



## ***Injury Prevention Program***

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### ***National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month Toolkit***

## **INTRODUCTION**

The month of October marks the observance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month across the United States. Nearly 4,000 infants die suddenly and unexpectedly, each year, in the United States and most of these deaths result from Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) and sleep-related causes, such as accidental suffocation.

The Safe to Sleep Campaign, an effort led by the National Institutes of Health to reduce the instances of SIDS/SUID through safe sleep environments, is coordinated in Georgia through the Georgia Department of Public Health's (DPH) Injury Prevention Program. In observance of SIDS, Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month, DPH is pleased to offer this toolkit.

This toolkit is designed to help community and faith-based organizations transform neighborhoods, engage communities, and promote safe infant sleep. There are a variety of activities and resources provided in this toolkit, so please don't feel as if you need to do all of them. We invite you to explore the menu of options and decide which ones could work best for your organization.

What are the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations on safe infant sleep?  
[Click here for the full report.](#)

## **THE OPPORTUNITY**

Community and faith-based organizations have a unique and critical role to play in ending infant sleep-related death and addressing related issues surrounding new parent support. Your organizations are trusted leaders in your community, which makes you well-positioned to take action. Parents learn many lessons about healthy living and well-being in faith and community-based settings that establish the foundation for their lifestyles as responsible and involved parents.

The goal of the Georgia Safe to Sleep Campaign, facilitated by DPH, is to educate parents, caregivers, and practitioners about ways to increase protection for infants against SIDS/SUID and help to end sleep-related causes of infant death.

Please consider joining the Safe to Sleep Campaign to address the barriers that prevent EVERY baby from enjoying safe sleep, for every sleep.

Thank you,

Terri Miller, MPH, CHES  
Safe to Sleep Campaign Coordinator

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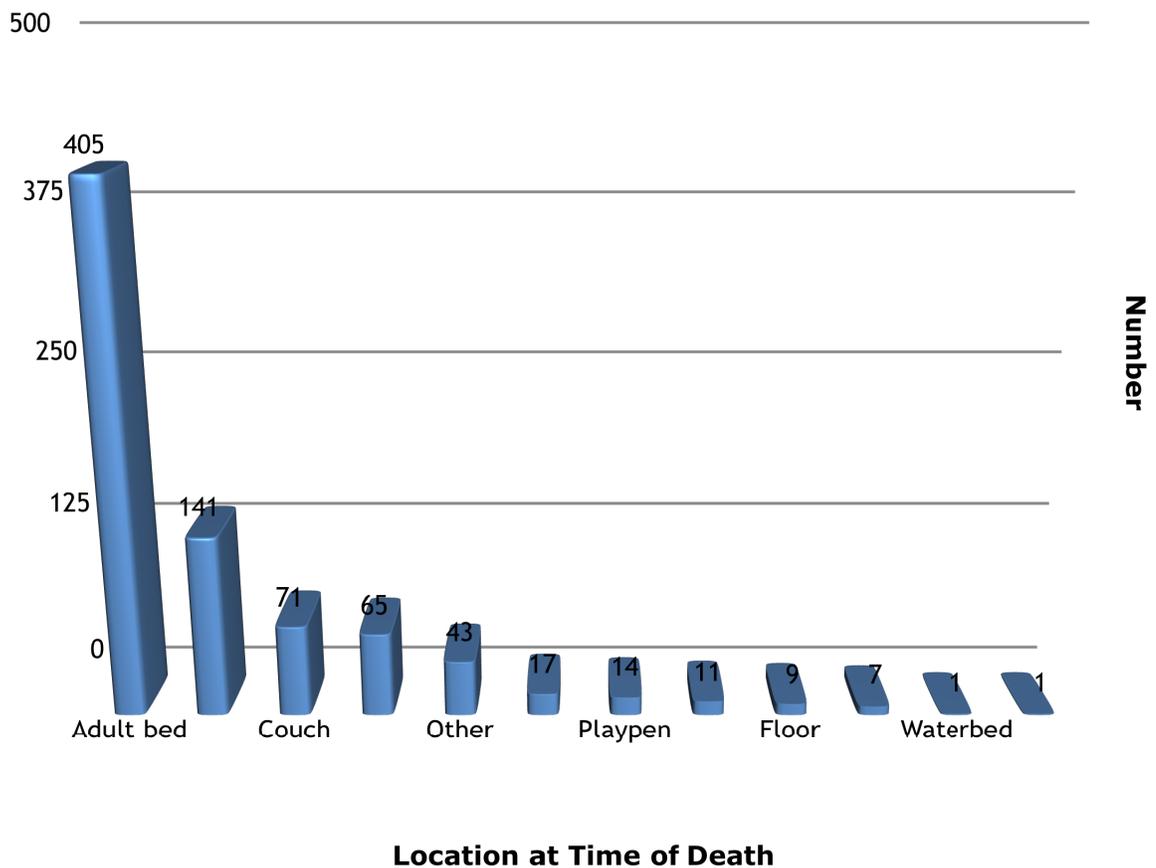
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**THE NEED**

