

# Babies Sleep Safest On Their Backs

Reduce the Risk  
of Sudden Infant  
Death Syndrome  
(SIDS)



A Resource Kit for Reducing the Risk of  
SIDS in African American Communities

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This Resource Kit was developed by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with support from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the NIH Office of Research on Minority Health.

The National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) was instrumental in encouraging the Partner Organizations to participate in this public health education initiative. NBCDI also provided guidance in the development of this Resource Kit.

### **“Back to Sleep” Campaign Sponsors**

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH  
Maternal and Child Health Bureau, HRSA  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
SIDS Alliance  
Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs

### **Partner Organizations**

National Black Child Development Institute  
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority  
Chi Eta Phi Sorority  
Chicago Department of Health  
Congress of National Black Churches  
District of Columbia Department of Health  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters  
National Coalition of 100 Black Women  
National Medical Association  
Pampers Parenting Institute  
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority





National Institutes of Health  
National Institute of Child Health  
and Human Development  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Dear Colleague:

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is a major cause of death for infants one month to one year old. It affects infants of all populations, yet African American families are affected at a greater rate.

Since the inception of the national "Back to Sleep" public health education campaign in 1994 to promote back sleeping for babies, the SIDS rate has dropped dramatically. However, despite the overall success of the campaign, the SIDS rate for African American babies is still two times greater than that of white babies.

To address this disparity, the "Back to Sleep" campaign, led by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI), invited organizations to join forces and create a national partnership. As a result, many African American organizations are a part of this partnership. Working together, a strategy was developed to educate people about the safest sleep position for babies—back sleeping.

The Resource Kit for Reducing the Risk of SIDS in African American Communities is part of the strategy for promoting back sleeping. Intended to involve communities through training and education, the Kit's information emphasizes the fact that the responsibility for safeguarding the health and well-being of infants rests not only on parents but also on family members, loved ones, and all those who care for infants. Indeed, promoting back sleeping and other safe practices is a community responsibility.

This Kit contains a variety of materials designed to help you communicate the campaign message, "Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs," to African American communities across the Nation. A training guide and community outreach materials for presentations and workshops have been included to aid volunteer outreach efforts. With your help, these materials have enormous potential to reach the families in your community who need this information most. We ask you to encourage your state and local affiliates to request a Kit and involve your community in this outreach program. Your efforts will play an important role in educating African Americans about SIDS, dispelling the myths, and reducing the number of infants who die from this mysterious killer.

For additional copies of all materials, call the "Back to Sleep" ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB (2742). For more information on this outreach initiative, please call the NICHD Information Office at 301-496-5133.

A list of the "Back to Sleep" campaign sponsors and a current list of national partners are included in the Kit. Continuing and expanding all of our partnerships strengthens our efforts to reduce the risk of SIDS in African American communities nationwide. Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Yvonne T. Maddox, Ph.D.  
Acting Deputy Director, NIH

Evelyn Moore  
President, NBCDI

Enclosure

# A Resource Kit for Reducing the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American Communities



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# How to Make This Kit Work for You



## Inside This Kit

This Kit is designed to help organizations like yours communicate clear, consistent, and creative messages about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) to African Americans in your community and across the Nation. All of the materials included support the education efforts and messages of the national “Back to Sleep” public health education campaign to reduce the incidence of SIDS.

The Kit provides you with all the materials and information you need to promote back sleeping and other safe practices to reduce the risk of SIDS in infants under 1 year of age in African American communities. The Kit includes:

- ◆ SIDS facts
- ◆ Myths and facts about SIDS
- ◆ Actions to reduce the risk of SIDS
- ◆ Responses to questions about SIDS
- ◆ A user-friendly brochure, a magnet, and an order form
- ◆ How to promote back sleeping in your community
- ◆ A sample community flyer
- ◆ A display ad
- ◆ A video
- ◆ Tips on how to work with the media
- ◆ A sample media release
- ◆ Sample radio public service announcements
- ◆ A list of national partners
- ◆ Training guides for community presentations and workshops
- ◆ A list of SIDS resources
- ◆ Evaluation form

It is important for you to know that the materials in this Kit are not copyrighted. You are free to reproduce, mail, and distribute as many copies as you wish. Additional copies of all of these materials—including brochures, magnets, or the entire Kit—can be obtained free-of-charge by calling the “Back to Sleep” campaign ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB (2742).

You are also free to use portions of these products to develop your own materials. You may even want to consider adding your organization’s logo. If you do so, please cite the “Back to Sleep” campaign as the source.

# How to Make This Kit Work for You *(continued)*



## Getting Started

Here are some ideas to help you use the Kit effectively to reach African American communities.

