

Keep Infants Sleeping Safely!

Historical data suggest that approximately 24 babies born in Ingham County this year will die before they reach their first birthday. We estimate that at least 20% of these deaths will occur because babies were put to sleep in an unsafe environment. These deaths can be prevented!

The message is simple: **Keep Infants Sleeping Safely (KISS)** promotes seven safe sleep steps:

1. Babies should sleep alone in a crib, portable crib, or bassinet.
2. Babies should sleep on a firm mattress with a tightly fitted sheet.
3. No pillows, stuffed animals, blankets, comforters, or other soft objects should be in the sleep area.
4. Babies should be put to sleep on their backs even when they can roll over.
5. Babies' faces should be uncovered during sleep for easy breathing.
6. There should not be any smoking around babies.
7. Babies should not be overheated – they should wear as much or as little clothing as adults are comfortable in. Use a sleeveless sleeper (“sleep sack”) instead of a blanket.

We know a lot more about safe sleep now than we did a generation ago. And what we have learned saves lives. In 1994 the “Back to Sleep” campaign, which encouraged parents, grandparents, and caregivers to place infants on their back for sleep, was launched; it is credited with reducing the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) by 50%. As a community, we have made great strides toward giving our infants a healthy start. But there is more work to be done.

KISS takes the next step. Infant deaths from unsafe sleep can occur when the infant's breathing is obstructed by pillows, soft bedding or toys, or even the arm or leg of an adult who is sharing the sleep space. KISS reminds us to place infants to sleep by themselves on a firm mattress without blankets, pillows, or soft decorations. That doesn't mean the crib or sleep space needs to feel lonely. You can use your comforter as a wall hanging, put pillows on a rocking chair, hang the bumper pad around the top of the crib or use as a window treatment, and put stuffed animals around the room. Your baby will be comforted by their surroundings, and they will also be safer.

---Furnished by: The Capital Area Infant Safe Sleep Coalition & Ingham County Great Start