



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov

OCTOBER IS ‘NATIONAL SAFE SLEEP AWARENESS MONTH;’ NYC REMINDS CAREGIVERS THAT THE SAFEST WAY TO PUT INFANTS TO SLEEP IS: ON THEIR BACKS & IN A CRIB WITHOUT BLANKETS, PILLOWS OR TOYS

Throughout October, New York City Recognizes National Safe Sleep Awareness Month and Reminds Families To Create A Safe Sleep Environment For Their Infants

In recognition of “National Safe Sleep Awareness Month,” NYC is dedicated to helping new families support their infants. The NYC Administration for Children’s Services today announced that its dedicated “Office of Child Safety & Injury Prevention” will be hosting Safe Sleep Information and Resource Fairs throughout the month of October. At the fairs, ACS will conduct crib demonstrations that simulate a safe sleeping environment for infants and distribute information and resources to support families to adopt strategies to keep infants up to a year old safe while sleeping. Babies should always sleep alone on their backs, and in a safety-approved crib – whether sleeping through the night or taking a nap.

“Throughout the month, ACS will be hosting Safe Sleep Information and Resource Fairs to help get this life-saving message out to as many families as we can: babies should sleep alone on their backs and in a crib,” **said ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser.** “When it comes to putting babies to sleep safely, less is more: cribs should be free of pillows, blankets, and toys, which can put sleeping babies at greater risk. We also know from the experts that it is safest for babies to sleep on their backs and in a crib.”

“As a parent like many of you, my child’s safety, no matter their age, is top priority,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan.** “The Health Department joins with ACS in helping all New Yorkers have the resources they need to keep their babies safe. Most deaths related to infant sleep are preventable. Our New Family Home Visits Initiative provides safe sleep education and cribs to families who need them.”

“Safe Sleep Awareness Month is a crucial time to remind New Yorkers of the simple steps they can take to keep their children safe at home,” **said Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom.** “Thank you to the Administration for Children’s Services and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for making sure caregivers and families have the information and resources they need to keep infants safe during Safe Sleep Month, and all year long.”

The New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene conducts routine monitoring of sleep-related infant injury deaths each year in New York City. Tragically, in New York City, nearly 36 babies die each year from suffocation and other preventable sleep-related injuries. From 2016 to 2020, there were 185 sleep-related infant injury deaths. 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 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 careful medical review of the case. Unlike SIDS, sleep-related infant injury deaths are preventable.

All babies younger than 1 year are at risk of dying from a sleep-related injury. Babies who are most at risk include those born preterm and babies younger than 4 months. These babies lack the body strength to move out of dangerous situations and may have health conditions that make them more vulnerable. Most deaths related to infant sleeping are preventable. Below are some ways in which families can create a safe sleep environment for their babies:

- Avoid bringing the baby into bed with you, even if you think it will keep the baby warmer. If parents are worried about their baby getting cold, dress them in a wearable blanket, such as a sleep sack, or in another layer of infant clothing. If you have heating problems in your home and your landlord hasn't fixed them, **call 311**.
- A baby should never sleep in an adult bed, on a couch, or on a chair with anyone. Babies can suffocate if another person accidentally rolls on top of them or covers their nose and mouth or, more commonly, if their baby rolls into a sleeping adult and is unable to roll away.
- Keep soft objects, loose bedding, or any other items that could increase the risk of suffocation out of the baby's sleep area.
- Place babies on their backs to sleep. Babies breathe better on their backs than on their stomachs or sides.
- 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 are at a higher risk of suffocating on the soft surface.
- Avoid smoke exposure during pregnancy and after birth. Babies exposed to cigarette smoke during pregnancy or after birth are at greater risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related infant deaths. If you smoke, learn about resources available to help you quit.

If you are a new parent and need assistance, the New Family Home Visits Initiative offers support, services, and referrals to new and expectant parents. Through this initiative, a trained health worker — such as a nurse, doula, or community health worker — makes in-person or virtual visits to the home of a parent who is pregnant or has an infant or young child. These resources include cribs for families who need them, and other infant safety equipment.

For more information on infant safe sleep best practices or resources in your community, visit: nyc.gov/safesleep or Infant Sleep Safety - NYC Health. You can also call 311 and ask for Safe Sleep.

The full list of Safe Sleep Information Resource Fairs can be found below. Media should RSVP to mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov.

Borough:	Community Partner:	Address:	Date and Time:
Staten Island	Muslim Sisters of Staten Island	P.S. 59 – The Harbor View School 300 Richmond Terrace Staten Island, NY 10301	Saturday, 10/07/2023 12:00PM
Manhattan	NYC H+H/ Metropolitan	1901 First Avenue Lobby New York, NY 10029	Wednesday, 10/11/2023 11:00AM
Queens	The B.R.I.D.G.E Family Enrichment Center	Beach 21 Street Plaza 10-47 Beach 21 Street Far Rockway N.Y. 11691	Friday, 10/20/2023 11:00AM
	Empire Blue Cross/Blue Shield	153-17 Jamaica Ave, Jamaica, Queens, NY 11432	Wednesday, 10/25/2023 11:00AM
Brooklyn	Wycoff Heights Medical Center	374 Stockholm Street 5 th Fl Meditation Room Brooklyn N.Y.	Thursday, 10/12/2023 9:00AM
Bronx	Bronx Healthy Start Partnership	Rose Hill Park 4270, 2659 Webster Avenue Bronx NY 10458	Thursday, 10/19/2023 11:00AM

DOHMH will also be hosting in-person Family Wellness Suite Car Seat Safety Classes throughout the month. The full list of those classes can be found below.

In-Person Family Wellness Suite Car Seat Safety Classes

Borough	Address	Date and Time	Language Spoken
Brooklyn	Brownsville Neighborhood Health Action Center 259 Bristol St, Brooklyn, NY 11212	Wednesday, 10/04/2023	Haitian Creole 1:30pm-3:30pm
Harlem	East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Center 158 E 115th St, New York, NY 10029	Thursday, 10/05/2023	English & Spanish 9:30am-1pm
Bronx	Tremont Neighborhood Health Action Center 1826 Arthur Ave, Bronx, NY 10457	Wednesday, 10/18/2023	English & Spanish 1pm- 3pm
Brooklyn	Brownsville Neighborhood Health Action Center 259 Bristol St, Brooklyn, NY 11212	Wednesday, 10/18/2023	Haitian Creole 1:30pm-3:30pm
Brooklyn	Brownsville Neighborhood Health Action Center	Tuesday, 10/24/2023	English 1:30pm-3:30pm
Harlem	East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Center 158 E 115th St, New York, NY 10029	Sunday, 10/19/2023	English & Spanish 9:30am-1pm

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