SIDS Awareness Month
October 2015

Partner Outreach Toolkit

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN
Ohio Chapter

Safe Sleep Initiatives
ABCs OF SAFE SLEEP
Ohio Chapter

September 25, 2015

Dear Partner,

In October 2013, the Ohio Senate unanimously passed SB 198, sponsored by Senators Shannon Jones and Charleta Taveras, naming October **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month** in Ohio. We are excited that you have agreed to join us in raising awareness about the importance of safe sleep this October.

Despite the success of the Back to Sleep Campaign, sleep-related infant deaths are still the leading cause of death for infants between one month and 12 months of age. In Ohio alone, more than 1,000 babies die each year before reaching their first birthday, making the state 46th in the nation for infant mortality.

In 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics released updated safe sleep guidelines that clearly define safe sleep practices and what a safe sleep environment looks like. At Ohio AAP, we are utilizing a three-pronged approach to our awareness and education efforts around the updated safe sleep guidelines. We are:

1) **Working with Children’s Hospitals** to increase compliance with the AAP recommended safe sleep environments so they are not only talking about, but also modeling, safe sleep practices for the parents and caregivers of hospitalized infants.

2) **Providing resources to pediatricians** so that they can provide guidance to parents during office visits throughout the very critical first year of an infant’s life.

3) **Working with community partners like you** to educate **parents and caregivers** about safe sleep through traditional media, social media, and grassroots efforts.

The toolkit that follows contains materials for your use in promoting safe sleep during SIDS Awareness Month. There are several ways you can help:

- “Like” the AAP Ohio Facebook Page and change your profile photo to the ABCs of Safe Sleep logo during the month of October!
- Post messages to your Twitter Feed and Facebook Page throughout the month of October – we’ve provided some samples. Remember to use #MoreFirstBirthdays with all of your posts.
- Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.
- Send an email message to your members/employees to inform them of SIDS Awareness Month in Ohio.
- Include an article in your regular newsletter or on your website.
- Distribute the enclosed flyer and infographic to anyone and everyone!

We look forward to working with you to raise awareness of this important safety initiative. Please help us encourage everyone to practice the ABCs of Safe Sleep so that we can see more Ohio babies grow to be happy, healthy adults!

Thank you for all you do for Ohio’s children,

Melissa Wervey Arnold
Chief Executive Officer
Infant Safe Sleep

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and accidental suffocation are the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 12 months of age, most commonly occurring among infants who are 1-4 months old. Often these deaths occur when a baby is in the care of someone other than a parent. Sharing this information with grandparents, babysitters, childcare providers and anyone who cares for your baby will help ensure everyone understands the importance of safe sleep.

You Can Reduce Your Baby’s Risk of SIDS
Follow the Safe Sleep Practices recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and create a safe sleep environment every time you put your baby to sleep:

- Remember the **ABCs of Safe Sleep**: Babies sleep safest **Alone**, on their **Backs**, in a **Crib**.
- The safest place for your baby to sleep is in the room where you sleep, but not in your bed. Placing the baby’s crib or bassinet near your bed makes it easier to breastfeed and bond with your baby, but ALWAYS place the baby back to sleep in his or her own bed when you are done feeding.
- Never place babies to sleep on adult beds, chairs, sofas, waterbeds, pillows, cushions or soft surfaces, with you or by themselves.
- Do not let the baby get too hot. If you notice sweating, damp hair, flushed cheeks, heat rash or rapid breathing the baby is likely overdressed. Set the room temperature in a range that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Consider using a pacifier at nap time and bed time. The pacifier should not have cords or clips that might be a strangulation risk.
- Breastfeeding is recommended to help to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Place the crib in an area that is always smoke free.

For more information and resources on infant safe sleep, visit [http://ohioaap.org/SafeSleep](http://ohioaap.org/SafeSleep)
Ohio AAP is committed to reducing infant mortality in Ohio with a safe sleep campaign that includes:

Ohio ranks 4-th overall in the country for infant mortality

Ohio ranks 49-th for African American babies, 37-th among white babies.*

Babies sleep safest Alone, on their Back, in a Crib.

