



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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WITH ARCTIC BLAST ON THE WAY, NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES REMINDS NEW YORKERS THAT -- EVEN IN COLD WEATHER -- INFANTS SHOULD NEVER SLEEP WITH BLANKETS OR IN BEDS

To Keep Warm, Caregivers Should Put Babies to Sleep in Sleep Sacks or In an Extra Layer of Infant Clothing

NEW YORK, NY – Ahead of the arctic blast expected to hit New York City this weekend, the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is reminding parents and caregivers with infants how to keep their babies warm and safe while sleeping. There is serious danger associated with babies less than a year-old sleeping with parents, siblings or others in adult beds, or sleeping with blankets or quilts, which can create a risk of suffocation. 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, such as a sleep sack.

"With freezing temperatures set to hit New York City this weekend, ACS is helping make sure that all New Yorkers caring for infants know how to put their babies to sleep in a way that will keep them both safe and warm," **said ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser.** "Out of the best of intentions to keep our beloved little ones warm, we can unintentionally put them in danger. We're reminding parents and caregivers that infants should sleep alone, on their backs, and in their own cribs free of blankets or other items."

ACS's cold weather reminder is part of an ongoing effort to help parents prevent unintentional injuries to their children. In 2021, ACS created a brand-new office, The Office of Child Safety and Injury Prevention, which supports ongoing child safety campaigns, including those related to unsafe sleep practices, hot car tragedies, window guards, unsafe storage of prescription medications and, most recently, pediatric exposures to cannabis edibles. Every year about 40 or more babies in New York City die 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 are mostly preventable.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to learn the ABCs of safe sleep. Infants should sleep Alone, on their Backs, in a safety-approved Crib. 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 sleep on 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. ACS is working to reach families proactively with educational messages and services that can support healthy children, families and communities.

Pursuant to New York City's Housing Maintenance Code, building owners are legally required to provide heat and hot water to their tenants. New Yorkers should contact 311 to file a complaint if indoor temperatures are not compliant with the Code in cold weather. New Yorkers should contact 311 to file complaint if indoor temperatures are not in compliance with the Housing Maintenance Code.

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.