Since the National Safe to Sleep campaign began in 1994 (then known as, the Back to Sleep Campaign), the overall U.S. SIDS rate has declined by 50 percent across all racial and ethnic groups, but there is still more work to be done. As of 2013, Georgia still averages 3 infant deaths per week, due to sleep-related causes. The majority of these deaths are preventable.

It was determined by the Georgia Child Fatality Review (CFR) Panel that the burden of these deaths in Georgia are not primarily related to SIDS, which accounted for only 2 percent of the 139 cases reviewed in 2013, but mainly from other highly preventable causes such as accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed (a part of SUID). The infant sleep environment, location, and position are all risk factors that can be addressed to help reduce all sleep-related infant deaths. The following graph shows the main locations of infant death, in Georgia from 2009-2013, demonstrating a need for increased public awareness about SIDS/SUID prevention and safe sleep practices.

**Location at time of Infant Sleep-related Death  
5 Year Totals 2009-2013**



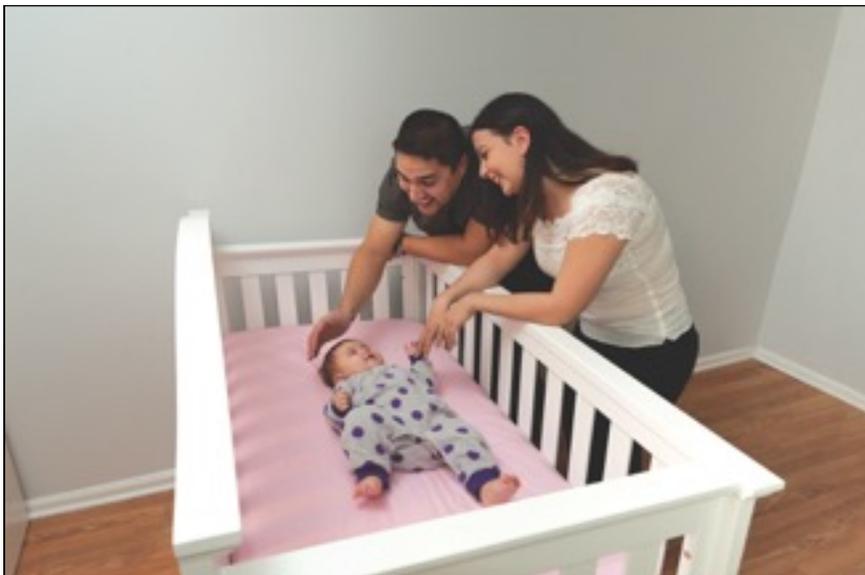
## **THE TOP 5 CHALLENGE:**

### **INCREASING SIDS/SUID PREVENTION AWARENESS IN GEORGIA**

Community and faith-based organizations within our communities have a unique and critical role to play in ending infant sleep-related death and addressing related issues surrounding new parent support.

Getting the word out about SIDS/SUID prevention requires collective action, and no matter your resources, you can help! In this toolkit we've provided 5, action-oriented, ways we're challenging you to promote SIDS/SUID awareness and safe sleep environments in your community.

1. Share your knowledge.
2. Create a Safe to Sleep educational display.
3. Contact local retailers to join you in the Safe Sleep Campaign.
4. Host a fundraiser for a local crib distribution program.
5. Host an art contest or contribute photos for social media of safe sleep in your community.



# 1

## Share Your Knowledge

This toolkit provides useful information and resources about SIDS/SUID prevention methods that you can share with your community and family members. Here are some simple and cost-effective ways you can leverage these materials to support our SIDS/SUID awareness activities.

### Posters:

- Request permission to mount a Safe to Sleep poster on your community notice board.
  - Ask for time during your community, chapter, or faith-based organization meetings to speak about safe infant sleep and use the poster as an aid for demonstration.
  - Distribute a poster to daycares and churches in your community to display in their infant care rooms.
- (Contact the DPH Safe to Sleep Coordinator for a PDF or hardcopy poster)

### Written Content:

- Use the provided written content in this toolkit (at the end) as a part of your organization's existing communications and promotional activities. Whether you manage a **website, newsletter, magazine or blog**, the articles provided are a great resource to use and update accordingly for your audience members. Submit a **news release** and see about having the local newspaper run an article on October SIDS Awareness month

### Events:

- If you are a part of a community organization, club or faith-based organization, host a gathering with parents of babies 1 year and younger, as well as, expecting parents, grandparents, and any other interested community members. Use the safe to sleep flipchart, "What is Safe Sleep for Babies", and other materials, to encourage a dialogue about SIDS/SUID and safe infant sleep practices. You may also want to incorporate a demonstration of safe infant sleep using a doll.