- Your baby sleeps safest in the room where you sleep, but not in your bed.
- Sleep environments should be free from blankets, pillows, bumpers, stuffed animals and other soft objects.
- Breastfeeding is recommended to help reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Consider using a pacifier at nap time and bed time.
- Infants should be immunized.

Statistics

- SIDS and unintentional suffocation is the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 12 months of age, most commonly occurring among infants who are 1-4 months old.

- More than three Ohio infant deaths each week are sleep related.

2007-2011 Child Fatality Review

Sleep Environments

Of 819 sleep-related deaths, only 51 (6%) of reviews indicated the baby was placed Alone, On the Back, In a Crib or Bassinet

- Only 23% (192) occurred in a crib or bassinette
- 60% (494) occurred in unsafe places: adult beds, sofas, chairs
- 58% (473) were sharing a sleep surface with another person

For more information about the Ohio AAP Safe Sleep campaign and to register to win a free sleep sack, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep. Questions? Contact Hayley Southworth at HSouthworth@ohioaap.org
Frequently Asked Questions

Where is the safest place for my baby to sleep?

The safest place for your baby to sleep is alone, in her own crib, with nothing else in the crib. Since the Back to Sleep Campaign started in the 90’s, we have seen a significant reduction in the amount of sleep-related infant deaths, just from placing babies to sleep on their back.

If my baby is sleeping on his back, is he more likely to choke?

No, in fact, he is actually less likely to choke on his back. When your baby is lying on his back, the breathing tube (trachea) lays on top of the feeding tube (esophagus). It is harder for stomach contents to come up from the stomach and into the airway when the baby is on his back.

How can I hear if my baby needs me if he is in his own crib?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends room sharing, not bed sharing. You can set up a crib or a portable crib in your room with you so that you can hear your baby and get to your baby easily for feedings, but the baby is not in the bed with you. In fact, room sharing has been shown to decrease the risk of SIDS.

Isn’t it better for my baby to be snuggled in bed with me?

No! Babies who share a bed with adults are much more likely to die of sleep-related deaths than those who sleep in their own bed, especially if the adult smokes, has been drinking or using drugs. Babies can become trapped between the mattress and the headboard, suffocate on the blankets and pillows, or get rolled on by adults, siblings or pets in the bed. Your baby should be in her own bed for every sleep!

I am afraid that my baby is going to hit his head on the crib. Is it ok to use those cute little bumpers?

No! Crib bumpers, pillows and other soft bedding have been implicated in many infant suffocation deaths. Babies are not strong enough to injure themselves on the crib slats. It is best to use a firm mattress with a fitted sheet and have nothing other than your baby in the crib.

My baby cries when I put him to bed on his back. Is it ok to put him on his tummy or side?

No, studies show that the safest place for your baby is on his back. If you are consistent about putting your baby to sleep on his back, he will get used to it and you will be keeping him safe.
Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

It has been really cold this winter. Is it ok to put a blanket on my baby?

Soft bedding and loose blankets have been responsible for the suffocation of many babies. Using a sleep sack keeps the baby warm while sleeping without having the risk of loose blankets that might suffocate her. Overheating has been implicated in SIDS as well. A sleep sack keeps babies warm without overheating them.

I am afraid my baby is going to fall off the couch when we nap. Is it ok to put him between me and the back of the couch to prevent him from falling?

Couches and recliners are common sites for infant suffocation, second only to an adult bed. Babies can become wedged in the cushions or trapped between the adult and the cushions, keeping the baby from breathing. Do not nap with your baby on the couch or recliner. Put your baby in the crib for every sleep.

I see SIDS alarms in the baby store. Should I get one to prevent my baby from dying of SIDS?

The alarms that have been marketed to prevent SIDS have never been shown to prevent deaths. Recently they have actually been implicated in infant injury and even death.

I keep hearing about babies dying from sleep-related deaths. What else can I do to keep my baby safe?

