

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Wood County Health Department Launches October Safe Sleep Campaign Following
Concerning Child Death Review Findings**

Wood County, WI – In recognition of October as Safe Sleep Awareness Month, the Wood County Health Department is reaching out to local news media and community members to address a critical child safety issue in Wood County. Recent Child Death Reviews in the county have identified concerning cases of child deaths linked to unsafe sleep environments. In response, public health leaders have formed a dedicated Safe Sleep Action Group and are actively running a county-wide Safe Sleep Campaign throughout October to protect infants and support local families.

"Reviewing these heartbreaking losses reinforces how vital it is that every caregiver has the knowledge and resources to create a safe sleep environment," said Sara Luchini, Public Health Nurse and Lead Facilitator of the Child Death Review Team at the Wood County Health Department. "Every sleep-related infant death is a tragedy, but through awareness, community education, and proper sleep equipment, we can prevent these losses."

"Creating a safe sleep environment for a baby can sometimes feel overwhelming, but simple, consistent practices save lives," added Pat Chang, Public Health Nurse specializing in Family Health and Injury Prevention at the Wood County Health Department. "Our goal with this campaign is to ensure every parent, grandparent, and caregiver in Wood County knows the ABCs of safe sleep and knows that the Health Department is here to help them every step of the way."

Community Initiatives & Traveling Displays

To bring safe sleep education directly into the community, traveling educational banners and posters are being displayed throughout October in local libraries and health systems across Wood County. These displays highlight the fundamental ABCs of Safe Sleep:

- A – Alone: Baby should sleep alone in their own sleep space.
- B – Back: Always place the baby on their back for every sleep, during naps and at night.
- C – Crib: Baby should sleep in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or pack 'n play with a firm, flat mattress and a fitted sheet. The sleep space should be free of clutter, blankets, pillows, and other items.
- D- Drug Free Home: The home should be free from smoke, alcohol, and drugs.
- E- Every Sleep: Follow safe sleep steps every sleep, every time.

Resources for Families of Wood County

The Wood County Health Department provides safe sleep education to all parents and caregivers through the Cribs for Kids program. Qualified families may receive a free Pack 'n Play and personalized support from public health nurses or community health workers.

Additionally, the department offers home visiting programs for caregivers who are expecting, have a baby, or have a young child. Home visitors teach about pregnancy, caring for your baby, breastfeeding, safe sleep, car seats, child development, and other topics tailored to your family's needs.

If you are interested in receiving services, please call the Health Department at 715-421-8911.

Safe Sleep Ambassador Program & Giveaway

As part of the October campaign, the Health Department is encouraging residents to participate in a free Safe Sleep Ambassador Program promoted through their social media channels. Community members who register and complete the quick, free online training will be entered into a drawing to win a free Pack 'n Play bundle and safe sleep materials through the month of October. The winner will be notified in early November. You can find the training link and entry form at

<https://form.jotform.com/262575206565159>.

For questions, contact the Wood County Health Department at 715-421-8911 or email health@woodcountywi.gov. For more Wood County Health Department news, follow us on Facebook and subscribe to our newsletter at www.woodcountywi.gov/departments/health.

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