\*Parents and caregivers will have many questions and concerns so be certain to have someone knowledgeable, on the reasons behind the recommendations, present to answer questions and explain "why" they are encouraged.



## **2** Create a Safe to Sleep Educational Display

The risks for sleep-related infant death are known and it is possible to drastically lower the risk, and increase the protection of infants, by following a few safe infant sleep recommendations.

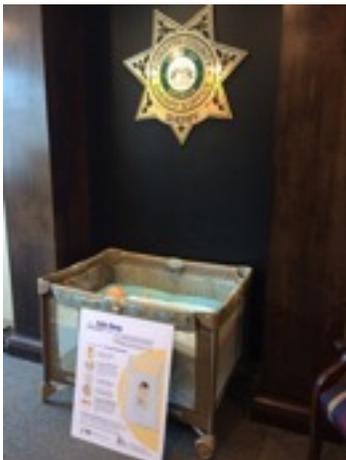
One method to convey these recommendations and demonstrate what is meant by “a safe sleep environment” is to set up a “Safe to Sleep Display” within your community. This display is meant to **show** what a safe infant sleep environment looks like and to help raise awareness of safe infant sleep.

A display can be set up in any location that has access to the public. Some examples include; local Health Department lobbies, local hospital lobbies, libraries, daycares, and so forth.

What you will need:

- One portable Pack ‘N Play with a bassinet,
- One infant doll,
- One fitted crib sheet,
- One sleep sack (wearable blanket),
- Optional:
  - A safe to sleep environment poster, and safe to sleep handouts.
  - Contact the Safe to Sleep Campaign Coordinator to see if resources for these optional items are available (while supplies last).

Below are some examples of Safe to Sleep Displays already being utilized in various Georgia communities.



### **3** Contact Local Retailers to Join You in the Safe to Sleep Campaign

Communicate with local crib, and other baby products, retailers about the importance of safe sleep environments and the unexpected risks posed by such items as; crib bumpers, fluffy blankets and stuffed toys.

Expecting parents should see a safe sleep environment while shopping for items for their infants. Request that the local manager of the retail store display their cribs in a manner that supports the national recommendations for infant safe sleep practices. Specifically, ask them to remove crib bumpers, blankets, toys, and stuffed animals from the crib displays. This is a powerful visual for new parents who need to feel that a bare crib is actually a comfortable, safe and loving space.



**Ideal Crib Display**



**Misleading and Dangerous Display**

You may also see if your retailer would like to display a “floor talker” in their baby aisle, to further demonstrate and reinforce the safe to sleep recommendations. See an example below. Floor talkers are 2’x2’ and are removable decals that adhere to linoleum or other smooth floor surfaces.



## **4** Host a Fundraiser for a Local Crib Distribution Program

This is a great way to assist families who are in need of a safe crib, or bassinet, for their infant.

First, find a suitable distribution location to accept donations. Distribution locations must be providing, or able to provide, education on safe infant sleep in addition to any crib distribution. Is there already a Cribs for Kids® location in your community? (You can check online and also learn more about the program at: [www.cribsforkids.org](http://www.cribsforkids.org)) If not, is there a program that works with new and expecting parents? The Health Department will be an obvious first choice but, you can also seek out such places as; Pregnancy Resource Centers, Hospitals, and other community service-oriented venues.

Once you have an established recipient; you can collect donations in order to purchase safe sleep environments for families in need within your community. The Crib for Kids® program provides Graco Pack 'n Play® portable cribs to organizations at a discounted rate. The portable crib (pack n plays, play yards etc.) are preferred to the traditional crib because of their low weight, low cost and ease of use and set up. Work with a team, or staff of volunteers, to plan the event and coordinate for all proceeds to go to expecting families or those with infants less than 6 months old, who are in need of a safe crib. Ideas for a crib distribution fundraiser that you can organize for your community include, but are not limited to, auctions, car washes, community yard sales, picnics and craft fairs.

Alternatively, or in conjunction with the fundraiser, you can encourage community members to donate their gently used pack n plays to your crib distribution center to be redistributed to families in need among your community.