- ◆ Use the entire Kit. If your organization has state or local chapters, you may order Kits in bulk quantities to distribute to your local chapters. That way, your organization's chapters can implement their own state or local campaigns to increase awareness of back sleeping in African American communities.
- ◆ The Kit is also available online at [www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Web site. Just click on the logo for the "Back to Sleep" campaign. You can download these materials or create a link from your organization's Web site. Then, anyone who visits your organization's Web site can get easy access to online materials and order forms. Talk to your organization's webmaster for details.
- ◆ Select items from the Kit for special events and promotional opportunities. There are many ways to use items in this Kit as stand-alone products. For example, you could arrange to show the enclosed video at your organization's annual meeting. Your members will become aware that this outreach effort is under way, and they will be encouraged to get involved. Another good idea is to order a bulk quantity of the "Back to Sleep" campaign magnets and hand them out as part of your organization's exhibit program so they know you support the outreach initiative.
- ◆ Enhance your public image. Modify the sample news release and mail or fax it to radio stations, television stations, and newspapers that follow your organization's activities to let them know that you support this effort. This approach also provides a great opportunity to publicize other activities your organization is sponsoring to promote increased awareness of SIDS in African American communities. You can also place an article in your organization's newsletter using quotes and excerpts from the Kit.
- ◆ Promote the Kit within your state and local chapters. Encourage them to request a Kit and sponsor a campaign within their communities. Various state and local chapters of one organization can coordinate activities and events to create a regional outreach effort.
- ◆ Conduct workshops. Sponsor and publicize local "town meetings" or "community forums" on SIDS. Be sure to give community members an opportunity to discuss how they can work together to promote back sleeping. Urge your chapters to send out news releases one week before the event so local media can attend and interview participants.

## How to Make This Kit Work for You (continued)



◆ Return the evaluation form. To be effective, we need to reach as many communities as possible. Your feedback is extremely important. Please fill out and return the enclosed evaluation form to let us know how we can continue to support your successful involvement in reducing SIDS in your community.

These are just a few ideas for your organization to get the most mileage out of this Kit and its message. Depending on the scope, reach, and mission of your organization, you may elect to take a different approach to support the “Back to Sleep” African American outreach program. Be creative. You know your organization and your members best.

Remember to review the list of other national organizations participating in this outreach effort and the resource list to identify possible opportunities to collaborate, share resources, and increase your reach. Seek out and take advantage of these opportunities to help promote back sleeping in African American communities. It’s much easier to achieve success by working together as partners.



## What is SIDS?

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the term for the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age that remains unexplained after a complete investigation, including:

- ◆ An autopsy.
- ◆ Examination of the death scene.
- ◆ Review of any symptoms or illnesses the infant experienced before dying.
- ◆ Any other important medical history.

Because most SIDS deaths occur while infants are sleeping in a crib, SIDS is commonly referred to as “crib death.” However, cribs do not cause SIDS.

## What is the Impact of SIDS in the U.S.?

Approximately 3,000 babies die of SIDS each year. Even though doctors and nurses still don't know what causes SIDS, they do know:

- ◆ Most SIDS deaths occur when a baby is between 2 and 4 months of age.
- ◆ African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies.
- ◆ More boys die of SIDS than girls.
- ◆ A SIDS death happens quickly, with no signs of suffering.
- ◆ More SIDS deaths occur in the colder months.

## How Can I Reduce the Risk of SIDS?

Before the 1992 recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics to place infants on their sides or backs to sleep to reduce SIDS, more than 5,000 babies in the U.S. died from SIDS every year. Since then, as tummy sleeping has declined, that number has been reduced to less than 3,000 each year. Below is a list of recommendations to reduce the risk of SIDS.

- ◆ Place your baby on his or her back to sleep, at nighttime and napttime. This is the best way to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Place your baby on a firm mattress, such as in a safety-approved crib.
- ◆ Remove all fluffy and loose bedding and other soft items from the sleep area.
- ◆ Make sure your baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep.
- ◆ Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby.
- ◆ Don't let your baby get too warm during sleep.

# Myths and Facts About SIDS



**Myth:** Babies can “catch” SIDS.

**Fact:** SIDS cannot be caught. It is not contagious and there are no symptoms before death.

**Myth:** Cribs cause “crib death,” or SIDS.

**Fact:** Cribs do not cause SIDS.

**Myth:** Babies who sleep on their backs can choke on spit up or vomit.

**Fact:** Babies swallow or cough up fluid that enters their airway. Doctors have found no increase in choking or other problems in babies sleeping on their backs.

