



Sweet Dreams Team Playbook

Tips and evidence-based advice to educate families on safe sleep - saving babies one conversation at a time.



How to Use This Toolkit

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Read the Intro

What this toolkit is and
who it's for.

Hello Community Partner!

Sleep-related deaths cause too many babies to die in our community, and we can avoid them if we remember our ABCs.

Babies must sleep Alone, on their Backs, and in an empty Crib. There should be no toys, bumpers, blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals - nothing but a fitted sheet to cover the mattress.

You should always share the room with your baby, **but never the bed.**

You are uniquely positioned to break down barriers, spreading the message far-and-wide, making the ABCs of Safe Sleep the norm in Columbus.

The goal is to ensure that more babies reach their first birthday. This integrated, place-based approach targets neighborhoods with the highest infant mortality rates.

This toolkit helps you as you speak to mothers and families with infant babies, as you reach out to community partners to help them find new ways to talk with and connect to their constituents and provides useful tips and evidence-based guidance on how to make communications and outreach efforts as effective as possible.

Let's get started!



The Little Sister -
Helps keep toys out
of the crib.

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Know the ABCs of Safe Sleep - Why it Matters

Why Safe Sleep?

The Mother - Captain of the Sweet Dreams Team.

Every year, about 22 babies die in our community due to unsafe sleep practices – that’s the size of a kindergarten class. In fact, sleep-related infant deaths are a major reason for Franklin County’s high infant mortality rate, and they are the leading cause of death for babies who are one month to one year of age.

And Black babies are dying at nearly **2** times the rate of Caucasian babies.



A - ALONE

Two out of three babies who died while sleeping were sharing an adult bed, couch or chair. Babies should always sleep alone and in an empty crib. **Share the room, not the bed.**



B - BACK

Babies should always sleep on their backs because they are less likely to choke than babies who sleep on their stomachs. This also allows baby to breathe easier.



C - CRIB

An empty crib, with a firm mattress and fitted sheet is safest. Bumper pads, pillows, stuffed animals, toys, or blankets, should **NEVER** be in the crib as they may cause the baby to suffocate or strangle themselves.

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3 Families lose a baby every week in Franklin County.

150

150 Infants a year die in Franklin County.

2x1

African American babies are dying at twice the rate of white babies.

Smoking is widely known to be a leading cause of preventable death of infants. Women who smoke during their pregnancy are more likely than those who don’t to have a baby born too small, too soon or to lose a baby to a sleep-related death. Once a baby is born, exposure to secondhand smoke increases the baby’s chances of a sleep-related death.

3

Talk the Talk

What the experts say.

Sleep-related infant deaths are those that happen suddenly and unexpectedly in a sleep environment due to a variety of causes, including accidental suffocation, positional asphyxia, overlay, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and undetermined causes. There is consistent scientific evidence that placing babies in a safe sleep environment – ALONE, on their BACKS, and in an empty CRIB – is important to reduce the risk of sleep-related infant deaths.



Why Alone?

Mothers, family members and caregivers should never share the bed with a baby because you can roll too close or onto the baby while sleeping. The baby can also get stuck between the mattress and the wall, headboard, footboard or other furniture; or the baby could fall off the bed and get hurt or fall onto something on the floor and suffocate.

The Uncle -
Frequently checks in on the family. Even if its from afar.

Why Back?

Babies sleep best on their backs because during the night they can wake up to take deep breaths. If babies are on their tummies, they might not be able to move their heads in order to take that breath. While lying on the tummy, a baby's nose or mouth may be blocked and the baby could suffocate. Also, the air the babies wake up to breathe in could be the air they just breathed out, which is carbon dioxide or "bad air," and this could suffocate the baby.

Placing babies on their backs prevents choking. Healthy babies naturally swallow or cough out their spit up, if they are on their backs.

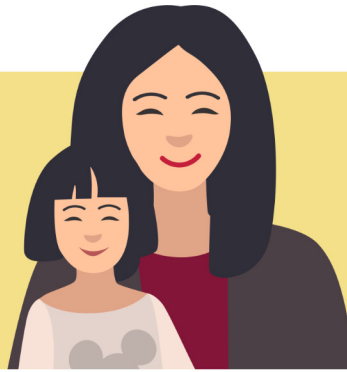
Why an Empty Crib?

Many parents think their baby will get hurt if they don't use bumper pads, but this is not true. Babies do not have the strength to hurt themselves. Babies are safe and warm without the bumper pads, pillows, blankets and stuffed animals.

4 Breaking Down Barriers

Understanding how to help.

This section provides examples of how to apply safe sleep practices identified earlier in the toolkit, to address common barriers to ensure a safe sleeping environment.



Why should I share the room and not the bed?

This person may worry about her baby and wants to keep the baby close. Baby monitors or keeping the crib close during sleeping hours can help ease stress and keep her baby safe.



Why does the baby need to sleep on its back?

This person may be concerned the baby is uncomfortable or they simply have previously been shown incorrectly how to put baby down.



Why does the baby need to be in the crib?

