

October 14, 2015

BABY NEEDS HIS OWN BED!

October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month



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Naples, Fla. – Some parents bring a newborn into their bed with them because they are unable to afford a crib, causing a potentially life-threatening scenario. While many parents simply believe it is just a natural loving thing to sleep with their baby, they are unaware of the dangers of co-sleeping until it's too late.

"The only way to put a baby to sleep safely is alone, on his or her back, and in a crib or bassinet," said Dr. Debra Sheppard, community pediatrician. "It's so important for people to be aware of the dangers of sharing a bed with an infant, and to make sure the baby's sleeping space is clear of things like toys, blankets, or pillows."

There is a significant rise in infant suffocation linked to bed-sharing. Rates have quadrupled in the past 20 years, government researchers find. From 1997-2009, 70% of all accidental child deaths in Florida were due to drowning or unsafe sleep environments. For children less than 1 year of age, two-thirds of injury related deaths were due to suffocation.

Approximately 500 families in Collier County do not have a bed for their baby.

The Archangel Fund for Collier County Charities of Trinity-By-The-Cove Episcopal Church has awarded a \$10,000 grant to the NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition of Collier County to purchase over 200 Pack n' Plays for babies of families in need. A Pack n' Plays is an economical solution to provide a safe sleep environment for a newborn or an infant.

The NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition will partner with Florida Department of Health in Collier County, Physicians Regional Healthcare System, The Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida, The Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida and Healthy Start of Southwest Florida to distribute the Pack n' Plays to families in need. One of the agencies, Healthy Start, has an in-home visiting program in which they served 1783 pregnant women and babies in Collier County last year. "We easily identify the families in need, because we are in the home and can see who really needs help." Cathy Timuta, Executive Director, Healthy Start of Southwest Florida.

In addition to providing the beds, these organizations will also provide education and training on proper sleep positions and sleep environment for baby.

October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month, and agencies of the Coalition will provide educational resources in order to increase awareness on safe

sleep practices for babies. There has been a Safe Sleep task force in Collier County since 2010. Agencies represented on this task force include: Naples Community Hospital, Florida Department of Health-Collier County, Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, Lighthouse Pediatrics, Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida, Collier County Sheriff's Office, Healthy Start of Southwest Florida, Charlie's Kids, NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition and The American SIDS Institute.

About The NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition of Collier County

Recognizing that infant suffocation and other health and safety issues require a coordinated approach, 38 child-serving non-profit and government service providers joined efforts in the creation of The NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition of Collier County, "the Coalition". Over the past five years the Coalition has grown its mission: to facilitate and implement programs to combat childhood obesity, prevent childhood drowning, and reduce SIDS.

To learn how you can help, visit: www.safehealthychildren.org.

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