Click below to find even more resources and ideas:



## **5** Host an art contest or contribute photos for social media of safe sleep in your community

### Art Contest:

Middle school students are future babysitters and eventually, future parents. Having them participate in disseminating safe infant sleep messages can promote constructive discussions about safe sleep among youth populations, as well as, their parents or caregivers.

Here is an example of an art contest from a local community; Middle and High School students were asked to create a message around safe infant sleep. The winning submission was printed on a tote bag which was filled with safe sleep materials. The bags were distributed at health centers (that offer prenatal care to low-income women), WIC Offices and, multiple home visiting programs. It was also displayed in local media and within the schools, health departments, County Courthouse, etc.

### Social Media:

Social media is an excellent way to engage a wide range of audiences online, for free. Through popular platforms like Facebook and Twitter, you can distribute important facts and information about SIDS/SUID and safe infant sleep in a conversational manner while also, providing important visual cues that help your followers better understand the concept of safe sleep environments.

Here are some tips to building a safe sleep social campaign with your community:

- Coordinate with parents in your community to have an Safe to Sleep photo drive. Have them take photos of their babies in environments that follow recommendations for safe sleep (no crib bumpers, blankets, stuffed toys, etc).
  - Ensure that everyone agrees to have their photos displayed in social media. You may want to consider having them provide their approval to distribute their personal photos publicly.
- Only use photos that meet the infant safe sleep recommendations – alone, back, crib.
- Post the photos on your community, club, or faith-based organization social media pages multiple times a day to reach the widest audience possible.
- Utilize and engage with the #SIDSMonth, #GaSweetDreams and #GaSafeSleep hashtags DPH will be using throughout the month of October to further increase exposure of your messages.
- **See the social media section in this toolkit for fantastic examples of potential social messages.**



## ART CONTEST



### FACT SHEET: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SIDS

Each year in the United States, many families are faced with the heartbreaking reality of the death of their baby before their first birthday. This is a stressful time for families and a challenge for a nation that loses thousands of infants per year.

Data from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that 24,000 infants died in the United States in 2011, and for every 1,000 babies that are born, 6 of them die within the first year. This is a rate higher than most other developed countries.

One of the leading causes of death in infants, 1 to 12 months old, is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The information below will provide educational information and recommended prevention practices that will help protect the health and safety of all babies in Georgia.

#### **What is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)?**

SIDS is an infant sleep-related fatality for which scientists are still trying to find the exact cause. SIDS is only one cause of a wider problem called, Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID). According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year, nearly 4,000 infants, less than 1 year of age, die suddenly and unexpected in the United States due to SIDS/SUID, with most of these deaths occurring in unsafe sleep environments.

While SIDS is one of the leading causes of death in infants 1 to 12 months old in the United States, it most frequently occurs when babies are between 2 and 4 months old, with 90% of all deaths occurring prior to 6 months of age.

#### **Risk Factors for SIDS**

As explained by the American Academy of Pediatrics, SIDS is thought to be a combination of risk factors including:

- Outside stressors – external risk factors such as:
  - infants sleeping on the stomach or side positions,
  - bed sharing, soft-bedding, head covered,
  - infant exposure to cigarette smoke and,
  - over-heating of the baby—infant bundled in too many layers of clothing,
  - alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy and after the baby is born.
- Vulnerable infants – intrinsic factors such as:
  - race,
  - maternal health conditions,
  - Preterm birth (less than 37 gestational weeks at birth),
  - Sex (more boys die of SIDS than girls)
- Critical development period - postnatal period when newly from the uterine environment, particularly from 0 – 4 months old.

Without a clear scientific consensus on the exact cause of SIDS, there are still no known means to totally prevent it. However, data reveals that infant safe sleep practices do dramatically reduce the risks of SIDS and there are also clear ways to reduce other sleep-related infant deaths, due to suffocation and strangulation in bed.

### **What SIDS Is Not<sup>1</sup>**

There are some myths surrounding the causes of SIDS, which are important to debunk in promoting SIDS/SUID awareness. SIDS occurs suddenly and unexpectedly, so there is no known way to completely prevent it, but the risk may be drastically reduced. The following are not causes of SIDS:

- SIDS is not directly caused by babies sleeping in cribs.
- SIDS is not caused by vomiting or choking when the baby sleeps on his or her back.
- SIDS is not caused by immunization shots or vaccination.
- SIDS is not contagious or catchable.
- SIDS is not a health concern for babies older than 1 year of age.

