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October is Infant Safe Sleep Month

Department of Health launches Safe Sleep Hawai'i webpage

HONOLULU – Governor Josh Green, M.D., has issued a proclamation declaring October Infant Safe Sleep Month, in conjunction with the national observance of Safe Sleep and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month, to remind parents and caregivers that sleep-related deaths are often preventable. In recognition, the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) recently launched the [Safe Sleep Hawai'i webpage](#) with information, resources, and referrals to help parents and caregivers create a safe sleeping environment for their babies.

“Each year, there are about 3,400 sleep-related deaths among babies in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),” said Annie Bell, supervisor in DOH’s Maternal and Child Health Branch. “To help increase awareness of safe-sleep messaging, DOH has created a new Safe Sleep Hawai'i webpage and is running a year-long media campaign highlighting the ABCs of safe sleep: Alone, on their Backs, and in a Crib.”

The ABCs of safe sleep are based on the following [recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#) to help parents and caregivers reduce the risk of sleep-related infant deaths:

1. Always place your baby on its back for naptime, bedtime, and any sleep-time.
2. Never put any soft objects such as pillows, blankets, toys, or crib bumpers where your baby is sleeping.

3. Infants should sleep in your room and close to your bed, but on a separate surface designed for infants, ideally for at least the first six months.
4. Use a firm, flat, non-inclined sleep surface to reduce the risk of suffocation or wedging/entrapment.
5. Breastfeed and/or feed human milk to both full-term and preterm infants for at least the first six months if possible.
6. Offer your baby a pacifier at naptime and bedtime to reduce the risk of SIDS.
7. Never smoke or use substances around your baby or let anyone smoke or use substances around your baby. Smoking and using substances such as alcohol, marijuana, opioids, or other illicit drugs should be avoided during pregnancy and after birth.

The Safe Sleep Hawai'i webpage includes referral links to community organizations partnering with DOH on this initiative. [The Parent Line](#) offers resources and information related to parenting, including free online safe-sleep workshops. The [Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawai'i](#) provides social services and clinical support for birthing families in Hawai'i, which includes the Hawai'i Cribs for Kids program that provides safe sleep education, support, and cribs for income-eligible families.

To learn more about safe sleep and download a Safe Sleep Guide for Parents available in 12 languages, visit health.hawaii.gov/safesleep.

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