



Tom Barrett  
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE  
Commissioner of Health

**Health Department**

Administration

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## City of Milwaukee Health Department Seeks to Reduce Infant Deaths through Safe Sleep Awareness Campaign

Mayor Tom Barrett and Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker launched a city-wide infant safe sleep public awareness campaign today by offering a free downloadable demonstration video on the city's Web site and collaborating with various city agencies to distribute materials to Milwaukee households and strategic public facilities throughout the area.

The Health Department also contacted all licensed childcare facilities in Milwaukee and urged them to remind all parents and caregivers within their programs about the importance of a safe sleep environment.

"Increasing awareness on the dangers of bed-sharing remains a top priority for the department," said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker.

"Intervention is the best prevention and we remain clear in our message," he said. "The safest place for babies to sleep is on their backs, in their own crib or bassinet, with no pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or toys, no exceptions."

"I remain troubled by all the recent deaths in Milwaukee, particularly those that have involved our infants," said Mayor Tom Barrett. "I urge Milwaukeeans to review the Health Department's recommendations and follow them."

### **To keep an infant safe while sleeping, parents should:**

- **Provide a separate but nearby sleeping environment**, meaning: babies should share a **room** with their parents, but **not a bed**. The risk of **SIDS** (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) is less when an infant sleeps in the same room as the mother, but more when the baby sleeps in the same bed.
- **Never put your baby to sleep on a couch or a chair**. Put your baby to sleep in a crib, bassinette or Pack 'N Play® that meets the safety standards.

- **Make sure that the only item in the crib is a mattress, covered by a tight fitting sheet.** No pillows, bumper pads, blankets or toys.
- **Put your baby to sleep on his/her back.** Babies who sleep on their backs are safer. Dress your baby in a one-piece sleeper to keep him/her warm in winter.
- **Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for the whole family.** But your house should not be too warm.
- **Never smoke in a house where an infant or child lives.**

The City of Milwaukee Health Department continues to work closely with all our key community partners, including hospital systems and community organizations to promote safe sleeping. In addition, MHD administers intensive home visiting programs aimed at improving healthy birth outcomes and reducing rates of infant mortality among high-risk families. Nurses within these programs work with pregnant women, fathers and infants to promote healthy pregnancies, better birth outcomes, and safe home environments for infants.

For more information on infant safe sleep, please contact the City of Milwaukee Health Department at 414-286-8620 or visit our Web site at [www.milwaukee.gov/safesleep](http://www.milwaukee.gov/safesleep).