This person may be a family member who also cares for the baby and wants to keep them close during the day.



Why shouldn't I have stuffed animals in the crib?

This person may want to comfort the baby with toys and stuffed animals but they do not understand the risk.

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Make a Game Plan - It's Time for Action

Encourage families to build a Sweet Dreams Team, share stories & knowledge.

What is the Sweet Dreams Team?

The SweetDreamsTeam is a team of people that is all about supporting you, your family and your new baby, helping to ensure the baby celebrates its first birthday. This could be any trusted member of your circle that you can count on to help you when you need support.

Who should be on a Sweet Dreams Team?

Get your Sweet Dreams Team to help you - do not be shy about asking for help. Your team could include:



Mother



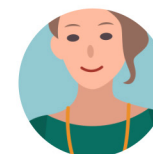
Father



Grandmother



Grandfather



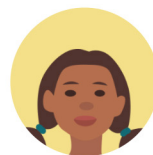
Aunt



Uncle



In-Laws



Sibling



Cousin



Babysitter



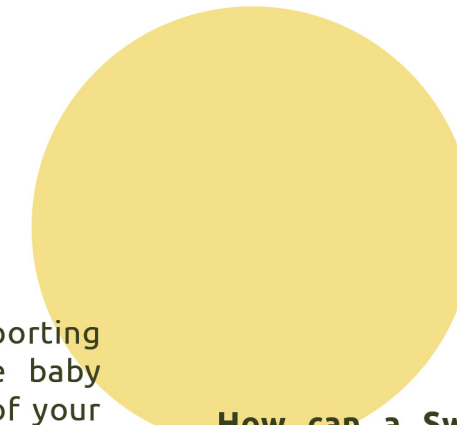
Trusted Family



Trusted Friend

Why should mom/families have a Sweet Dreams Team?

Mom is superwoman but she can't do it all on her own. Having a team of knowledgeable and reliable people who are close to the family, and who you know understand and are committed to practicing the ABCs of safe sleep can help alleviate stress which can help to avoid preventable accidents or death.



How can a Sweet Dreams Team help?

A Sweet Dreams Team can help pick up the pieces to help mom and the family to continue to care for the baby. Need someone to watch baby for a few hours to catch up on rest? Call on your Sweet Dreams Team. Listed below are additional ways that a Sweet Dreams Team can help. A few ideas include:

- Pick up groceries
- Watch baby
- Feed baby
- Change baby's diaper
- Pick up other children from school
- Clean the house
- Do the laundry
- Prepare meals and/or lunch for the other school children
- Run errands

6

Call the Play

Your message platform.

A

B

C

Now that we have covered safe sleep practices, potential barriers and how to build a Sweet Dreams Team, **you're ready to help save the lives of babies - one conversation at a time.** Use this checklist as you are speaking with families to make sure it is as effective as possible.

Know Your Audience

- Who am I speaking to?
- What could be a potential barrier?

Make Your Message Relatable

- Where can I add a personal touch?
- Who does my audience identify with or admire?

Make it Actionable

- Is all of the information in my message clear?
- Am I using simple language?
- Have I communicated the ABCs of Safe Sleep?
- What kind of planning does my audience need to do to create a safe sleep environment?



The Father -
Actively supportive and
equally engaged in ensuring
safe sleep practices.

Outreach Materials

1. Safe sleep checklist
 2. Tips on making sweet dreams happen
 3. Sweet Dreams for mommy tip sheet
 4. Existing materials on celebrateone.info
-





Safe Sleep Checklist

Understanding
how to help.

The Babysitter -
Follows the correct
Safe Sleep procedures
every time

No toys or stuffed animals in the crib

No bumper pads in the crib

No pillows in the crib

Baby is in the same room, but not the same bed

Firm mattress

There's only a fitted sheet in the crib

No blankets in the crib

Baby is in his or her own crib
(not the couch, an adult bed or a chair, or other unsafe sleeping device)

Baby is on his or her back

Making Sweet Dreams Happen

Tip sheet.

Practice the ABCs of safe sleep – every nap, every night, every time.

Make sure your baby sleeps safely. Remember the ABC's of safe sleep. A baby should sleep ALONE, on the BACK and in an empty CRIB. And remember, share the room, never the bed. For more information on safe sleep, visit celebrateone.info.

Sleep when your baby sleeps.

If your baby takes a nap, try to take a nap when the baby is taking a nap. The chores and other things can wait, or better yet, ask members of your support team to help with some of your chores and errands. This is a great way to get them involved with the newborn and helps them find ways to support you during the first months of you bringing your new baby home.

Talk about your sleep needs.

Talk about your ability to handle the lack of sleep with your partner when the new baby comes. Do it early, before you bring baby home. Think about your team of helpers, your “Sweet Dreams Team” – those who can assist you and your partner to help with getting rest. Remember, your support team of “Sweet Dreams Team” help must know and always practice the ABCs of safe sleep.

Eat well.

Eat nutritious meals. Healthy eating habits will give you more energy, improve your mood and help you focus better.

Just say “no” to added responsibility.