**Myth:** Only white babies die of SIDS.

**Fact:** African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies.

**Myth:** A SIDS death can be prevented.

**Fact:** Although there is no way to make sure a baby will not die of SIDS, the chance of a baby dying of SIDS can be greatly reduced by placing babies on their backs to sleep.

**Myth:** Shots or medicines cause SIDS.

**Fact:** Shots or medicines do not cause SIDS. All babies should be seen for well-baby check-ups. Babies should also receive their shots on time.

**Myth:** SIDS can occur at any age.

**Fact:** SIDS is the unexplained death of a baby under 1 year of age. Most SIDS deaths happen between 2 and 4 months of age. The number of babies dying of SIDS dramatically drops after 6 months of age.

# Actions to Reduce the Risk of SIDS



## ◆ Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep

Make sure that all caregivers place your baby to sleep on his or her back. This is the single most important thing you can do to reduce the risk of SIDS.

## ◆ Place your baby on a firm mattress, such as in a safety-approved crib

Don't put your baby to sleep on a soft mattress, sofa, sofa cushion, waterbed, sheepskin, or other soft surface.

## ◆ Remove all fluffy and loose bedding from the sleep area

Make sure all pillows, quilts, stuffed toys, and other soft items are out of the sleeping area.

## ◆ Make sure your baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep

- Keep your baby's mouth and nose clear of blankets and other coverings during sleep.
- Use sleep clothing with no other covering over the baby.
- If you use a blanket or another covering, make sure your baby is "feet to foot" in the crib. Feet to foot means that the baby's feet are at the bottom of the crib, the blanket is no higher than the baby's chest, and the blanket is tucked in around the crib mattress, making it unlikely the baby can slip under the blanket.

## ◆ Don't let your baby become too warm while sleeping

Your baby should be kept warm, but not too warm. Too many layers of clothing or blankets can overheat your baby. Also, keep the temperature in the baby's sleep area at a level that is comfortable for you.

## ◆ Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby

Make sure no one smokes around your baby. SIDS is more common among babies who are exposed to smoke from tobacco during or after pregnancy.

## ◆ Take your baby for well-baby check-ups

Make sure your baby doesn't miss any well-baby check-ups and receives his or her shots on time.

## ◆ Get good health care

Good care starts early in pregnancy and includes eating the right foods. Don't smoke, use drugs, or drink alcohol while you are pregnant. You should also have frequent check-ups with your doctor or nurse.

# Responses to Questions About SIDS



## **Can my baby choke while sleeping on his or her back?**

Some mothers worry that babies who sleep on their backs will choke if they spit up or vomit while sleeping, but babies automatically swallow or cough up such fluid. In fact, doctors have found no increase in choking or other problems in babies who sleep on their backs.

## **What's wrong with my baby sleeping on his or her stomach? I was placed to sleep on my stomach.**

Doctors have no way of knowing which babies will die of SIDS, but they do know some actions to reduce the risk. In 1992, when the American Academy of Pediatrics first recommended back or side sleeping to reduce the likelihood of SIDS, more than 5,000 babies in the U.S. died from SIDS every year. Since then, as tummy sleeping has decreased, that number has been reduced to less than 3,000 each year.

## **What if my baby can't adjust to sleeping on his or her back?**

Some babies don't like sleeping on their backs at first, but most get used to it quickly. The earlier you start placing your baby on his or her back to sleep, the more quickly he or she will become used to the position. Also, babies can benefit from sleeping on their backs. Babies who are on their backs can move their arms and legs and look around more easily.

## **Is it okay if my baby sleeps on his or her side?**

Although the side position is safer than the stomach position, babies who sleep on their sides are in danger of rolling onto their stomachs. If you choose to place your baby on his or her side to sleep, make sure the baby's lower arm is in front of the baby to help stop him or her from rolling onto the stomach.

## **What about new products designed to keep my baby in a certain position during sleep?**

There is no proof that any such products will help lower the risk of SIDS. Back sleeping is the best position to reduce SIDS risk. During the time of greatest risk, 2 to 4 months of age, most babies are not able to turn over from their backs to their stomachs.

## **What if my baby's grandparents or caregivers want to place my baby to sleep on his or her stomach at naptime?**

Make sure everyone knows to place your baby on his or her back to sleep at naptime and nighttime. Explain to everyone why back sleeping is the best.

# Responses to Questions About SIDS (continued)



## **Are there times when my baby should be on his or her stomach?**

Yes, your baby should have plenty of “tummy time” when he or she is awake and being watched. This also helps make your baby’s neck and shoulder muscles stronger.

## **Will my baby get “flat spots” on the back of his or her head from back sleeping?**

Flat spots on the back of a baby’s head are usually a temporary condition that goes away a few months after the baby begins to sit up. Tummy time, when your baby is awake, is a good way to reduce flat spots.

