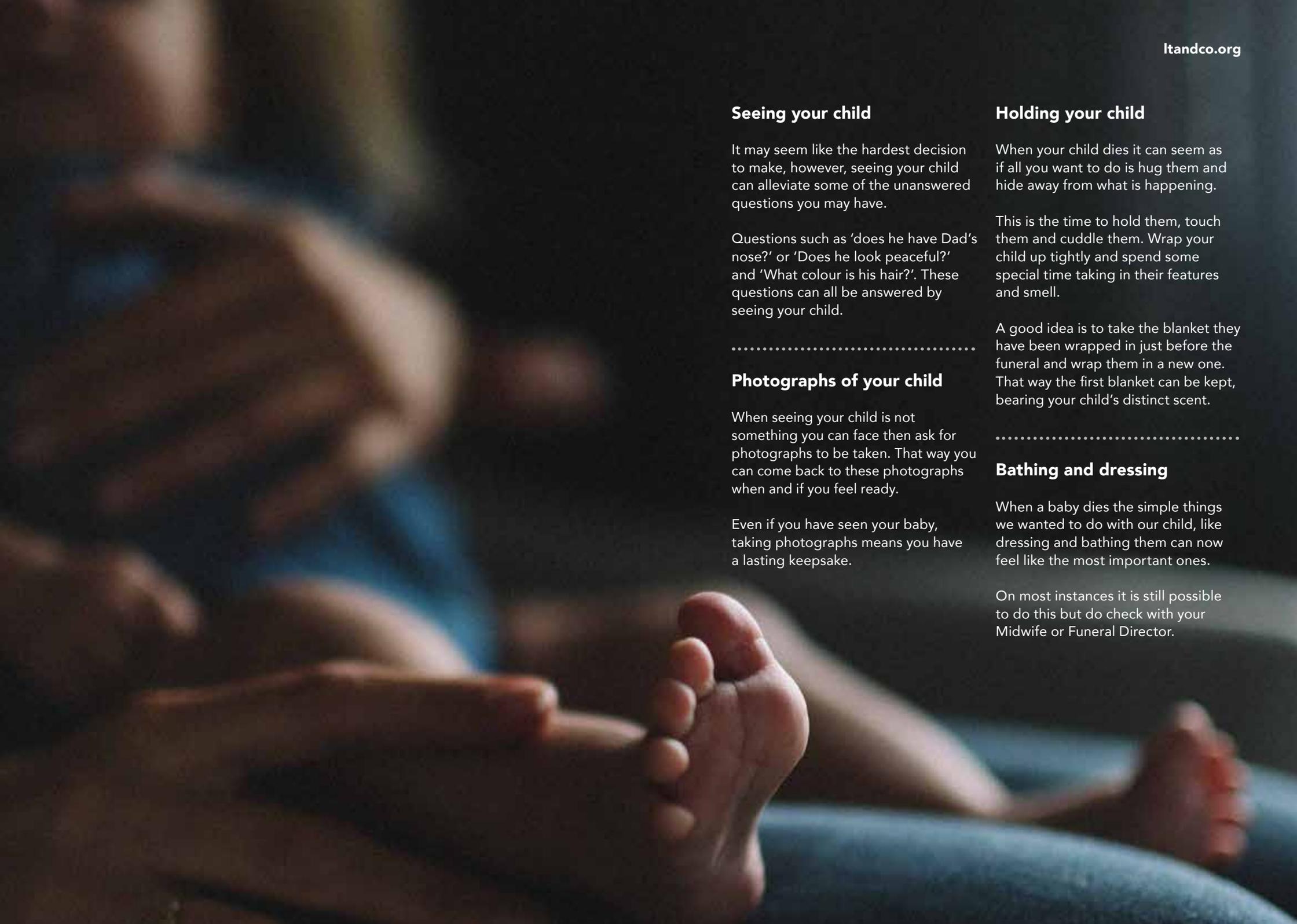
A good idea is to take the blanket they have been wrapped in just before the funeral and wrap them in a new one. That way the first blanket can be kept, bearing your child's distinct scent.

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Bathing and dressing

When a baby dies the simple things we wanted to do with our child, like dressing and bathing them can now feel like the most important ones.

On most instances it is still possible to do this but do check with your Midwife or Funeral Director.



Talk, read or sing to your child

When we are expecting a child we imagine the things we will tell our new family member, the stories we will read them and the songs we knew as children that we intend to pass on.

You can still spend time doing this. Ask your Midwife or Funeral Director for some quiet time to sit and do this.

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Take a lock of your child's hair

Every baby is different. Some are born with lots of hair and some with none at all.

If possible take a lock of hair and keep it safe. It is something to look at in the weeks, months and years to come.

Make a memory box

A memory box is a good place to store all of your precious memories together. The box doesn't have to be fancy or expensive but somewhere safe where all your beloved babies' things can be held. Most hospitals have these available to give to you.

It will comfort you to take it out from time to time and look over the items you have gathered.

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Taking hand prints or a cast

Hand and footprints capture your baby in ink and allow you a permanent reminder to look back on. A cast is a similar idea.

Casts can be made in various materials. You can even have a 3D image made of your child's hand or foot. They can also be imprinted flat onto specifically designed modelling clay kits.





Have your babies prints on a piece of jewellery

There are now various companies that will visit your child and take a fingerprint with a special kit.

This is then cast in gold or silver and can be worn as a treasured piece of jewellery.

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Personalise/decorate your baby's coffin

No one ever wants to choose a coffin for their child, however it may help you to feel as if you are doing something for your child by selecting a coffin.

It is not the decisions you had hoped to make for your child but it can help you to feel you have some control over events that are happening. Place stickers, transfers or tie ribbons to the coffin. Or you can have a specifically designed coffin with a design of your choice.

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Take your child home

With the help of a specially designed CuddleCot it is now possible to have your child at home with you before the funeral, allowing you precious more moments before the time to say goodbye arrives.

Talk to your Midwife or Funeral Director who can advise you on this.

This booklet has been prepared and sponsored by Little Things and Co. – The baby bereavement charity.

Little Things & Co. are a registered charity (1165463) who provide emotional and practical support to anyone suffering the loss of a baby.

Little Things and Co. believe the bereavement care after losing a child should be seamless, thoughtful and helpful.

To find out more about the work they do visit **www.ltandco.org** or email **info@ltandco.org**

