

NEWS RELEASE

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For More Information, Contact:

Sarah Massey, Program Director
Infant & Child Death Services
North Dakota Department of Health
Phone: 701.328.2722
Email: smassey@nd.gov

Create a Safe Environment for Baby to Sleep

BISMARCK, N.D. – Parents and caregivers play a vital role in helping children stay safe while they're asleep. Safe-to-Sleep®, a North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) initiative, works to protect babies from sleep-related causes of infant death.

“North Dakota’s Safe-to-Sleep® campaign is meant to educate parents, caregivers and community members on the importance of safe sleep strategies to keep babies healthy and safe,” said Sarah Massey, the NDDoH Infant and Child Death Services Program Director.

Each year, about 3,500 babies in the United States die suddenly and unexpectedly from unknown causes such as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), accidental suffocation in a sleeping environment, and other death from unknown causes. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following actions to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death:

- Place baby on his or her back on a firm sleep surface such as a crib or bassinet with a tight-fitting sheet.
- Avoid use of soft bedding, including crib bumpers, blankets, pillows and soft toys. The crib should be bare.
- Share a bedroom, but not the same sleeping surface, preferably until baby turns one year of age, but at least for the first six months. Room-sharing decreases the risk of SIDS by as much as 50 percent.
- Avoid exposing baby to smoke, alcohol, and illicit drugs.
- Breastfeed your baby. Any breastfeeding has been associated with reduced SIDS risk.
- Offer a pacifier at naps and bedtime. Do not hang around the neck or attach to clothing.
- Do not use home cardio-respiratory monitors and avoid the use of SIDS marketed commercial devices, including wedges or positioners, that are inconsistent with safe sleep guidelines.
- Infants should receive all recommended vaccinations.
- Supervised, awake tummy time is recommended daily to facilitate development.

For more information on Safe Sleep, visit the website at <https://www.ndhealth.gov/sids/> or call 701.328.2722.

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