## **At what age is a SIDS death likely to happen?**

SIDS is the sudden death of a child under 1 year of age. It is the leading cause of death for infants after 1 month of age and occurs most frequently between the second and fourth month. The incidence of SIDS drops dramatically after 6 months of age.

# How to Promote Back Sleeping in Your Community



The main goal of the “Back to Sleep” campaign in African American communities is to increase national awareness of placing babies to sleep on their backs to reduce the number of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) deaths among African Americans. The most effective way to achieve this goal is to work within individual communities across the Nation. This is your opportunity to make a difference in your community and help protect the well-being of our infants.

## How to Use the Materials in This Kit

Here are some tips on how you can use the materials in this Kit to reduce the risk of SIDS in your community:

- ◆ **Brochure**—Distribute the brochure at local group meetings (faith organizations, community centers, etc.), hospital and physicians’ waiting rooms, libraries, senior citizen centers, and other locations throughout the community. You can distribute the brochure at local community events, such as fairs, block parties, cultural celebrations, and other observances. You may want to join forces with local hospitals so that a copy of the brochure is given to parents when their newborn is released from the hospital.
- ◆ **Magnets**—Hand out campaign magnets at local community events and health fairs. Contact local doctors’ offices, health centers, pediatricians, and hospitals to see if they are willing to give the magnets to new and expectant African American parents.
- ◆ **SIDS Information**—Send copies of the information sheet to local reporters along with other “Back to Sleep” campaign materials that provide background information.
- ◆ **Myths and Facts About SIDS**—Sponsor local “town hall” meetings or community forums to discuss the myths and facts associated with SIDS among African Americans and how individuals and organizations in the community can work together to educate the public. Use the sample community flyer to promote your event.
- ◆ **Actions to Reduce the Risk of SIDS**—Use this informative piece as a drop-in article for community newsletters and weekly newspapers. These publications are often looking for articles and items of interest to the community.

# How to Promote Back Sleeping in Your Community (continued)



- ◆ **Responses to Questions About SIDS**—Provide a training session for your organization’s staff and volunteers on how to address difficult questions from people in the community who are not aware of the benefits of back sleeping. Identify a small group of trained volunteers who are willing to go out into the community and educate people about the importance of back sleeping.
- ◆ **Sample Display Ad**—Adapt this display ad to include information about your organization. Place it in church bulletins, newsletters, and local papers. Adapt the sample **Bus Ad** for local use.
- ◆ **Video**—Provide copies of the video to organizations or agencies in your community that sponsor classes for new and expectant parents. Show the video at local community fairs and events so that people can be exposed to the message about back sleeping as they’re walking by. Even if they don’t stop to talk, they may still get the message and pass it on to others or pick up “Back to Sleep” campaign magnets and other information. The video can also be used in local churches, community centers, health centers, doctors’ offices, hospitals, and other places where new or expectant parents may visit.
- ◆ **Sample Media Release**—Insert your organization’s information and send the release to local daily and weekly newspapers, radio, and television stations, magazines, community newsletters, and other news outlets. You may also want to include the “SIDS Facts” handout, the brochure, the radio public service announcements (PSAs), and other campaign materials.
- ◆ **Sample Radio Public Service Announcements**—Contact the public affairs directors at local radio stations and encourage them to read the PSAs on the air. Feel free to change the contact information if you want listeners to call someone in your organization for more information or referrals.
- ◆ **Training Materials**—Use these presentation materials to educate parents, caregivers, and others about SIDS and the recommended actions that reduce the risk of a baby dying of SIDS. Three training modules for 15-, 30-, and 60-minute sessions are included. Use them to make presentations at schools, childcare centers, faith organizations, community centers, libraries, hospitals, health care clinics, and other places to reach African American parents and other caregivers.

## How to Get Involved

Even if you aren’t part of an organization or agency that’s actively promoting the “Back to Sleep” message, you can still get involved—even if you don’t have a lot of time. Here are a few ideas:

