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October is Safe Sleep and SIDS Awareness Month
*Department of Health launches media campaign
encouraging safe sleep practices for infants*

HONOLULU – October is Safe Sleep and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month, and the Hawaiʻi State Department of Health (DOH) just launched a media campaign to educate parents and caregivers on how to keep infants safe while sleeping. SIDS is the sudden, unexplained death of a baby younger than one year old, which usually occurs during sleep.

"Every year in Hawaiʻi, an average of 14 babies die due to unsafe sleep practices," said Sage Goto, head of Safe Sleep Hawaii, an advocacy group led by DOH that consists of public and private agencies. "Many parents and caregivers just aren't aware of what a safe sleep environment looks like, and the hope is to increase awareness with clear and practical steps provided by the media campaign."

The public awareness campaign includes a TV and digital spot promoting the safe sleep ABCs, which are evidence-based recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics to help reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths.

Parents and caregivers can create a safe sleeping environment for infants by following the ABCs:

- **Alone** – Keep the crib or playpen empty (no toys, bumpers, pillows, or blankets).
- **on their Backs** – Always place infants on their backs and on a firm surface to sleep.
- **in a Crib** – Move infants that have fallen asleep in swings, strollers, or car seats into a crib or playpen.

For more information on the best safe sleep practices for infants, including virtual workshops and an informational poster that can be downloaded in 12 languages, visit theparentline.org/safesleep. The Parent Line is a free, confidential warmline that parents and caregivers can call to problem-solve parenting challenges and child and adolescent behavior: (808) 526-1222 or 1 (800) 816-1222 (toll-free).

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