



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Throughout October, ACS Will Host Webinars About How to Create A Safe Sleep Environment For Infants

New York, NY: In recognition of October as “National Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month,” the NYC Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) is reminding New Yorkers that babies should always sleep alone on their backs and in a safety-approved crib or bassinet– whether sleeping through the night or taking a nap.

“This October we’re marking Safe Sleep Awareness Month and empowering New Yorkers with free, accessible education to help keep their babies safe. Thank you to the Administration for Children’s Services for helping get this information into communities all across the city, because we know safe sleep education saves lives,” **said Suzanne Miles-Gustave, Deputy Mayor, Health and Human Services.**

“ACS is committed to making sure all families have the information and resources they need to keep their children as safe possible and that is why we are hosting webinars all month on how to create a safe sleep environment for infants,” **said Commissioner Jess Dannhauser.** “In recognition of Safe Sleep Awareness Month, we are reminding all parents and caregivers that infants should always sleep alone in a crib and on their back.”

In recognition of Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month, throughout October, the ACS Office of Child Safety and Injury Prevention (OCSIP) is hosting interactive Infant Safe Sleep Webinars for parents and caregivers of infants. The webinars will provide safe sleep education and peer-to-peer support that is respectful, non-judgmental and will help families create a safe sleeping environment for infants. After each webinar, parents will be able to recognize risk factors and eliminate hazards in their baby’s sleep environment.

The webinars will take place every Tuesday in October at 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The Spanish webinars will be held every Thursday in October at 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Families can join the Safe Sleep workshops via Zoom by visiting this website: nyc.gov/safesleep.

ACS will also participate in several information and resource fairs throughout the month to promote infant safe sleep and raise awareness among families and communities about sleep-related risks.

All babies younger than 1 year are at risk of dying from a sleep-related injury. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that about 3,000 infants died from a sudden unexpected infant death, with more than 1 in 3 dying from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in 2022 (the most recent year for which data are available). Many cases were due to accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed.

The ABCs of safe sleep are easy to remember and ensure safe sleep for infants:

A - Alone:

- Babies should sleep alone in a crib or bassinet, separate from parents, other children, or pets. Babies can suffocate if another person unintentionally rolls on top of them. Babies may also roll into a sleeping adult, another child or pet, blocking their airway.
- Avoid bringing the baby into bed with you, even if you think it will keep the baby warmer. Instead, dress them in a wearable blanket, such as a sleep sack, or in another layer of infant clothing. If you have a heating problem in your home that your landlord hasn't fixed, call 311.

B - Back:

- Infants should sleep on their backs. Side-sleeping increases the chance that infants will roll onto their stomachs—the position highest associated with sleep-related injuries. Babies breathe better on their backs than on their stomachs or sides.

C - Crib:

- Babies should sleep in a crib or bassinet with a firm, flat mattress and a tight-fitting sheet. Never share an adult bed or another sleep surface, like a sofa or chair, with an infant. It increases the risk of suffocation from soft mattresses, pillows, blankets and other items. Keep stuffed animals and soft bedding like bumpers, pillows, quilts, and comforters out of the infant's sleep space. These items put babies at a higher risk of suffocating on the soft surface.

Lastly, avoid smoking 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.

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