## How to Promote Back Sleeping in Your Community (continued)



- ◆ Contact your local health department or organizations that have SIDS programs in your community. Ask them if they offer information on back sleeping to new or expectant parents. If they do, tell them you hope they will continue to do so in the future because it's an important message that can ultimately save lives. If they don't, tell them how important it is and give them the toll-free number for the "Back to Sleep" ordering line (1-800-505-CRIB) for free brochures, videos, and other materials.
- ◆ Write letters, send e-mails, or make telephone calls to local community leaders to tell them about the "Back to Sleep" campaign and the importance of reaching African Americans. Encourage them to get involved and to support community efforts to get the message out.
- ◆ Don't forget senior citizen centers, churches, and other community- or faith-oriented groups. Everyone needs to learn about the importance of back sleeping and other ways to reduce the risk of SIDS. Ask the staff at these organizations if you can display copies of campaign materials, such as the brochure or the "Myths and Facts About SIDS" handout, in a place where people can pick them up.
- ◆ Make a list of everyone you know who has an infant under the age of 1, anyone you know who is expecting a child, and everyone you think may become a mother or father in the next few years. Next time you see them, tell them about your involvement in the "Back to Sleep" campaign and its messages. It's a subtle yet effective way to get the message out.
- ◆ If you have the time to make a larger commitment, coordinate a workshop or presentation using the training materials provided in this packet. The materials are designed to be adapted for workshops or brief presentations. You can also contact organizations in your community with an interest in the safety and well-being of infants. Tell them that you want to get more involved in educating people in the community about the importance of back sleeping and that you are willing to work as a volunteer. Together, you can decide how your skills and life experience can best be used to educate others in the African American community about SIDS.

These are just a few ideas about how you can get involved in educating your community about SIDS. You may have your own ideas too, but the most important thing is that you get involved.

Many of the national organizations that support the "Back to Sleep" campaign have state and local chapters or affiliates. Please review the list of National Partners to identify local affiliates in your community. Working together, we can help save infant lives!



## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS): African American Communities Raising Awareness and Reducing Risk

Help reduce the risk of SIDS, also known as “crib death,” in our community. Come to this important workshop to learn ways to help protect your baby.

Get the facts. Find out how SIDS can affect you, your family, and our community.

**Who should attend:** Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, babysitters, childcare providers, and everyone who takes care of infants

**When:**

**Where:**

**Time:**

**For more information, contact:**



## **Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs!**

Placing babies to sleep on their backs is the safest way to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), also known as “crib death.”

### **Other ways to help protect your baby:**

- ◆ Place your baby to sleep on a firm mattress
- ◆ Remove fluffy blankets, comforters, and other soft items from the sleep area
- ◆ Make sure your baby’s head and face stay uncovered during sleep
- ◆ Don’t let your baby get too warm while sleeping
- ◆ Don’t smoke before or after the birth of your baby
- ◆ Take your baby for well-baby check-ups
- ◆ Get good health care before and during your pregnancy

**Help reduce SIDS deaths in our community.  
Help save infant lives!**

# How to Work with the Media—Radio, TV, Print



Reporters, editors, and other members of the media play an important role in expanding your SIDS outreach message. Good media contacts increase opportunities for communicating your message to the right audiences.

- ◆ Use every available channel of communication (television, radio, print) to get your message out to the community.
- ◆ Let your passion and concern about SIDS guide your ambition.
- ◆ Always look for new angles and story ideas to increase exposure for your message.

## Find a Contact Person

- ◆ Obtain a current media directory from your public library, or ask a local SIDS organization to share its press lists.
- ◆ Make phone calls to find out the names of health, feature, or city writers and editors at your local newspaper, and anyone else who may be interested in your story. Locate assignment editors. These are the people who make decisions about which stories will be published.

## Spend Some Time Educating the Media

- ◆ Let reporters and assignment editors know that SIDS is a major public health problem and that African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies.
- ◆ Offer statistics about the number of babies who die of SIDS each year. Be knowledgeable and professional.
- ◆ Position yourself as a reliable source of information to build a good relationship with reporters.
- ◆ Anticipate reporters' needs and have information available when requested.

## Take the Initiative and Introduce Your Story to Local Media Outlets

- ◆ Before you call, make sure you are prepared to present your story idea clearly and precisely.
- ◆ Prepare an outline to help guide you through your presentation.

## How to Work with the Media—Radio, TV, Print (continued)



- ◆ When you get the reporter or editor on the phone, introduce yourself and your organization and its concern about SIDS.
- ◆ Before discussing your idea, ask if the reporter has time to talk. If not, ask whether you can arrange to call back at a better time.
- ◆ When approaching health reporters, let them know that you understand the limits on their time and that you are prepared to do as much as possible to help get the story printed or produced.
- ◆ Offer a press release, current and available research or statistics, and whatever else might be helpful in getting the job done. Be sure to include a name and contact number so interested reporters know who to call for more information.

# Sample Media Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** [Name of person within your organization who is available to answer questions from the press. Be sure to add the contact's phone number.]