### **What is Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID<sup>2</sup>)?**

SUID is the term that encompasses all sudden deaths of infants less than 1 year of age that cannot be explained due to such things as medical issues, congenital defects, illness etc. Not every sudden unexpected infant death is caused by SIDS. The 3 main types of SUID are; SIDS, Unknown Cause and, Accidental Suffocation and Strangulation in Bed. The infant sleep-related deaths caused by accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed are considered highly preventable, and are an important focus for infant safe sleep campaigns.

There are many causes of accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed. The most prominent of them include:

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<sup>1</sup> Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. *Myths and Facts about SIDS and Safe Infant Sleep*. U.S Department of Health and Human Services; 2013. <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sts/about/Pages/mythsfacts.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/SIDS/index.htm>. Accessed July 25, 2015

- Babies sleeping in the same bed as parents or other people also referred to as bed-sharing. Bed-sharing can lead to the following dangers for the infant:
  - Overlay – when someone rolls on top of or against the infant while sleeping.
  - Entrapment – when the baby gets trapped between two objects, such as the mattress and the wall or bedframe.
- Babies sleeping on other unsafe surface can lead to the following dangers:
  - Sleeping on couches – entrapment, suffocation, and overlay concerns.
  - Sleeping on air mattresses – suffocation risks due to non-firm sleep surface.
  - Car seats and bouncy seats – infants can slide down in the seat and their breathing can become restricted.
- Unsafe crib or crib environment<sup>3</sup>
  - Cribs that have been recalled, such as the “drop down” side cribs where the sides slide up and down for easier access to the baby. (Visit [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) for more information about current crib recalls).
  - Broken cribs where a baby can get trapped between spaces.
  - Other unapproved cribs with wide slats that can entrap the baby’s head and neck.
  - Cribs with soft objects that increase chances for suffocation, such as toys, soft bedding, crib bumpers, blankets, quilts, pillows and comforters.

### **SUID/SIDS Prevention: Alone, Back, Crib – The ABCs of Safe Sleep**

The most effective manner to encourage increased awareness about safe sleep practices for infants is to spread the word about the ABCs of Safe Sleep – alone, back and crib. By following the prevention methods outlined below, parents, caregivers and families can greatly reduce their baby’s chances of SIDS.

- **Alone** –Caregivers are encouraged to “room-share,” but not “bed-share” with infants. Infants should sleep alone in their cribs or bassinets under the watchful care of an adult. The infant should not share a bed with parents, children or pets. When infants share beds with other people, it increases the risk of suffocation if someone rolls on or against the infant. The baby may also get trapped between objects, such as the mattress and the wall. Remember, infants are unable to push you, or something else, away from them.
- **Back** – The safest way to put babies to sleep is on their backs. There is evidence that sleeping in the supine position (on the back) reduced SIDS deaths. Once babies can roll back to front and front to back, parents no longer need to reposition the child.
- **Crib** – The crib should be free of all soft objects, such as loose beddings, blankets, pillows, comforters, crib bumpers and quilts, and from any cords or wires. The baby’s face should not be covered by blankets. The mattress should fit the crib, be firm and covered snugly with a fitted sheet. A soft crib mattress can conform to the baby’s head or face and increase the risk of suffocation. Additionally, cribs should not be recalled and should meet CPSC standards. Learn more at: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

Other Safe Sleep Recommendations:

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<sup>3</sup> United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Safe to Sleep®-Crib Information Center. [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). Accessed July 25, 2015

- Body and room temperature – Infants should not get too hot while sleeping and their room should be at a comfortable temperature, not too warm. Keep the baby at least four feet from all space heaters.
- Clothing layers – Babies should not be clothed in garments that can significantly impact their body temperature or impact their breathing. In many cases, a one-piece sleeper will suffice.
- Smoking – Exposure to secondhand smoke is also another risk factor for SIDS. Mothers should not smoke, drink or use drugs during or after pregnancy. Furthermore, no one should be allowed to smoke around the baby.

### Sample Newsletter Article #1:

#### **Observing SIDS, Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month**

The arrival of a new baby can be the source of love, inspiration, excitement, and even anxiety, for many parents. Everyone enters parenthood with different feelings and expectations, but they all share one common goal: ensuring the health and safety of their newborn.

Among all the things parents think to protect their children from, one of the least suspected dangers is, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID). SIDS is when an otherwise healthy infant dies unexpectedly from unknown causes. Each year, the U.S. loses nearly 4,000 babies to SIDS/SUID. As of 2013, in Georgia, 3 infants died each week due to SIDS and other, sleep-related causes.

While no known cause has been identified by researchers, there are lots of things people can do to better protect their children from SIDS and other, preventable, sleep-related deaths. That's why we're proud to join parents, caregivers and child health professionals in showing our support for National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month, this October, to raise awareness about SIDS and the prevention methods that help protect babies.

