



**Ambassador  
Campaign #1:  
*Safe Sleep***

 **B'more for  
Healthy Babies™**  
*Every baby counts on you*

# What is B'more for Healthy Babies?

- A bold new initiative in Baltimore designed to decrease our high infant mortality rate
- Sponsored by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Baltimore City Health Department, Family League of Baltimore City with funding from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield

# What is B'more for Healthy Babies?

Our vision:

All of Baltimore's babies are born healthy weight, full term, and ready to thrive in healthy families.



# What is B'more for Healthy Babies?

## Key components:

- Citywide mass media campaigns
- Intensive outreach efforts in high-risk neighborhoods to connect people with services
- Improved education, screening, referral by providers



# Why do we need B'more for Healthy Babies?



- 128 babies under the age of one died in Baltimore City in 2009
- Baltimore has the 4<sup>th</sup> worst infant mortality rate in the U.S.
  - National rate: 6.8 deaths per 1000 live births
  - Baltimore's rate: 12.1 deaths per 1000 live births
    - African American: 14.3 per 1,000
    - White: 7.3 per 1,000



# Why do we need B'more for Healthy Babies?



## Leading causes of infant mortality in Baltimore:

#1 Prematurity / low birth weight complications

**#2 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and unsafe sleep conditions**

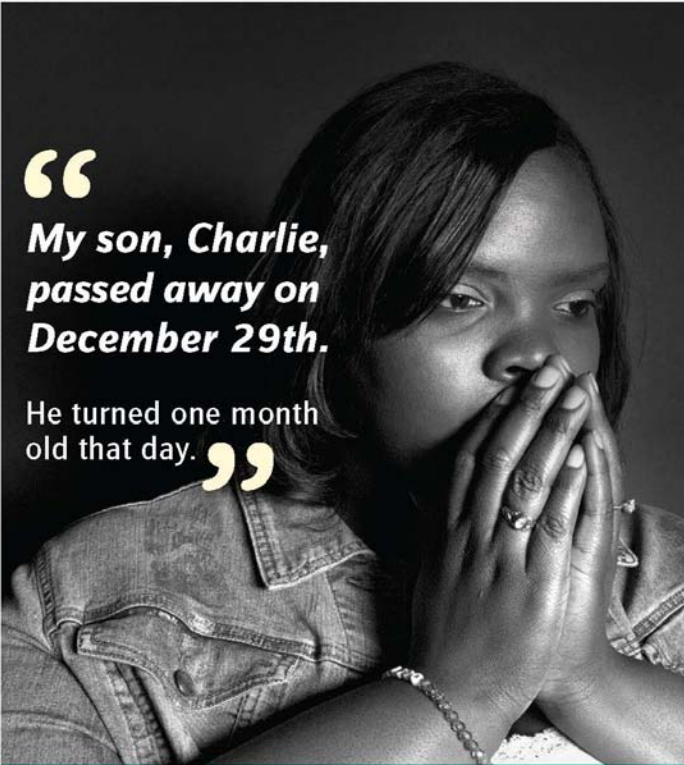
#3 Birth defects

**Our First Campaign Will Address Safe Sleep**

## Baltimore babies will sleep safe

- Last year, our city had more cases of sleep-related infant deaths than in any previous year
- Each month, an average of 2 babies in Baltimore City died from unsafe sleep conditions
- Most of these deaths were preventable

# Sleep Safe Campaign: Our Approach



**“**  
***My son, Charlie,  
passed away on  
December 29th.***  
He turned one month  
old that day. **”**

*Knowing what I know now, Charlie would have slept in his crib that night instead of in our bed with us. I wish I could go back to that night and change it.*

The safest way for your baby to sleep is alone, on his or her back, in an empty crib. Babies can suffocate if they sleep with an adult or another child, or if they sleep with blankets or pillows. Tell everyone who takes care of your baby that you want your baby to

