

Capital Area Healthy Start Promotes the Birth of Safe Sleep for Infants Initiative

TALLAHASSEE, FL – On Monday, July 1st, Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition (CAHSC) will join the Florida SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) Alliance’s efforts to launch safe sleep practices in Leon and Wakulla Counties.

According to the Florida SIDS Alliance, SIDS is defined as the death of an infant that remains unexplained after a complete autopsy, death scene investigation, and review of medical history. It is the number one cause of death for infants between the ages of one month and one year. Affecting over 2,500 families each year, it is sometimes known as “crib death.” SIDS kills over 100 babies in Florida every year. Safe sleep for a baby can reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death.

The Birth of Safe Sleep for Infants is a statewide initiative in response to the educational components related to Senate Bill 56 and House Bill 83. As of July 1, 2013, this will be identified as Florida Statute 383.311. The bill was signed by the Governor on May 30, 2013 and may be found at http://laws.flrules.org/files/Ch_2013_062.pdf.

“We know that there are infants dying in unsafe sleep environments,” explains Kristy Goldwire, Executive Director of CAHSC. “These deaths are 100% preventable. The Coalition is working to educate parents about safe sleep and to warn them about the dangers of suffocation or entrapment of an infant while sleeping in an adult bed, on a couch, in a crib filled with blankets and pillows, or in a defective product.”

With a goal to educate and inform the community about the dangers of co-sleeping and to promote safe sleep, CAHSC is conducting outreach to educate community members about safe sleep practices and Healthy Start services. The Early Learning Coalition, North Florida Women’s Care, LeRoy Collins Public Library, Leon County Health Department, and Wakulla County Health Department are promoting safe sleep by distributing informational brochures, resources, and pacifiers. The community will have the opportunity to visit these locations and win a drawing for a HALO SleepSack. The community is encouraged to visit these locations between 9 a.m. and noon.

Guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and National Institute of Child Health and Human Development include but not limited to: always placing your baby on his or her back to sleep, both for naps and at night; using a firm sleep surface; room-sharing without bed-sharing; bumper pads should not be used in cribs; consider offering a clean, dry pacifier at nap time and bedtime; and supervised, awake tummy time is recommended to facilitate development and to minimize development of flat head. For additional information, visit www.nichd.nih.gov/SIDS and www.sidsfla.org.

Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition (CAHSC) is a 501c3, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health of infants and their families, and created to decrease the high rates of infant deaths in Florida.