

CITY OF BALTIMORE

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner
210 Guilford Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21202

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Rianna Brown

PHONE: 443-984-3606

81 Infant Deaths Associated with Unsafe Sleep Practices in Baltimore, 2002-2006

Baltimore, MD September 26, 2007 – The Baltimore City Health Department has launched an aggressive campaign to prevent infant death during sleep. The campaign is driven by new data showing that unsafe sleep practices are associated with 81 of 89 expected infant deaths during sleep from 2002-2006.

The unsafe sleep practices of concern include: placing a young infant to sleep on the stomach or side, co-sleeping, and placing an infant to sleep near soft bedding, blankets or toys. The campaign emphasizes the ABCs of safe sleep. Babies sleep safest **A**lone, on their **B**ack, and in a **C**rib.

The Health Department's campaign includes:

- Posting bus shelter advertisements;
- Sponsoring radio advertisements;
- Distributing free ABCs of safe sleep onesies to newborns at city birthing hospitals;
- Providing free cribs to families who need them;
- Training for staff at birthing hospitals; and
- Community outreach.

The Health Department is releasing a data snapshot unexpected infant deaths during sleep, using information compiled during meetings of the Child Fatality Review team. The campaign is supported with funding from the state Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

To see the safe sleep onesie, and for more information, please visit <http://firstcandle.org/ABCsofsafesleep/index.html> or <http://www.baltimorehealth.org>

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