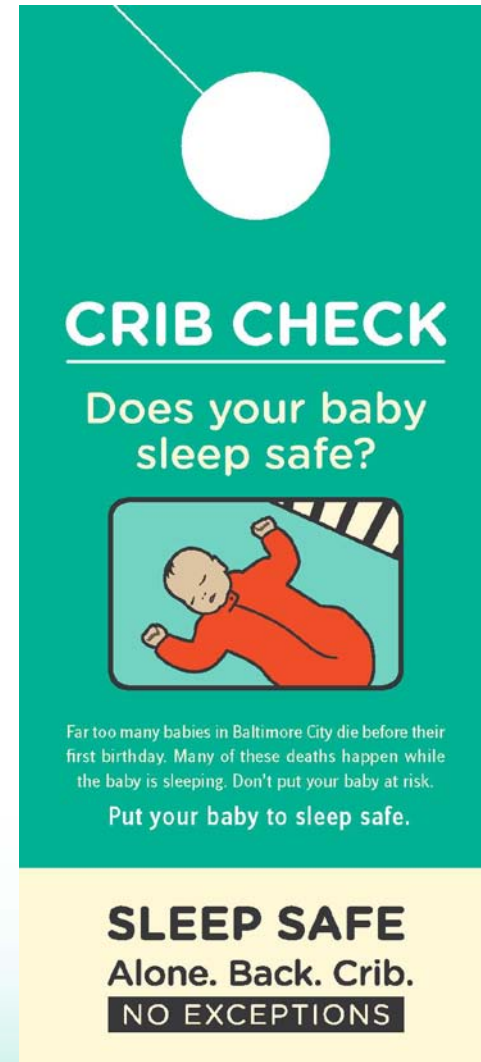
**SLEEP SAFE — Alone. Back. Crib. No exceptions.**

## Real Moms – Real Stories

Three Baltimore mothers tell their own stories about safe sleep and the choices they would make if they could go back and make them again

# Sleep Safe Campaign: Components

- Bus, radio, transit ads
- Posters, door hangers, rack cards, magnets, onesies, t-shirts
- News coverage on TV and radio



# Sleep Safe Campaign: Components

- Powerful video featuring real stories of the three Baltimore mothers, shown at birthing hospitals, the courthouse (jury duty), etc.
- Discussion guide to help providers lead a discussion with the public, before and after the video

## What can you do?

- We want **you** to use the video and discussion guide with mothers, fathers, relatives, and caretakers
- Use the **discussion guide** to prepare people for watching the video, and to answer questions after the viewing
- **Every baby counts on you!**



# Prepare the group for viewing

- Make sure everyone is seated comfortably and can see the screen
- Turn off cell phones
- Give the short introduction provided in the discussion guide

# Show the video



### *Examples of questions:*

- What are your first impressions of the video?
- Could this happen to your baby or to a baby you know?
- What will you do differently after seeing this video?
- Do you think it will be difficult to follow the advice in this video?

## Remind the audience

**SLEEP SAFE**  
**Alone. Back. Crib.**  
**NO EXCEPTIONS**

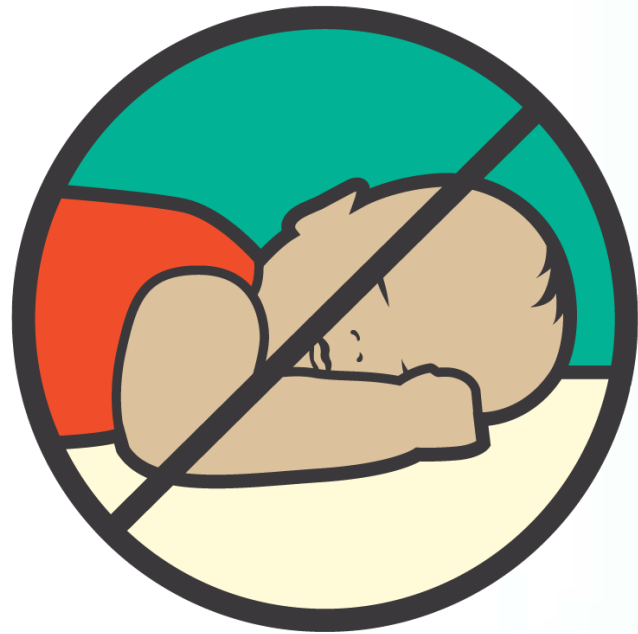
# Alone...



- Most babies who died of unsafe sleep last year were sleeping with adults or other children when they died.
- Share your room with your baby, but not your bed.