- Get good prenatal care.
- Do not drink, smoke or do drugs during or after pregnancy.
- Do not expose your baby to cigarette smoke.
- Breastfeed your baby for as long as possible.
- Give your baby a pacifier at naps and night time.
- Immunize your baby on the recommended schedule.
- Always put your baby to sleep on his back.
- Talk to grandparents and other childcare providers about safe sleep practices.
- Allow your baby tummy time while he is awake and supervised. This helps your baby develop muscle strength and control in his neck.
- Do not use sleep positioners or SIDS alarms. There should be nothing in the crib but your baby.
- If you swaddle your baby, keep blankets loose around the hips and stop swaddling babies when they reach two months of age. A wearable blanket or sleep sack is a good alternative to swaddling for older babies.
- Take your baby to the pediatrician for well child care visits.
SAMPLE E-MAIL TO EMPLOYEES/MEMBERS

Dear (Employees/Member):

October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month in Ohio. Our office/organization will be working to raise awareness of this important issue by {INSERT DETAILS OF PARTICIPATION HERE}.

Why we are doing this:
In Ohio alone, more than 1,000 babies die each year before reaching their first birthday, making our state 46th in the nation for infant mortality. While the “Back to Sleep” Campaign initiated by the American Academy of Pediatrics and partners in 1994 has reduced the incidence of SIDS by 50%, it continues to be a leading cause of death for infants, particularly those between the ages of one and four months old.

We know that safe sleep practices are proven to reduce an infant’s risk of SIDS, making education the key to helping ensure more Ohio babies make it to their first birthdays. In 2011, The American Academy of Pediatrics released updated guidelines for infant safe sleep that promote:

- Room sharing, NOT bed sharing (66% of infants diagnosed with SIDS were sharing a sleep surface with another person);
- Always putting the baby on his or her back to sleep; and
- A sleep environment free from blankets, pillows, bumpers, stuffed animals and other soft objects.

The Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP) will be conducting activities and outreach throughout the state during the month of October to help educate parents and caregivers about the importance of safe sleep practices and environments.

Learn more:
To learn more about infant safe sleep practices and environments, visit www.OhioAAP.org/safesleep.
SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

In Ohio, more than 1,000 babies die each year before reaching their first birthday. In fact, more than three Ohio infants die each week due to improper sleeping arrangements – 66% of those are infants who were sharing a sleep surface with another person. This puts our state at a dismal 46th in the nation for infant mortality.

To help bring a spotlight to this issue, Senate Bill 198 designated October every year as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month in Ohio. This gives us a valuable opportunity to educate our citizens about the importance of safe sleep practices, particularly during the first six months of an infant’s life.

In 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) expanded upon the original Back to Sleep campaign with updated safe sleep recommendations that encourage parents to not only place children on their backs while sleeping, but also stress the importance of creating a safe sleeping environment EVERY time a baby goes to sleep. The recommendations include:

- Room sharing, NOT bed sharing;
- Always putting the baby on his or her back to sleep; and
- A sleep environment free from blankets, pillows, bumpers, stuffed animals and other soft objects.

To learn more about infant safe sleep practices and to see what a safe sleep environment looks like, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep.

Let’s work together to raise awareness about safe sleep practices so that more Ohio babies will celebrate their first birthdays!
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- Always putting the baby on his or her back to sleep; and
- A sleep environment free from blankets, pillows, bumpers, stuffed animals and other soft objects.

The Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP) will be conducting activities and outreach throughout the state during the month of October to help educate parents and caregivers about the importance of safe sleep. We encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with safe sleep practices and environments, and share this information with anyone who cares for an infant. Let’s work together to raise awareness about infant safe sleep so that more Ohio babies will celebrate their first birthdays!

To learn more about infant safe sleep practices and to see what a safe sleep environment looks like, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep.
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Don’t forget to use the hashtag #MoreFirstBirthdays on Twitter and Instagram!