SIDS most frequently occurs when babies are between 2 and 4 months old with the majority of deaths (90%) occurring before 6 months of age. Although there are no known ways to prevent SIDS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health and, other health organizations have identified ways to reduce the risk, and prevent other sleep-related deaths, by modifying the infants sleep position and environment.

While putting baby down for a nap may seem harmless, unsafe sleep environments increase the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related death due to blankets, pillows, toys and even additional clothing, which can interfere with a baby's breathing. The position of the baby can also pose a

risk for SIDS. According to the American Association of Pediatrics, it is safer for babies to sleep on their back (also called the supine position) rather than their stomachs (called the prone position).

One national effort to reduce SIDS is the Safe to Sleep Campaign, coordinated in Georgia by the Georgia Department of Public Health's (DPH) Injury Prevention Program. The campaign is based on the American Academy of Pediatrics', 2011 expanded recommendations on safe infant sleep and has made significant progress in reducing instances of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths. In fact, since the Safe to Sleep campaign launched, the number of babies sleeping on their backs has doubled and SIDS deaths have declined by more than 50% from 1994 to 1999.

The Safe to Sleep Campaign, champions the ability of parents, caregivers and family members to protect babies and reduce their chances of SIDS/SUID by following the ABCs of safe sleep:

- **Alone** – Babies need their own sleep space. Room sharing but, not bed sharing. Set up the infant's safe sleeping area in the same room, but separate, from yours. This is especially important in the very early months when the risk of SIDS/SUID is greatest.
- **Back** – Babies sleep safest on their backs. Every sleep. Every nap. Every time.
- **Crib** – When it comes to cribs, the popular saying "bare is best" rings true. All you need is a simple tightly fitted sheet to go on a crib mattress. Babies need a firm mattress with a tight fitting bottom sheet, made specifically for the crib. No blankets, quilts, crib bumpers or toys.

There are other important factors to keep in mind when protecting babies from SIDS such as not allowing the baby to overheat due to too much clothing, not allowing smoking near the infant and, mothers should avoid smoking, drinking or using other illicit drugs during pregnancy.

The first year of a baby's life should be filled with love and great memories. Join us this month as we work to encourage everyone to know the ABC's of safe sleep to help their babies have sweet dreams and live long, healthy lives.

If you're looking for more information about SIDS and safe sleep practices, visit the Georgia Safe to Sleep campaign online at [www.dph.ga.gov/safetosleep](http://www.dph.ga.gov/safetosleep)

## **Sample Newsletter Article #2:**

### **Sweet Dreams: Crib Safety 101**

For many parents, nap time or night time is their most relaxing part of the day. While they enjoy the newness of a baby girl or boy, feedings, diaper changes, crying and even cuddle time with their little ones can become exhausting!

When laying babies down to sleep, it's easy to want to comfort them with toys or other special items – it's a known fact that babies enjoy the feeling of being held close to someone. It's also

common to think that baby cribs and nursery products, such as crib bumpers, are an excellent way to ensure your baby lives in safety and comfort.

Unfortunately, many of these popular practices and baby products may put babies at risk for SIDS/SUID, also known as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death. SIDS happens when a healthy baby dies from unexpected causes. This devastating situation impacts nearly 4,000 infants and their families each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This month, for National SIDS, Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month, we're encouraging parents, grandparents and even baby sitters to learn about a concept called, "the safe sleep environment".

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) created the Back to Sleep campaign in 1994. It touted several important messages you should know and more than 20 years later, public health, health care, and child advocates are still teaching these important messages that are easy to remember, and implement, in your own life.

All you have to do is know your ABCs:

- **Alone** – Babies need their own sleep space. Room sharing but, not bed sharing. Set up the infant's safe sleeping area in the same room, but separate, from yours. This is especially important in the very early months when the risk of SIDS/SUID is greatest.
- **Back** – Babies sleep safest on their backs. Every sleep. Every nap. Every time.
- **Crib** – When it comes to cribs, the popular saying "bare is best" rings true. All you need is a simple tightly fitted sheet to go on a crib mattress. Babies need a firm mattress with a tight fitting bottom sheet, made specifically for the crib. No blankets, quilts, crib bumpers or toys.

A rule of thumb for all baby products is stay up-to-date on important recalls, especially cribs. With a massive baby product market, new cribs and toys are hitting stores all the time. Know what products are in your home and how they may impact your baby's sleep environment.