**[Name of your organization]  
Spearheading Local Outreach Effort  
To Reduce Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)  
in African American Communities**

The [Insert the name of your organization] has kicked off a community education campaign to help parents and other caregivers reduce the high incidence of death from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American communities. National research has revealed that African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies. Overall, SIDS is the leading cause of death in all infants under 1 year of age, and most SIDS deaths occur between the ages of 2 and 4 months.

Research has shown that placing babies to sleep on their backs dramatically reduces the incidence of SIDS.

“SIDS is a community problem. We must come together to help educate one another about the steps we can take to reduce the number of babies who will die from this syndrome,” said [insert name of spokesperson] of [insert your organization name]. This campaign is designed to bring together parents, grandparents, caregivers, and everyone concerned about the health of infants. This effort is part of the national “Back to Sleep” campaign, sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, American Academy of Pediatrics, SIDS Alliance, and Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs.

The National Black Child Development Institute, along with other partner organizations and their local affiliates, is working to reduce the risk of SIDS in African American communities. Representatives of organizations interested in joining this community-based effort are encouraged to contact [insert contact name and phone number].

# Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs)



## **:30-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Did you know that the safest way for babies to sleep is on their backs? This small change in the way you care for your baby is the best protection against Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS, sometimes called “crib death.” African American babies are 2 times more likely to die of SIDS as white babies. Remember, back sleeping is safest. To find out more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB. That’s 1-800-505-2742.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.

## **:15-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Help protect African American babies from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS, sometimes called “crib death.” All babies should sleep on their backs. To learn more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.

## **:30-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Placing babies to sleep on their backs is the most important thing you can do to reduce the chance that your baby will die from SIDS—Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, sometimes called “crib death.” Nearly 3,000 babies die from SIDS each year. African American babies are 2 times more likely to die of SIDS as white babies. Remember, back sleeping is safest. To find out more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB. That’s 1-800-505-2742.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.

## **:15-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Reduce the risk of SIDS—Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, sometimes called “crib death,” by placing babies on their backs to sleep. To learn more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.



# **Reducing the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American Communities**

**A Training Guide for a 15-Minute  
Community Education Presentation  
on SIDS**

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)



## Goals and Objectives

### Introduction

As a result of this presentation, participants will be prepared to help increase awareness of SIDS in African American communities by talking with others about the impact of SIDS and risk-reduction behaviors.

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- ◆ Define Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and understand the impact of SIDS in African American communities.
- ◆ Apply “Back to Sleep” risk-reduction practices and other infant care practices that help reduce the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Identify ways to increase awareness in their community.
- ◆ Know where and how to find more information and community resources about SIDS.

## Time and Audience Size

This is a **15-minute presentation** that will help you provide a **brief overview** of SIDS, risk-reduction practices, and community resources. Because this is a very brief presentation that doesn't include audience interaction, you can deliver this presentation to any size group. You will not have time to answer questions during the presentation so, if possible, allow time afterwards for questions.

## Preparation

Prepare for your training session by reviewing and becoming familiar with the packet before presenting the material.

Put together a stapled packet of handouts 1–10 to give to each participant at the beginning of your presentation. These handouts include the major points that will be discussed during your 15-minute presentation. If you have access to an overhead projector, make overhead transparencies of the handouts to use during your presentation. Otherwise, refer to the numbered handouts as you discuss each one.

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

(continued)



The other material found in the Resource Kit provides a wealth of additional information about SIDS that can help you prepare for your presentation. The handouts for this 15-minute presentation are based on these other materials. Depending on the group to whom you are presenting, you may want to make copies of some of these materials.

To help you identify local resources, contact the SIDS Alliance, the Association of SIDS organizations and Infant Mortality Programs, and/or the National SIDS and Infant Death Program Support Center. They are listed in the “SIDS Resources” section of this Kit. You might want to prepare a list of SIDS organizations and bereavement services as well as other programs that support family health in your community. Your state or local health department may also be able to provide information on additional community resources.

## Materials

You will need to make copies of the following handouts and information for your presentation. Save the brochures and other resource materials for the end of the session. To order additional brochures, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

- Handout-1 Welcome
- Handout-2 We Will Talk About . . .
- Handout-3 The “Back to Sleep” Campaign
- Handout-4 National Partners
- Handout-5 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is . . .
- Handout-6 SIDS Facts
- Handout-7 SIDS Myths and Facts
- Handout-8 How to Reduce Your Baby’s Risk
- Handout-9 Help Spread the Word
- Handout-10 Each of Us Can Help
- Brochure: Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs:  
Reduce the Risk of SIDS
- National Resource List
- Local Resource Lists (instructor to provide)

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

(continued)



## The Presentation

“Saving Babies in Our Communities” article

Order Form for Campaign Materials

The essential information in the training curriculum is provided as “Core Content.” Presentation tips contain insight and advice to help you in your presentation. **Bold text** in the Core Content is identical to the text in the handout. This will help you keep your place when you are providing additional information.

