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AHEAD OF WINTER STORM, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROVIDES TIPS TO HELP INFANTS SLEEP SAFELY DURING COLD WEATHER

An Average of 41 Babies in NYC Die Each Year From Sleep-Related Injuries; ACS Promotes the Importance of Safe Sleep

NEW YORK, NY – As New York City braces for a major winter storm, the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) today reminds those caring for infants about the dangers associated with babies less than a year old sleeping with parents in adult beds, or sleeping with blankets or quilts, which create a risk of suffocation. Instead, to keep babies warm and safe, parents and caregivers are urged to dress babies in an extra layer of infant clothing or in a wearable blanket.

"As we enter the winter months with snow and freezing temperatures, parents and those caring for infants need to know how they can put their babies to sleep in a way that will keep them both safe and warm," **said ACS Commissioner David. A. Hansell.** "It's critical parents and caregivers know how to create a safe sleep environment for their infants by ensuring children sleep alone, on their backs, and in their own cribs free of blankets or other items."

Tragically, in New York City, 40 or more babies die each year (almost one baby each week) from suffocation and other preventable sleep-related injuries. A sleep-related injury death is the sudden death of an infant less than 1 year old that occurs because of where and/or how they were placed to sleep. Sleep-related infant injury death is not the same as SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) or "crib death." SIDS is the natural death of a baby that cannot be explained after a careful medical review of the case. Unlike SIDS, sleep-related infant injury deaths involve accidents that can be explained and are mostly preventable.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to learn the ABCs of safe sleep. Infants should sleep **A**lone, on their **B**acks, in a safety-approved **C**rib. Parents should also remember the following five things during the winter weather.

1. Avoid bringing the baby into bed with you, even if you think it will keep the baby warmer. A baby must never sleep in an adult bed, on a couch or on a chair with anyone. Babies may suffocate if another person accidentally rolls on top of them or covers their nose and mouth.
2. Keep soft objects, loose bedding, or any other items that could increase the risk of suffocation out of the baby's sleep area.
3. When worried about a baby getting cold, dress them in a wearable blanket, such as a sleep sack, or in another layer of infant clothing.

4. Place babies on their backs to sleep. Babies breathe better on their backs than on their stomachs or sides.
5. Put babies to bed in a flat, firm sleep surface with a fitted sheet made for that specific product. Though it might seem more comfortable to put a pillow on top of the mattress, babies may suffocate on the soft surface.

Over the years, ACS has engaged in important campaigns to help increase awareness about safe sleep practices. In 2015, the City took an important step in expanding and energizing its work to improve infant safe sleep practice among New York City residents by creating a dedicated Safe Sleep Team at ACS with outreach members. For more information on infant safe sleep best practices or resources in your community, visit: www.nyc.gov/safesleep or call 311 and ask for Safe Sleep.

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