



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Cabinet for Health and Family Services**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**The ABCs of Safe Sleep Reduce the Risk of Sudden
Unexpected Infant Death**

*52 Weeks of Public Health Campaign Spotlight: Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
Awareness Month*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (October 19, 2017) – This October, as part of the 52 Weeks of Public Health, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) is promoting awareness about Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and the importance of safe sleep as part of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month.

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death is a term used to describe deaths occurring within the first year of life in which the cause of death is not immediately obvious. Through the Division of Maternal and Child Health, Kentucky operates the SUID Case Registry program which reviews all SUID cases, and analyzes data for the development of policy and procedural practices.

According to 2015 data, there were approximately 3,700 SUID cases in the United States, making SUID, the 3rd leading cause of infant death. SUID is the 2nd leading cause of infant death in Kentucky with approximately 83 cases occurring annually from 2011-2015.

SUID includes deaths from sudden infant death syndrome, which is too often times caused by accidental suffocation or strangulation in bed. According to Kentucky's 2016 preliminary data, 103 babies died as a result of sudden unexpected infant death. Unsafe sleep habits are the one of the most common reasons for SUID in Kentucky.

“Although medical professionals and researchers do not know the exact causes of SUID, there are several ways to reduce the risk of sleep-related infant deaths,” says Dr. Henrietta Bada, Director of the Division of Maternal and Child Health. “At the Department for Public Health, we recommend following the ABCs of safe sleep.”

Every five days, another Kentucky baby dies in their sleep. Many of these deaths can be prevented by following the [ABCs of Safe Sleep](#):

- **ALONE**- sharing a room, but not sharing a bed
- On his or her **BACK**- during naptime and the night
- In a **CRIB**- that is clean and clear of clutter; no pillows, blankets, toys, or bumper pads
- Free from **DANGER**- because exhaustion, drinking, and drug use impair your ability to care for a baby

To learn about Kentucky’s safe sleep program, contact the Division of Maternal and Child Health at (502) 564-2154 or e-mail safesleepKY@ky.gov.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.