# Introductions and Agenda Overview–3 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-1 Welcome

### Handout-2

### We Will Talk About . . .

### Handout-3

### The “Back to Sleep” Campaign

### Handout-4

### National Partners

### Presentation Tip

## Core Content\*

- ◆ Introduce yourself. Explain your role and your organization’s commitment to community education and helping to reduce the risk of SIDS in African American communities.
- ◆ Review key points you will discuss and the overall goal.
- ◆ **The “Back to Sleep” campaign is a public health education campaign to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in the U.S.**
- ◆ **The goal of the campaign is to promote back sleeping as the safest sleep position for infants under 1 year of age.**
- ◆ These Partner Organizations are committed to helping African American families address a variety of health concerns. Increasing awareness of ways to reduce the risk of SIDS is an important health issue for African American families.

Reference the national organizations supporting the initiative in your community.

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\* Bold text in this section is identical to text on handouts.

# What We Know About SIDS—5 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-5 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Is . . .

### Presentation Tip

### Handout-6 SIDS Facts

### Presentation Tip

### Handout-7 SIDS Myths and Facts

### Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ SIDS, sometimes called “crib death,” is the number one cause of death in babies between the ages of 1 month and 1 year.
- ◆ Scientists have not yet been able to determine the exact cause of SIDS. In most cases, a diagnosis of SIDS is given after an autopsy, death scene investigation, and review of the infant’s medical history.

As you read the definition of SIDS, acknowledge how difficult SIDS is to understand for all concerned people.

- ◆ We do know that SIDS is not contagious and is not caused by child abuse, neglect, or “shaken baby syndrome.”

Read the “SIDS Facts” handout.

- ◆ Explain that this information has been gathered by scientists, doctors, researchers, and other people who are trying to understand the causes of SIDS.
- ◆ Families really can reduce their babies’ risk of SIDS but not “cure” or “prevent” it.

Read the “SIDS Myths and Facts” handout.

- ◆ The experts who study SIDS are very clear that no one is to blame for a SIDS death, and it cannot be predicted. SIDS can happen to any family no matter their race, ethnicity, income, or where they live.
- ◆ Families around the world, including many African American families, have led the way in trying to find the cause of SIDS. Affected families have encouraged the scientific community to learn as much as possible.



- ◆ Families who have experienced this terrible loss often feel guilty and responsible for their baby's death.

# Reducing Your Baby's Risk—5 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-8 How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk

### Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ These risk-reduction behaviors are the ideal in terms of reducing SIDS risk. Of course, well-baby care and a smoke-free environment are also important for a baby's good health.

As you discuss each behavior, make sure you provide a full and accurate description of what each behavior means and how to perform it.

- ◆ **Place Your Baby on His or Her Back to Sleep at Nighttime and Naptime.** U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher and the American Academy of Pediatrics say that back sleeping is the safest sleep position.
- ◆ People may be skeptical about changing their current practices because they learned them from people they respect and trust. For example, for years doctors (and many grandparents) recommended putting babies to sleep on their stomachs. However, based on the study of thousands of SIDS deaths, we know that back sleeping and these other risk-reduction behaviors can help save infant lives.
- ◆ The earlier you put your baby on his or her back to sleep, the more quickly the baby gets used to this position.
- ◆ If your baby cannot sleep on his or her back, discuss other sleep options with your doctor or health care provider.
- ◆ Placing babies to sleep on their backs is the *single most important* thing to do to reduce SIDS risk.
- ◆ **Place Your Baby on a Firm Mattress, Such as in a Safety-Approved Crib.** Your baby is safest on a firm surface. Do not place your baby on a soft mattress, sofa, cushion, waterbed, sheepskin, or other soft surface.



## Presentation Tip

For more information on safety-approved cribs, refer the audience to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Consumer Hotline: 1-800-638-2772.

- ◆ Some families may not have the money to buy safety-approved cribs. You can still create a safe, firm surface for your baby by eliminating soft, fluffy items from bassinets, cradles, and other sleep areas.
- ◆ Bedsharing poses risks for infants' safety. They can get trapped between the mattress and the structure of the bed or covered by an adult's blankets and pillows. If you choose to have your baby sleep in your bed, make sure you follow all of the risk-reduction recommendations, especially the back sleep position, for safe sleeping.
- ◆ **Remove All Fluffy and Loose Bedding from the Sleep Area.** Make sure that all pillows, quilts, stuffed toys, and other soft items are taken out of the crib and other sleep areas.
- ◆ Some parents may have emotional attachments to a handmade quilt, special toy, or clothing given to them by a cherished friend or family member. Create a safer environment by using these special gifts at times other than sleep time.
- ◆ **Make Sure Your Baby's Head and Face Stay Uncovered During Sleep.** If possible, use only sleep clothing with no other covering for your baby. This keeps the baby's nose and mouth clear during sleep.
- ◆ If you choose to use a blanket, make sure the baby's feet are at the foot of the crib, the blanket is no higher than the baby's chest, and the blanket is tucked in around the mattress, so the baby's head can't get covered by the blanket.
- ◆ Some infants who have died have been found with soft coverings over their nose and mouth at the time of death.



