



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Parents: Put Babies “Back to Sleep”
September is Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month**

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – About 150 babies die in Michigan each year due to unsafe sleeping environments, according to the Michigan Department of Human Services. Taking a few minutes as a parent, grandparent, caregiver or babysitter to learn safe sleep practices can make a difference. Governor Rick Snyder recently declared September is Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month.

The Kent County Health Department recently received a mini-grant from the Michigan Department of Community Health, which is being used to teach fathers about safe sleep environments. “Reducing sleep-related infant deaths has long been a priority at the Kent County Health Department,” said Adam London, Administrative Health Officer. “Mothers receive information about safe sleep before bringing their babies home, but oftentimes, fathers do not. This grant allows us to make sure fathers also receive this vital information.”

The Health Department, Healthy Kent 2020 and Strong Beginnings will be holding an educational dinner and event on September 26 in Grand Rapids (see attached flyer). Some of the information that will be shared with fathers includes:

- Always place your baby on his or her back during sleep time.
- Bumper pads should not be used in cribs. There is no evidence that bumper pads prevent injuries, and there is a potential risk of suffocation, strangulation or entrapment.
- 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 (**room-sharing without bed-sharing**).
- Keep soft objects or loose bedding out of the crib, such as pillows, blankets, and bumper pads.
- Wedges and positioners should not be used.
- Pregnant woman should receive regular prenatal care.
- Don't smoke during pregnancy or after birth.
- Offer a pacifier at nap time and bedtime.
- Avoid covering the infant's head or overheating.

Safe Sleep Trainings are available to anyone who is interested. The one hour trainings are provided free of charge by the Safe Sleep Coalition. Also available are Infant Safe Sleep brochures, posters and DVDs in both English and Spanish. Group trainings are also available. Anyone interested should contact Barb Hawkins-Palmer at Barb.Hawkins-Palmer@kentcountymi.gov. More information on safe sleep is available at www.michigan.gov/safesleep.

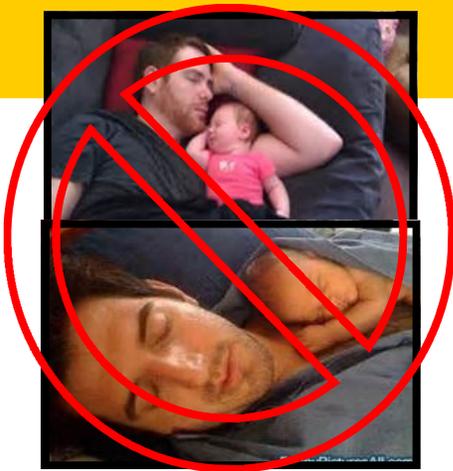
KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

DADS COUNT! FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE



SUPER

**Dads
Against
Dangerous
Sleep**



Do you have a baby under 12 months?

Are you a father expecting a baby soon?

Do you know how to safely put babies to sleep?

FACT: In 2012 there were 150 babies in Michigan who died due to unsafe sleep. These deaths are 100% preventable!

www.tomorrowschild.org

Join us for

SUPER



DADS

Keeping babies

safe during sleep

Who: Men Only (sorry no children)

What: Hot meal, prizes, education and fun!

When: Thursday, September 26, 2013
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Where: United Methodist Community House
904 Sheldon SE, Grand Rapids MI

Registration is Required.

Please call
Latesha Lipscomb at (616) 331-5954

Transportation Provided.

Proud Sponsors



Strong Beginnings

A federally funded Healthy Start Program