



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KILL DATE: (September 30, 2011)

SEPTEMBER IS INFANT SAFE SLEEP MONTH IN LIVINGSTON COUNTY Learn and Follow Safe Sleep Guidelines

HOWELL, Michigan – September 15, 2011. September, 2011 will mark the fifth observance of Infant Safe Sleep Month for Michigan. Governor Rick Snyder has declared September as Infant Safe Sleep Month to help stem the growing tide of deaths caused by babies being put to sleep in an unsafe environment. Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, or SUID, is Michigan's leading cause of preventable infant death. Michigan currently ranks 37th among states for overall infant mortality and the state's infant mortality rate, 7.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, remains one of the highest in the nation.

In 2009, 63 Michigan babies, or more than one child every week, died of accidental suffocation or strangulation in bed.

- Four out of 5 deaths due to suffocation occur in an adult bed, waterbed, couch or recliner
- For nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of deaths due to suffocation, the baby was found sleeping with another adult or child
- Soft/heavy bedding was found to be a factor in 50% of the sleep related deaths
- An additional 45 deaths were classified as SIDS in 2009

For the past few years, Livingston County has also experienced a few preventable infant deaths. In an effort to alert parents, grandparents and caregivers on ways to provide a safe environment for infants, several Livingston County agencies, including Child Connect for Family Success/4C, Child Abuse Prevention Council of Livingston County (CAP), Livingston County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) and Safe Kids Huron Valley, are targeting September as Safe Sleep Month.

The American Academy of Pediatrics provides these guidelines:

- Infants should be placed to sleep on their backs.
- Use a firm sleep surface and firm mattress covered only with a fitted sheet.
- Keep soft objects and loose bedding out of the crib (no pillows, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys, bumper pads, or other soft objects).
- Do not share a bed with your baby.
- Do not smoke when you are pregnant, do not smoke or let others smoke around your baby.
- Avoid allowing your baby to become overheated.
- Encourage “Tummy Time;” it’s important to practice supervised tummy time while your baby is awake to build strong neck and shoulder muscles.
- Make sure everyone caring for your baby knows these guidelines.

For a free Safe Sleep brochure and more detailed information, please visit

<http://www.tomorrowschildmi.org/> or www.michigan.gov/safesleep. LCDPH has a lobby display to show a “Safe Sleep” environment, including handouts on crib safety, infant sleep tips, and where sleep sacks can be purchased. To view the **Tomorrow's Child's Safe Sleep Video**, go to the Updates section at www.lchd.org.

For information on Helping Baby Back to Sleep and Tummy to Play, go to

www.HealthyChildren.org.

CONTACT:

Jennifer Lavelle

Livingston County Department of Public Health

(517) 546-9850

jlavelle@co.livingston.mi.us

www.lchd.org