

Public Service Announcement

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month

Start Date: October 16, 2017 End Date: October 31, 2017 Nunavut-wide

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October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness month. SIDS is defined as the sudden, unexplained death of an infant less than one year old in their sleep and Nunavut has the highest rate of infant mortality in Canada, nearly five times higher than the national average.

The Department of Health encourages new parents and caregivers to practice safe sleep to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death.

Ways to reduce the risk of SIDS are to:

- Always place baby to sleep on their back;
- Share a room, not a bed;
- Breastfeed;
- Provide a smoke free environment pre and postnatal and;
- Avoid loose bedding;

The Department of Health will continue to offer the Nunavut Baby Bed to every newborn in the territory. The safe sleep bed is filled with items for baby care such as sleep sacks, clothing and toiletries, items for mothers after birth, and a bag of books provided by Department of Education's Early Childhood Education program. Parents are encouraged to register for a Nunavut Baby Bed during prenatal appointments through a nurse or midwife at your health centre or public health.

A <u>Safe Sleep Factsheet</u> is available on the Department of Health's website.

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