Reducing the Risk of SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths

Erin McClain, MA, MPH
UNC Center for Maternal and Infant Health
To strengthen the adoption of infant safe sleep practices across the state that reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and that prevent infant sleep-related deaths such as accidental infant asphyxiation and suffocation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safe Sleep Advisory Committee</th>
<th>Composed of members from the following agencies:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• DHHS NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center</td>
<td>• Carolina Global Breastfeeding Inst.</td>
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<td>• DHHS Child Fatality Prevention Team</td>
<td>• Atrium Health, Injury Center</td>
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<td>• DHHS Pregnancy Care Management</td>
<td>• Safe Child NC</td>
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<td>• DHHS Children and Youth Branch</td>
<td>• Welcome Baby</td>
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<td>• DHHS Women’s Health Branch</td>
<td>• NC Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)</td>
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<td>• DHHS State Center for Health Statistics</td>
<td>• Cribs for Kids</td>
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<td>• DHHS Department of Social Services</td>
<td>• Wake County Human Services</td>
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<td>• Office of the Chief Medical Examiner</td>
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Current Focus of Safe Sleep NC

NC healthcare providers have asked for more information that fosters conversation and addresses nighttime parenting, including how to:

• Engage in honest conversations
• Reduce risk
• Reach high priority populations
## Leading Causes of Infant Death, NC 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause Category:</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prematurity/Low Birth Weight</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Defects</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Unknown Causes</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal complications</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other perinatal conditions</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory Distress</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infections</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Causes (Residual)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidental Suffocation/Strangulation in Bed</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory diseases</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulatory diseases</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIDS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, 2016 Infant Mortality Report
Sleep-Related Deaths by Sleep Environment, 2016

Unsafe Sleep: **Bed Sharing** Assoc. (91)  Unsafe Sleep: **Not Bed Sharing** Assoc. (42)  NOT Unsafe Sleep Assoc. (11)

Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner-Division of Public Health North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

SafeSleepNC.org
Bed Sharing Among North Carolina Infants, PRAMS 2016

- 53% of Infants Bed Share
- 60% of Low Birth Weight Infants Bed Share

2016 Updated Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment from the AAP

1. Place infants on their back to sleep (supine) for every sleep period until they are 1 year of age.
2. Use a firm sleep surface.
3. Breastfeed, if possible.
4. Share the Room, Not the Bed: Place infants to sleep in the same room where you sleep. Infants should sleep close to the parents’ bed but on a separate sleep surface designed for infants, ideally for the first year, but at least for the first six months.
5. No soft objects: Keep soft objects and loose bedding out of the infant’s sleep area.
6. Offer a pacifier (after breastfeeding has been firmly established) at naptime and bedtime.
7. Avoid tobacco exposure during pregnancy and after birth.
8. Avoid alcohol and illicit drug use during pregnancy and after birth.
9. Avoid overheating and head covering in infants.

http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2016/10/20/peds.2016-2938
Strategies for Engaging with Parents and Caregivers
What Influences Parents & Caregivers About Infant Sleep?
Feedback from Parents

- Trust healthcare providers most for safe sleep information;
- Yet, receive inconsistent messages about infant sleep practices, and
- Feel they cannot be honest about their infant’s sleep environment

Source: https://www1.nichd.nih.gov/cbt/sids/nursececourse/Welcome.aspx
What Healthcare Providers Say and Do Makes a Difference

It is important that providers:

✓ KNOW about safe sleep information,
✓ SHOW safe sleep practices, &
✓ TELL parents about safe sleep
Strength-Based Approach to Nighttime Parenting

- Families feel valued, not judged
- Ask for permission to share information
- Be respectful and sensitive
- The goal is to reduce the risk by sharing information, answering questions and concerns, discussing resources, problem solving, and offering support
Addressing Bed Sharing
The AAP continues to advise against bed sharing; however, there is now acknowledgement that parents do bed share both intentionally and unintentionally and that should be addressed to reduce risks.
A Harm Reduction Approach

- Aims to reduce risk in the bed sharing environment and help mothers to find ways other than bed sharing to address other night time needs

- Nonjudgmental approach that both recognizes that parents are likely to bed share and empowers them to minimize the risks involved

- Recognizes that bedsharing exists on a spectrum and acknowledges that not all bed-sharing environments share the same risk factors


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When Bed Sharing is Very Dangerous

- When the infant is younger than 4 months
- If the infant was born premature or low birth weight
- If the bed-sharer uses tobacco or if the mother used tobacco during pregnancy
- If the bed-sharer has taken illicit drugs or medicine that causes drowsiness
- If the bed-sharer has consumed any alcohol
- If the bed-sharer is not the parent
- If there are multiple bed-sharers (including other children)
- If the sleep surface is soft, such as an old mattress, waterbed, or pillow-top mattress
- If the sleep surface is a couch, sofa, or recliner
- If there is soft bedding, such as pillows or blankets, present in the bed
The following guidelines are for all parents, whether they intend to bed share or not.

