

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

January 20, 2016

M E M O R A N D U M

What's Inside:Safe Sleeping
Environments for
Young Children

TO: REGIONAL DIRECTORS, FIELD SUPPORT MANAGERS,
CIRCUIT MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

FROM: TIM DECKER, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: SAFE SLEEPING ENVIRONMENTS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform staff of safe sleeping guidelines in response to a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) request and critical event recommendations. The goal of this memo is to assist staff in understanding their role and responsibility in providing preventive education about safe sleep practices to families and individuals caring for children under the age of two.

Did You Know?

Despite research and statistics about the importance of safe sleep, the number of babies who die in adult beds and other unsafe sleep environments is on the rise. According to the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Missouri has experienced a 46% increase over the last two years in the number of infant deaths due to unsafe sleeping practices.

During the reporting year of 2013, the State Technical Assistance Team identified early childhood suffocations as the leading cause of unintentional injuries. Critical incident reviews have identified approximately 90 sleep related fatalities occur each year in Missouri. These fatalities are often preventable with proper understanding and education.

Some of the common concerns identified as unsafe sleeping environments consist of:

- Co-sleeping with a parent or sibling
- Sleeping on soft surfaces
- Utilizing soft items, blankets and bumper pads in cribs
- Placing an infant on their stomach to sleep
- Cribs that have a drop down side
- Allowing an infant to sleep in a car seat, baby seat, or swing

Safe Sleep is as Simple as ABC

Infants should sleep **Alone**, on their **Backs**, and in a **Crib**. Prevention and education are key factors in providing safe sleeping environments for children under the age of two.

In October 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued new guidelines on reducing the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related deaths. The following is a summary of their recommendations:

- Always place your baby on his or her back for every sleep time.
- Always use a firm sleep surface. Car seats and other sitting devices are not recommended for routine sleep.
- The baby should sleep in the same room as the parents, but not in the same bed.
- Keep soft objects or loose bedding out of the crib, to include pillows, blankets and bumper pads.
- Pregnant women should receive regular prenatal care.
- Avoid tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use during pregnancy and after birth.
- Breastfeeding is recommended.
- Consider offering a pacifier at naptime and bedtime.
- Avoid overheating.
- Do not use home cardio-respiratory monitors as a strategy for reducing the risk of SIDS.

How to Spread the Word About Safe Sleep

Through family engagement and social connectedness Children's Division staff can provide education and empower caregivers as well as community partners about safe sleep recommendations.

Staff should provide education, resources, and discuss safe sleep practices with all families and individuals caring for children, two years old or younger. Information should also be provided to families who are expecting a new baby in the home.

Collaboration

Children's Division plans to collaborate and partner with The Children's Trust Fund to support community education regarding safe sleep practices. Staff can access additional information as well free printable materials including rack cards and posters about safe sleep practices at [Electronic Materials — Children's Trust Fund of Missouri](#).

NECESSARY ACTION

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division staff.
2. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:

PDS CONTACT Crystal Wilson 573-522-9306 Crystal.L.Wilson@dss.mo.gov	PROGRAM MANAGER Christy Collins 573-751-9603 Christy.Collins@dss.mo.gov
CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS N/A	
FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS N/A	
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES Information regarding hazards associated with infant seats and carries: http://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476(15)00345-5/fulltext National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep: http://nappss.org/ Interactive tool identifying a safe sleeping environment	
RELATED STATUTE N/A	
ADMINISTRATIVE RULE N/A	
COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS N/A	
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR) N/A	
<u>PROTECTIVE FACTORS</u> Parental Resilience Social Connections Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development Concrete Support in Times of Need Social and Emotional Competence of Children	
FACES REQUIREMENTS N/A	