

October is SIDS Awareness Month

With approximately 3,600 sleep-related deaths among U.S. babies each year, National SIDS Awareness Month - October-is celebrated to advance advocacy, protection and promotion of evidence-based safe-sleep practices to ensure that all babies are sleeping safely. More than one-third of sudden unexpected infant deaths that occur in the United States each year are from SIDS.¹

SIDS means **Sudden Infant Death**.

Unfortunately, too many babies in this country are lost to sleep-related deaths that might be prevented which includes sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), accidental suffocation, and deaths from unknown causes.

Sleep-related infant deaths are still a major problem in Alabama. In 2020, 404 babies tragically died before their first birthday. Of those deaths, 61 were officially ruled sleep-related with the cause of death listed as either “sudden infant death syndrome” (SIDS) or “accidental suffocation or strangulation in bed.” An additional 41 deaths were listed as “undetermined,” although many of those deaths occurred while the baby was sleeping.

Some of these deaths are preventable. Research also shows that unsafe sleep areas, such as those that include non-fitted sheets, blankets, or stuffed toys, remain a leading cause of infant death.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends all babies should sleep **alone** on their **backs**, without any toys or soft bedding, and in their own **crib**. Parents are encouraged to share a room with the baby, but not the same bed. These strategies will help reduce the risk and protect our babies from harm.”

Always remember the **ABC**'s of Sleep – **A**lone, on his/her **B**ack, and in a **C**rib.