Feeding a baby at night in an adult bed is safer than on a couch or recliner, both of which are extremely dangerous.

If feeding in a bed, keep all blankets, sheets, comforters, and pillows, away from the baby to prevent overheating and/or accidental suffocation.

SafeSleepNC.org
What about Baby Boxes?

• Developed in Finland post-WWII as part of an overall plan to improve infant health that included universal healthcare, paid parental leave, etc.

• Local health departments and other community agencies should consider the pros and cons before investing, including:
  • Not proven acceptable or efficacious in the US setting
  • High potential for parental user error
  • Limited usefulness – can only be used until baby is rolling over
  • Cost is comparable to pack-n-play
Resources for Providers, Clinics, & Parents/Caregivers
Healthcare Provider Safe Sleep Training

- 60 minute online training
- Free 1.5 Nursing Contact Hours approved by the North Carolina Nurses Assoc.
- Access it here: bit.ly/safesleepnc
Available North Carolina Resources

Handout (English and Spanish)

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**Does Your Baby Sleep Safe?**

Reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep related causes of death by creating a safe sleep space for your baby.

*Learn more at SafeSleepNC.org*

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**How to make a Safe Sleep Space for Baby**

- **Share your room, not the bed.**
  - Baby should not sleep in an adult bed or on a couch, or in a sleep chair, with you or with anyone else.

- **Put baby to bed on their back for every sleep.**
  - This is the safest sleep position for babies.

- **Use a firm sleep surface in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or pack n’ play.**
  - All new cribs sold after June 28, 2011 meet current safety standards.

- **Don’t let baby get too hot during sleep.**
  - Most babies should wear only one layer of clothing. Damp or wet clothing would be uncomfortable.

- **Avoid overheating baby**
  - A bare sleeping space is best. Baby’s sleeping area should not include blankets, pillows, ruffles, or soft bumpers. A tight-fitting sheet or a firm mattress is all that is needed.

- **Keep your home and car smoke and pet free.**
  - Keeping baby free of second-hand smoke and pet dander reduces the risk of death. Need help? Call the NCQuitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

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**Common Safe Sleep Questions**

**Won’t my baby choke on her back?**

No. Infants are actually less likely to choke when placed on their backs. When your baby is on their stomach, everything splashes in their lung, causing choking or breathing problems.

**How do I keep my baby warm?**

Keep your baby’s room warm enough that you can easily pick her up for feedings during the night and then return her to her crib for sleeping.

**How will I bond with my baby if he doesn’t sleep with me?**

There are lots of other times for bonding with your infant, but when your baby is sleeping it is important for them to be in their own space. Your baby will sleep better too.

**How can I know if my baby is breathing?**

If your baby doesn’t sleep with you, put your baby’s crib near your bed so that you can easily pick her up for feedings during the night and then return her to her crib for sleeping.

**What if I fall asleep with my baby?**

Ask someone to care for the baby while you get some rest. If you fall asleep, or experience exhaustion, you can resume breast feeding and try again. If you fall asleep while the baby is sleeping, they will need to be transferred to another sleeping surface.

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*Learn more at SafeSleepNC.org*
Available North Carolina Resources
Posters (English and Spanish)

SafeSleepNC.org
Order these FREE resources by going to this link:
https://whb.ncpublichealth.com/provpart/pubmanbro.htm

Click “Publications Form”

See page 3 under “Parenting & Baby”

Fax your order to 919-870-4827
Available National Resources

cpsc.gov/cribs

Recalls and Crib Standards

Videos

Posters

SafeSLEEPnc.org
Coming Soon:
Website & Safe Sleep NC Champions
NEW Safe Sleep NC Website

Parent/Caregiver Site
- English & Spanish
- Safe sleep information
- Interactive quizzes, FAQs, forms, etc. for parents/caregivers
  - Levels of risk regarding bed sharing
  - Safe sleep environment quiz

Healthcare Provider Site
- Safe sleep information
- Online training
- Social media tool kit
- Resources
Safe Sleep NC Champions

Goal: Emphasize importance of safe sleep education and to disseminate up-to-date information by partnering with local health departments and other agencies.

How to be a Safe Sleep NC Champion:
- Take the Safe Sleep NC Champion online training
- Utilize and tell others in your organization about Safe Sleep NC resources
- Promote Safe Sleep NC messages by using the E-Toolkit

SafeSleepNC.org
Safe Sleep NC Contact Information

Erin McClain, MA, MPH  
erin_mcclain@unc.edu  
919-808-0989

Megan Canady, MSW, MSPH  
megancanady@med.unc.edu  
919-843-7865
References


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016 Sudden unexpected infant death and sudden infant death syndrome


