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HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
NEWS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Make Sure it's a Happy, Healthy Holiday  
Season for Little Ones**

**GRAND RAPIDS** - Here we are, right in the middle of another festive, sometimes hectic, holiday season. Family gatherings and out-of-town guests are quite common this time of year. For those who will be hosting children, or if you are visiting someone with children, the staff of the Kent County Health Department have a few reminders on how to make sure it's a safe and happy holiday season for infants and children.

**ABC's of Infant Safe Sleep:** Be sure if a family member is watching an infant, that they know babies should be **A**lone, on their **B**acks, in an empty **C**rib. You can have them share a room, but not a bed. These practices can help prevent injury – even death – in infants. More information about infant safe sleep is available at [www.michigan.gov/safesleep](http://www.michigan.gov/safesleep).

**Stow away certain items:** Whether you are the host or the guest, make sure you keep medications, needles, or other items that can be harmful to toddlers or small children out of their reach. If you have expired or unwanted medicines that require disposal, check out [www.wmtakebackmeds.com](http://www.wmtakebackmeds.com).

**Immunize:** Infants and the elderly are far more susceptible to viruses than healthy adults. If you are going to be around newborns, talk with your health care provider about getting a TDaP vaccine to protect babies from pertussis (whooping cough). And the CDC advises all adults to get vaccinated against the flu, which can have serious complications in the very young, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems. It can take up to two weeks for a flu immunization to become effective, so the sooner you get it, the better-prepared you will be if exposed to flu. Learn more about flu prevention or schedule your vaccination at [www.sticktototheflu.com](http://www.sticktototheflu.com).

**Décor Dangers:** Make sure toddlers and small children are supervised when around garland, lights or other decorations. Some of these items can present a choking hazard or can cause injury if they fall on a child. (This advice is also helpful if you have small pets.)

While the holidays are bound to be stressful at times, try to take time, relax, and enjoy the season. The many nurses, sanitarians and staff of the Kent County Health Department hope these tips will help everyone have a safe, healthy holiday season!

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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](http://www.accesskent.com/health).