

# Why is Safe Sleep important?

Because even one death is too many.

## Safe Sleep

Safe Sleep focuses on actions you and others can take to help your baby sleep safely and to reduce your baby's risk of dying while sleeping, which is called Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SUIDS).

The term "SUIDS" may sound scary, and the death of a baby is always heartbreaking. But there are a number of ways you can lower his or her risk while giving your baby the best care possible.

Learning about SUIDS and safe sleep for babies is important for all caregivers, not just for parents. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, babysitters, childcare providers and anyone else who might care for a baby also need to know about safe sleep.

The mission of the South Carolina Birth Outcomes Initiatives (SCBOI) Safe Sleep Initiative is to eliminate sleep-related infant deaths by providing prevention education and consistent messaging and support to healthcare providers, parents, caregivers and the community.

Simple, consistent actions can make a big difference in keeping your baby safe.

# Can this really happen to me or someone I know?

## The truth is in the numbers.

- South Carolina's State Child Fatality Committee found 80 cases of infant deaths reviewed in 2017 were due to unsafe sleep.
- In these deaths, 65% of the babies who died were sleeping in an adult bed, couch or chair.
- For a South Carolina infant, a sleep-related death is 18 times more likely to occur than a motor vehicle-related death.
- According to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), SUIDs is the third leading cause of infant death in South Carolina.
- Putting a baby to sleep in the parents' room, but on a separate surface, reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome by up to 50%.

## Contact Information

For more information on the South Carolina Birth Outcomes Initiative, email [scboi@scdhhs.gov](mailto:scboi@scdhhs.gov) or visit [scdhhs.gov/boi](http://scdhhs.gov/boi).

## South Carolina Birth Outcomes Initiative

[www.scdhhs.gov/boi](http://www.scdhhs.gov/boi)

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# Safe Sleep, Every Sleep



Six infants die each month  
in South Carolina from  
unsafe sleep.

**Safe Sleep Initiative**  
South Carolina Birth Outcomes Initiative

# Know and Share the ABCs of Safe Sleep

Babies are at risk of sleep-related deaths until they are a year old, and most deaths occur when babies are between 1 month and 4 months of age. However if you follow these safety tips based on the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations, you can help prevent infant deaths due to unsafe sleep practices. Even one is just too many.



## Alone

Babies should sleep alone in their own safe sleep space such as a crib, bassinet or playard with a firm, flat mattress. Sleeping alone means no other people, pets or objects are in the same sleep area.

This means all toys, soft objects, bumper pads, blankets and pillows need to be removed from a baby's crib. These items are choking and suffocation hazards. Also, never lay a baby down on adult beds, chairs, sofas, waterbeds, air mattresses, pillows or cushions.

## Back

Always put your baby to sleep on his back, both for naps and at night. Placing babies on their backs to sleep is one of the most important ways to prevent sudden unexpected infant death (SUID). Often a baby is put to sleep safely at first, but then is moved to an unsafe sleep position after awakening in the night.

## Crib

A crib, bassinet or playard is safer than having a baby sleep next to you in bed. But what's just as important is making sure the crib or bassinet is safety approved by the Consumer Products Safety Commission and that the crib is bare.

## Additional Safety Tips

Here are some safety tips to remember.

- **Do not use cribs made before 2011.** Older cribs may not meet current safety standards.
- **Do not use altered cribs.** Cribs that are broken or modified, or that have gaps larger than two fingers between the sides of the crib and the mattress can be dangerous.
- **Use a firm mattress.** Make sure the sleep surface, such as a mattress, of the crib or bassinet is firm.
- **Share a room, not a bed.** A crib or bassinet near your bed can make it easy to reach your baby so you can easily breastfeed and bond with the baby. This is safer than risking falling asleep with a baby in bed with you.
- **Keep sleeping space away from cords.** Do not place a crib or bassinet near a window with blinds, curtain cords or baby monitor cords, as babies can strangle on these items.
- **Set a timer.** When feeding your baby, set an alarm or timer on your phone to ensure you stay awake.
- **No objects in sleeping space.** Remove all bumper pads, blankets, toys, pillows and other objects from the baby's crib or bassinet.