# ...on the Back ...

- Many babies who died last year in Baltimore City were found sleeping on their stomachs.
- Two babies who died last year had been placed on their side to sleep.



# ...on the Back ...

- The safest position for a baby to sleep is on his or her back.



# ... in a Crib

- **No toys**
- **No bumpers**
- **No pillows**
- **No blankets**
- **No stuffed animals**



# ... in a Crib



Your baby's sleeping place should be clean and clear, with just a firm mattress and tight fitting sheet

**...and nothing else.**

Your baby can wear a sleeper if it is cold.

# No Exceptions!



Your baby should **ALWAYS**  
sleep safe:

- Every night
- Every nap

It's just not worth the risk  
of your baby dying.

## Prepare for questions you may hear

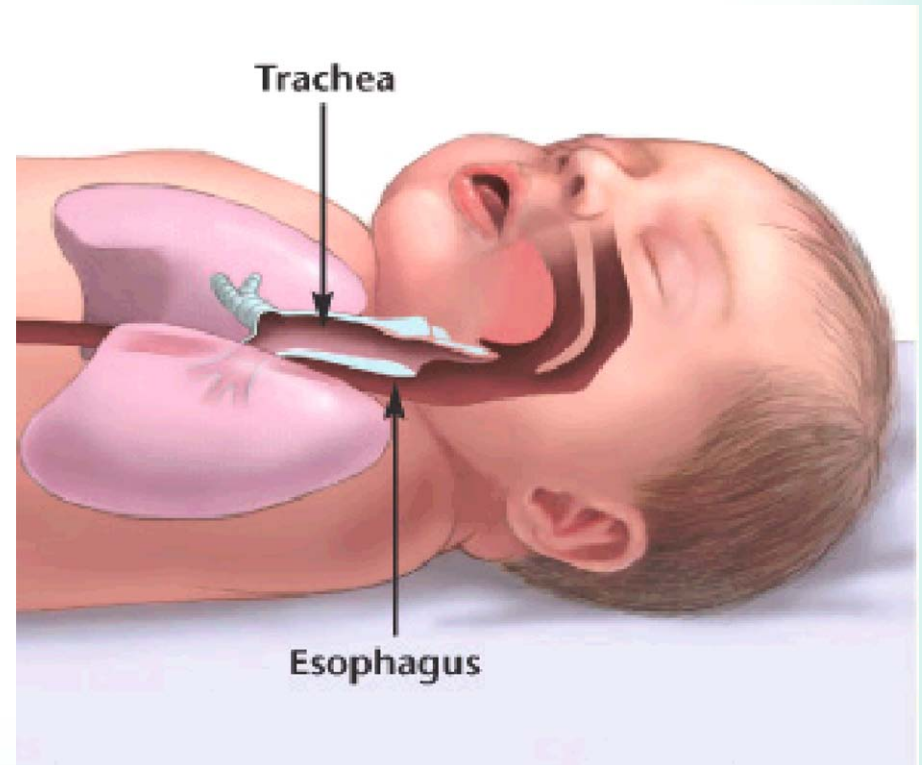
Q. My mother and auntie tell me that they put their babies to sleep on their stomachs and that I should too. Should I listen to them?