Also, beware of any baby products that claim to prevent or reduce the risk of SIDS/SUID. The Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warns consumers against purchasing products with such claims. These sleep products include pillows, infant positioners, crib tents, mattresses, crib bedding (including bumpers and blankets) and, baby monitors. The FDA's website on "Safety Products with SIDS Prevention Claims" cautions that it has not approved any baby products to prevent or reduce SIDS/SUID.

We know how exciting it may be to welcome your little one into the world with lots of gifts, toys, and items that make their life comfortable, but never forget their safety as well.

Learn the ABC's of safe sleep and make sure your baby is well-equipped to enjoy healthy and safe sweet dreams for every sleep, every time.

Sample Media Release: SIDS Month Observance/Event Promotion

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact Name:**

**Organization's Name**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

**[Organization Name] Joins the Safe to Sleep Campaign to Reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in Georgia**

[City, State] – [Month, Day, Year] – This October, [organization name] is standing in solidarity with organizations throughout Georgia and the nation in observance of National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month.

SIDS, a leading cause of death for infants 12 months old and younger, is when a baby dies, usually during sleep, from unexplained causes. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveal that nearly 4,000 infants in the United States under 1 year of age die each year suddenly and unexpectedly while sleeping. As of 2013, Georgia averaged 3 infant deaths per week, due to sleep-related causes.

Unsafe sleep environments are pervasive, as many people purchase popular baby products believing they are comforting to a child however, research shows that SIDS deaths can be reduced by as much as 50% if infants are placed to sleep, alone, on their back, and in a safe sleep environment free of blankets, toys, and crib bumpers.

In honor of this month's observance, [organization name] is pleased to be hosting [event title with date, time and location.] This event is aimed at raising awareness about SIDS among parents, grandparents and anyone involved in caring for infants. Attendees will gain insights into what safe crib environment look like and how to avoid common, unsuspecting hazards that increase chances of infant sleep-related deaths.

**[QUOTE FROM ORGANIZATION OR EVENT LEADER]**

The Safe to Sleep® Campaign, a national infant safe sleep initiative led by the National Institutes of Health, is coordinated in Georgia, by the Georgia Department of Public Health's (DPH) Injury Prevention Program.

“We all have a tendency to want to use blankets, toys, or other items that we believe will help babies go to sleep faster and sleep longer. This is a natural reaction to wanting to comfort the babies in our lives,” said Terri Miller, Safe to Sleep Coordinator at, DPH. “However I encourage everyone to be aware of the risks these products may pose, such as suffocation, overheating, or even strangulation.”

“To keep your babies safe, we recommend the ABCs of safe sleep as outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics,” Miller continued. “Alone, back, and crib. Babies should sleep alone, on their back, and in a crib, in the same room and close to their parents but, not on the same sleep surface. It's important to avoid using crib bumpers, blankets and other objects that may restrict access to fresh air.”

All month long, [organization name] will be working to teach everyone the ABCs of safe sleep. [Insert details about organization's activities or event plans.]

To register for the event, contact [include contact person, phone number or website.] For more information about SIDS, visit [Safe the Sleep](http://www.dph.ga.gov/safetosleep) campaign online at [www.dph.ga.gov/safetosleep](http://www.dph.ga.gov/safetosleep).

### Sample Email Template

Dear Colleagues,

October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Pregnancy and Infant Death Awareness Month. National data reveals that Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is a leading cause of deaths in infants less than 1 year old.

It is believed that these innocent victims of SIDS die suddenly and without warning, usually during sleep. Experts are not sure why, but they do know that when babies are put on their backs to sleep, in a safe sleep environment, the risk of SIDS is dramatically decreased by as much as 50%.

[Organization's name] is encouraging parents, grandmothers, and caregivers of infants to practice the recommended ABCs of infant safe sleep as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

- Alone— Babies need their own space to sleep
- Back— Babies sleep safest on their backs: every sleep, every nap, every time
- Crib— Babies should sleep in a safety-approved crib or bassinet, with a firm mattress and tight fitting bottom sheet, made specifically for the crib. No blankets, quilts, crib bumpers, toys or any objects should be in baby's sleeping space.

Data shows that nearly half (47%) of infants die while sleeping in an adult bed. This is often due to accidental suffocation from loose bedding and pillows or by someone rolling against or on top of the infant.

This month let us start a conversation and a practice to safeguard our children against SIDS. We encourage you to join this month's observance and the Georgia Safe to Sleep campaign by sharing this important information with your family, friends and community partners.

Let us work together to protect Georgia's babies and help them enjoy sweet dreams and a long, healthy life.

For more information or resources, the Georgia Department of Public Health has made resources available online. Visit [www.dph.georgia.gov/safetosleep](http://www.dph.georgia.gov/safetosleep) for more information.