Sample Tweets

October is SIDS Awareness Month. Spread the word about safe sleep. #MoreFirstBirthdays

Ohio has the 4th highest infant mortality rate in the country. SIDS can be prevented. #MoreFirstBirthdays

Remember the ABCs of safe sleep: Alone. Back. Crib. Every baby. Every sleep. #MoreFirstBirthdays

Sleep sacks keep babies warm and safe in their crib. NO blankets! Register to win one at www.ohioaap.org/safesleep #MoreFirstBirthdays

Share your room, NOT your bed with your baby. #MoreFirstBirthdays

Couches, chairs & beds are too soft to be safe sleep places for babies. Always use a crib or bassinet. #MoreFirstBirthdays

Safe crib = NO pillows, blankets, toys or bumper pads. See what safe sleep looks like at www.ohioaap.org/safesleep #MoreFirstBirthdays

If baby falls asleep in a car seat, stroller or swing, ALWAYS move her to her crib or bassinet to sleep. #MoreFirstBirthdays

Babies should always sleep in an area that is smoke free. #MoreFirstBirthdays

More than 1,000 babies in Ohio die each year before reaching their 1st bday. Learn about safe sleep and reduce the risk. #MoreFirstBirthdays
Sample Facebook posts

Ohio lawmakers passed SB 198, declaring October SIDS Awareness Month. Learn more about infant safe sleep and share what you learned with anyone you know who cares for an infant. It could mean more first birthdays for Ohio’s babies. Learn more at www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Ohio has the 4th highest infant mortality rate in the country, with more than 3 infants dying each week due to improper sleeping arrangements. Parents can reduce the risk of SIDS by following the ABCs of Safe Sleep every time they put their babies to sleep. For more information, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Losing a baby to SIDS is devastating. See how two Ohio families are channeling their grief into efforts to raise awareness about safe sleep practices and decrease the high infant mortality rate in Ohio. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ok-v4Wo-VtY Register to win a free Halo sleep sack at www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Cuddling your baby during feeding time and waking hours best develops that closeness. At bedtime, room-sharing is great. With a baby-safe crib placed next to your bed, the baby will sense your nearness and still have a safe place to sleep. Parents will sleep better knowing their baby is safe too! For more safe sleep tips and to register to win a Halo sleep sack, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Never place babies to sleep on adult beds, chairs, sofas, waterbeds, pillows, or cushions. The safest place for a baby to sleep is in a crib, on a firm mattress covered by a fitted sheet. For more safe sleep tips and to register to win a Halo sleep sack, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Keep toys, blankets, stuffed animals and crib bumpers out of the crib! To see what a safe sleep environment looks and to register to win a Halo sleep sack, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Studies show that by following the AAP Safe Sleep Practices and putting babies in a safe sleep environment every time they go to sleep, you can reduce the risk of SIDS. Don’t ignore the facts. Encourage all moms and caregivers you know to follow the ABCs of Safe Sleep. For more details, visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Regular prenatal care can help reduce the risk of SIDS. Visit your doctor on the recommended schedule and avoid smoke exposure, alcohol and illicit drug use during pregnancy and after baby is born. For more tips on how to reduce your baby’s risk of SIDS and to register to win a Halo sleep sack, visit: www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

Approximately one in five sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) deaths occur while an infant is in the care of someone other than a parent. Often, these deaths occur when babies who are used to sleeping on their backs at home are then placed to sleep on their tummies by another
caregiver. This is called “unaccustomed tummy sleeping,” and these babies are 18 times more likely to die from SIDS. Learn more about safe sleep and register to win a Halo sleep sack at: www.ohioaap.org/safesleep

SIDS is the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 12 months of age, most commonly occurring among infants who are 1-4 months old. Get the facts on safe sleep and make sure everyone who cares for your baby knows them too. Visit www.ohioaap.org/safesleep for more details and to register to win a Halo sleep sack.

SAFE SLEEP INITIATIVES LOGO

We encourage the use of Ohio AAP Safe Sleep Initiatives logo as part of your organization’s awareness efforts. The logo may be resized, but the color and content must remain exactly as it appears below.