Remember to manage your time and try not to take on any additional responsibility when you have a new baby at home. Get your Sweet Dreams Team - the people you count on the help you with the baby - the baby's dad, your mom, grandma, granddad, your sister, brother, aunts, uncles, cousins, best friend or other trusted family members or friends - to help you. And be sure they all know and practice the ABCs of safe sleep. Also ask for when appropriate from your older children. If your other children are old enough to support you at times, let them. If you have younger children not yet capable of helping – ask your support team to spend time with the older children, offering you more time with the newborn. Having your Sweet Dreams Team help with things such as errands, tasks, chores and babysitting can help.



Making Sweet Dreams Happen

Tip sheet.

Say yes to help.

When your support team offers help – accept it. Whether it's taking the older children out for fun, cooking meals for you, doing laundry, cleaning the house, watching the new baby while you take a nap, go out for errands or have date night with your partner, etc. – ACCEPT THE OFFER.

Remember, your “Sweet Dreams Team” – your child's grandparents, your in-laws, aunts, uncles, trusted family friends, trusted babysitter – those people you can count on to help you with the baby. Make sure they all know and always practice the ABCs of safe sleep. If you are not sure they understand, sign them up to be a Safe Sleep Ambassador with Columbus Public Health.

Don't nap holding baby.

Babies should never sleep with an adult or child on a couch, chair, air mattress or bed.

Don't worry that you won't hear your baby cry.

If you are concerned that you won't hear your baby or if the nursery is far away from your bedroom, buy a monitor and keep it near you. Remember that your baby is safe when you practice the ABCs of safe sleep and share the room but not the bed. If the baby cries for a few minutes before you hear him, it will be OK. Also, you want your baby to learn to go back to sleep by himself or herself and letting the baby cry a bit, is okay.

Call in help.

Ask your partner (or a member of your “Sweet Dreams Team” – your husband, mom, mom-in-law, aunt, uncle or others) to alternate baby duties with you so that you can make up for missed sleep with short naps during the day. Even 15 minutes of sleep can be beneficial to body and mind.

Outsource Tasks.

If your baby takes a bottle, ask your partner to take on some of the feedings. If you are breastfeeding, you may consider pumping and giving someone else a turn to feed. Try to divide up all your household responsibilities as best you can. Learn to delegate tasks to others to avoid burn-outs. Whether it's running errands or attending an older child's activities, ask a member of your Sweet Dreams Team - your husband, mom, dad, mother-in-law, father-in-law, aunt, uncle or others to help.

Share the room with a baby, not the bed.

Always place a baby in an empty crib, bassinet or Pack 'n Play with a firm mattress and fitted sheet.

If you need a crib, Columbus Public Health can help. Call 311 (614-645-3111) for more information.

Sweet Dreams for Mommy

Tip sheet.



Other tips for moms

Prepare your baby for bed. Change your baby's diaper before the nighttime feed to minimize arousing them. And unless your baby has pooped or soaked through this or her diaper, you probably don't want to change your baby at all in the middle of the night, to keep him or her in that sleepy state — especially if your baby is only waking to eat.

Share Nighttime Feeding Responsibility

Nighttime feedings are part and parcel of being a new parent but you don't have to go it alone. Taking turns with feeding will give you more time for uninterrupted rest. Whether you're breastfeeding or feeding on a bottle, do get help from people close to you so that you aren't the only one waking up at night.

Learn to Say 'No' to Guests

It's natural for well-wishers to drop in and see the new addition to your household. However, it's important to pick and choose who to welcome so that you aren't bogged down by hostess demands. Some visitors are considerate and offer to lend a hand while others demand that you give them the same attention you did before you had your baby. Say 'yes' to those who come with a helping hand and learn to say 'no' to those who may not be as helpful during this time.

Sweet Dreams for Mommy

Tip sheet.



Sleep Early

Since infants sleep for short stretches at a time, new moms can expect to wake up 2-3 times a night. As you'll be waking up often, getting to bed early lets you stay off your feet and enjoy some extra sleep. Even if you can't fall asleep early, you can use the time for yourself and relax.

Have a Bedtime Routine

A bedtime routine is anything that prepares you for sleep. Turning off gadgets, taking a bath/shower to de-stress, and listening to calming music are a few examples. Do whatever it is that calms you. Try to stick to your bedtime routine each night so that when it's time for bed, you can fall asleep more easily.

Keep your eye on the prize

One day -- maybe tomorrow, your infant will sleep through the night. And so will you. Some babies sleep through the night earlier than others. If your baby is crying all night, talk to your pediatrician as there may be a medical reason that can be treated.

*All information taken from the following resources:
Nationwide Children's Hospital - Family Resources and Education Website*

*Parent Magazine - "SIDS Prevention Strategies Every Parent Should Know" - By
Jan Sheehan And Nicole Harris*

*University of Chicago - Pediatrics Clerkship - University of Chicago Sudden Infant
Death SIDS Website*

Web MD - "10 Tips to Improve Sleep for New Moms" - By Denise Mann

CelebrateOne.info Website

#SweetDreamsTeam