Sincerely,

[Insert name and title]

### Sample Social Media Messages

Throughout October, you are encouraged to leverage your social media networks to promote the SIDS, Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month activities happening in Georgia, as well as communicate important safe sleep practices. These free methods of communication are ideal for organizations on a tight budget, but still want to get the word out about protecting Georgia's babies from SIDS.

Below are sample social media messages that can be utilized for Facebook, Twitter or other social pages your organization manages. Feel free to use any of the below messages or customize them as needed. You can link to pages on your own website or other website with educational information about SIDS. Please remember that Twitter messages must be 140 characters or less.

#### **Twitter:**

- It's National #SIDSMonth! Learn the ABCs of safe sleep: alone, back and crib. #GaSafeSleep [optional link]
- Is your baby having #GaSweetDreams? Learn how to keep your baby safe and healthy even while they sleep. [link]
- True or false? Crib bumpers are safe for my baby. Find out the answer: [link] #SIDSMonth #GaSafeSleep
- A bare crib is a great crib! Remember, no blankets, toys or objects are allowed to sleep with a baby. #SIDSMonth #GaSafeSleep
- Do you know your ABCs? #SIDSMonth #GaSafeSleep [link]

- DYK? The chances of #SIDS can be decreased by nearly 50% if babies have a safe sleep environment? [\[link\]](#) #SIDSMonth
- Help us protect Georgia's babies from sleep-related death. Join our #SIDSMonth campaign! [\[link\]](#) #GaSafeSleep
- Want to nap with your little one in bed? You may be putting them at risk for #SIDS. [\[link\]](#) #SIDSMonth #GaSafeSleep
- Sorry, Teddy...no stuffed animals in the crib with baby. [\[link\]](#) #SIDSMonth
- Register for our #SIDSMonth event! We're going back to basics and teaching the ABCs of safe sleep. [\[link\]](#) #GaSafeSleep

### **Facebook:**

- This month, we're observing National SIDS, Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month to protect Georgia babies from SIDS and other sleep-related deaths. Check out the following information to learn the basics of safe sleep environments for the babies in your life. [\[link\]](#)
- Think that fancy crib bumper is helping your baby stay comfortable in their new crib? You may want to reconsider. These products can create harmful risks for infants and maybe even increase their chances of SIDS. [\[link\]](#)
- Stuffed animals are adorable, but they don't belong in a baby's crib. [\[link\]](#)
- Want to know what a safe sleep environment looks like for your baby? [\[link\]](#)
- As of 2013, Georgia averaged three infant deaths per week due to sleep-related causes. You can help stop this. Learn the ABCs of safe sleep environments and share that information with everyone you know. [\[link\]](#)
- Register for our #SIDSMonth event! We're going back to basics and teaching the ABCs of safe sleep. [\[link\]](#)
- Parents can be overwhelmed with adjusting to life after welcoming a new baby into the world. As you anticipate your little one's arrival, prepare their safe sleep environment in advance of their birth. [\[link\]](#)
- Bare cribs are best! AAP and other child health leaders recommend you exclude toys, objects, blankets or anything that can impact a baby's breathing from their sleep environment. [\[link/photo\]](#)
- If you're going to be near a baby when they're sleep, room-share instead of bed-share. Want to know the difference? [\[link\]](#)

Help your baby have sweet (and cool) dreams. Don't dress them of excessive layers of clothing as it may increase chances of overheating or even SIDS. Learn more: [\[link\]](#)

### **Bereavement Resources**

Losing a child for any reason can be a devastating and life-changing event for anyone. If someone in your community needs help to get through this difficult time, help is available. There are many resources available to support bereaved families, including [SIDS Resources Inc.](#) and the [CJ foundation for SIDS](#). Following are additional sources for information and support:

- **Bereaved Parents of the USA** - <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org>
- **The Compassionate Friends** - <http://www.compassionatefriends.org>
- **MISS Foundation** - <http://www.misschildren.org/>
- **The Dougy Center** - <http://www.dougy.org>
- **Share Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support, Inc.** - <http://www.nationalshare.org>

#### **Other Safe Infant Sleep Resources**

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: Safe Infant Sleep Information  
[www.cdc.gov/sids](http://www.cdc.gov/sids)

First Candle - SIDS/SUID prevention and bereavement resources  
[www.firstcandle.org](http://www.firstcandle.org)

American Academy of Pediatrics  
[www.healthychildcare.org](http://www.healthychildcare.org)

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) – National Safe to Sleep Campaign (materials available free of charge)  
<http://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov>

Cribs for Kids – Crib program as well as prevention and bereavement resources.  
[www.cribsforkids.org](http://www.cribsforkids.org)