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MEDIA RELEASE

Information **Advisory** **Warning** **Update**

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St. Clair County Health Department Encourages Safe Sleep for Babies September is Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, or SUID, is Michigan's leading cause of preventable infant death. Michigan currently ranks 37th among states for overall infant mortality. Michigan's infant mortality rate is 6.8 deaths per 1,000 live births and remains one of the highest in the nation; St. Clair County has 5.7 deaths per 1,000 live births. Sleep related deaths are a major contributor to the infant mortality rate. From 2010-2015, 871 sleep-related infant deaths occurred in Michigan, 15 deaths occurred in St. Clair County in that time frame.

Babies have suffocated while sleeping in adult beds, sharing a bed with an adult or child, sleeping on furniture, and sleeping with pillows, cushions, and blankets. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following tips to help protect babies during naps and bedtime:

- Place an infant on their backs to sleep
- Use a firm sleep surface or firm mattress covered only with a fitted sheet
- Remove soft objects and loose bedding from the crib (no pillows, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys, bumper pads, or other soft objects)
- Do not share a bed with your baby
- Avoid allowing your baby to become overheated

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- Encourage "tummy time;" it's important to practice supervised tummy time while your baby is awake to build strong neck and shoulder muscles
- Make sure everyone caring for your baby knows these guidelines, including babysitters, friends, and family members

Resources are available to the general public, parents, families, professionals, and caregivers of infants at www.michigan.gov/safesleep. For more information on St. Clair County Health Department's infant safe sleep efforts call (810) 987-5300. To learn more about our services visit our website www.scchealth.co and follow us on social media @scchdmi.

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