A. No. Over the years studies have shown that babies who sleep on their backs are less likely to die from SIDS.

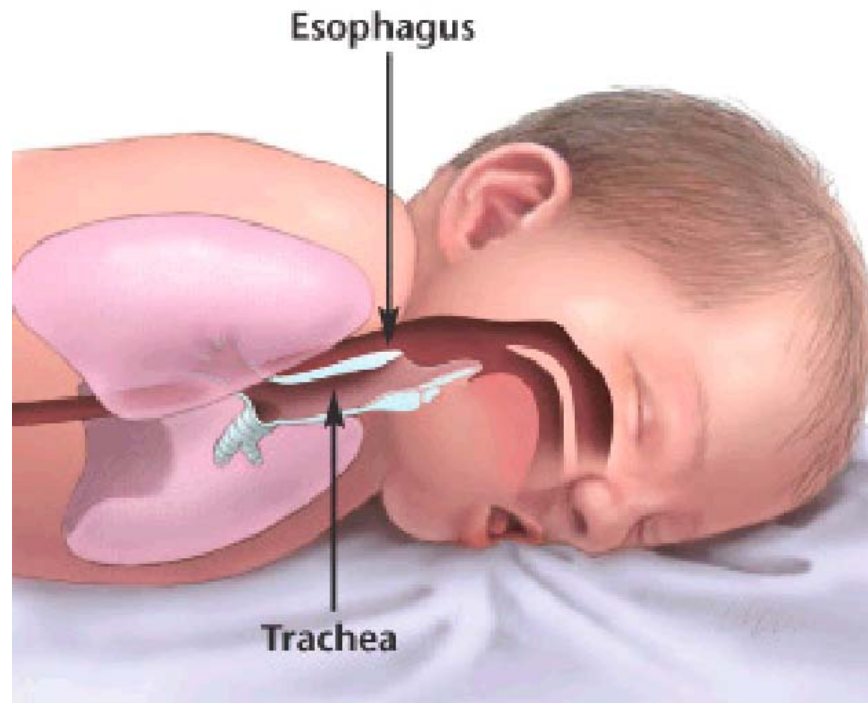
*Be prepared to answer people's concerns about choking while sleeping on the back*

# Is a baby more likely to choke on its back?

No! When a baby is on its back, the air pipe (trachea) is above the food tube (esophagus). Anything that is spit up from the stomach has to go against gravity to be inhaled into the air pipe. A healthy baby generally will turn its head so that spit up goes out of its mouth – not back down its throat.



# Stomach sleeping is dangerous for baby



However, when a baby is on its stomach, anything spit up can block the air pipe and cause choking or breathing problems.

# Prepare for questions you may hear

- Q. Everyone I know sleeps with their baby  
– it's part of my culture.
- A. Babies are more likely to suffocate  
when they sleep with an adult or in an  
adult bed. Put your baby's safety first.

## Prepare for questions you may hear

Q. My baby looks so uncomfortable on his back. He can't sleep that way.

A. Put your newborn baby on his or her back to sleep from day one. Your baby will soon get used to sleeping like that.

If your baby is used to sleeping on his stomach, it may take a few days for him to get used to it – but rest assured, he will.

# Prepare for questions you may hear

- Q. What if my baby rolls over by himself?
- A. Once your baby is able to roll over from back to stomach, you can let the baby sleep in that position. Your baby is old enough to be safe.

## Prepare for questions you may hear

- Q. How am I going to breastfeed if my baby doesn't sleep with me?
- A. Remember – share a room, not a bed. Put your baby's crib next to your bed so you can easily return the baby to the crib after breastfeeding.

# Prepare for questions you may hear

Q. How am I going to bond with my baby if she doesn't sleep with me?

A. Hold your baby for feedings and bonding. Your baby only needs to be alone, on her back, and in a crib for sleep. You may find you sleep better, too!

# Prepare for questions you may hear

Q. Doesn't my baby need to spend time on his tummy?

A. Yes! You can give your baby 'tummy time' when he is awake and being watched.

## Prepare for questions you may hear

Q. "My baby has a cold. Shouldn't I bring him in bed with me so I can watch over him?"

A. Babies are especially vulnerable when they are sick. It's more important than ever to make sure your baby sleeps safe – alone, on his back, in the crib. Move the baby's crib next to your bed so you can check on your baby during the night.

## What if I can't afford a crib?

- Cribs are available through Baltimore HealthCare Access at 410-649-0526.
- Some cribs – like Pack N' Plays -- are easy to carry, setup, and take down. They can be moved from room to room.



## Other messages to share

- Keeping your home smoke free can also reduce your baby's risk. Don't let anyone smoke around your baby. That includes you!
- You can use a pacifier to calm your baby and help him or her go to sleep. Research suggests that pacifiers help reduce risk of SIDS.

## Remember our key message

**SLEEP SAFE**  
**Alone. Back. Crib.**  
**NO EXCEPTIONS**

[www.healthybabiesbaltimore.com](http://www.healthybabiesbaltimore.com)

- Information, statistics
- Sleep safe video and other materials
- Resources and upcoming events
- Links to Facebook, BHB text reminders and Text4baby

**Every Baby Counts on You!**

**Thank you!**