- ◆ **Don't Smoke Before or After the Birth of Your Baby.** Your baby will be safest if you make sure no one smokes around your baby. Studies have shown an increased risk of SIDS in babies whose mothers smoke.
- ◆ **Don't Let Your Baby Get Too Warm During Sleep.** Babies need to be warm, but not too warm, during sleep. Make sure the baby's room temperature and clothing are the same as what makes you comfortable. Just like you, too many layers of clothing or blankets can overheat the baby and make the baby uncomfortable.
- ◆ Some people fear that babies are more affected by the cold than adults. They may overdress or cover babies in cold weather. But babies are not more sensitive to cold and should not be overdressed.
- ◆ **Make sure you follow all of these risk-reduction recommendations if you have your baby sleep in your bed.**
- ◆ **Finally, remember that most babies are born healthy and stay that way as they grow. Using these risk-reduction practices helps reduce your concern about SIDS so you and your family can enjoy your new baby!**
- ◆ SIDS risk-reduction education is not intended to cause greater fear for babies' health, but rather to inform families of the things they can do to help them feel more comfortable and secure about their baby's health.

## Presentation Tips

Hold up and show your audience the "Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs" brochure as a good summary of all the information you've presented.

If you were not able to give everyone a copy of the brochure, refer the audience to the toll-free "Back to Sleep" ordering line: 1-800-505-CRIB.



## Handouts & Tips

Handout-9  
Help Spread the Word

Presentation Tip

Handout-10  
Each of Us Can Help

## Core Content

- ◆ Anyone who is involved in the day-to-day care of infants should be aware of back sleeping.

Review the list of people that your audience can talk with to help spread the word.

- ◆ Unfortunately, babies in the African American community continue to die of SIDS more often than do white babies. An African American baby is currently 2 times more likely to die of SIDS than a white baby.
- ◆ Remember, no one is to blame for SIDS deaths, but with increased community awareness, the risk of SIDS can be reduced for our generation and future generations.
- ◆ When we understand the serious nature of the SIDS problem in our community, each of us can become a valuable community resource.
- ◆ **First, Talk About SIDS. Help Increase Community Awareness.** Many people don't understand that SIDS affects the African American community in significant numbers. By discussing the problem with neighbors, childcare providers, health care workers, family members, and others, we can help increase community understanding.
- ◆ **Then, Talk About Risk Reduction. Share New Ways to Reduce the Risk.** The tragic experiences of thousands of families have brought about increased awareness about SIDS and the ways we can reduce the chances that our babies will die of SIDS. We can learn from these tragedies and share information on risk reduction with those in our community.
- ◆ **And, for additional information on SIDS and the "Back to Sleep" campaign, call the toll-free ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB.**



## Presentation Tips

Remind your audience that back sleeping is the single most important way to reduce SIDS risk.

If possible, invite your audience to ask you questions after your presentation.

# Welcome



## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS

Reducing the Risk in  
African American Communities

# We Will Talk About . . .



- ◆ What We Know About SIDS
- ◆ Reducing Our Babies' Risks
- ◆ Resources for Families and the Community

## Our Goal . . .

Each participant will be prepared to help increase awareness of SIDS by talking with others about the impact of SIDS and risk-reduction behaviors.

# The “Back to Sleep” Campaign



- ◆ The “Back to Sleep” campaign is a public health education campaign to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in the U.S.
- ◆ The goal of the campaign is to promote back sleeping as the safest sleep position for infants under 1 year of age.

# National Partners



- ◆ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- ◆ American Academy of Pediatrics
- ◆ Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs
- ◆ Chi Eta Phi Sorority
- ◆ Chicago Department of Public Health
- ◆ Congress of National Black Churches
- ◆ D.C. Department of Health
- ◆ Maternal and Child Health Bureau
- ◆ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- ◆ National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters
- ◆ National Black Child Development Institute
- ◆ National Coalition of 100 Black Women
- ◆ National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- ◆ National Medical Association
- ◆ Pampers Parenting Institute
- ◆ SIDS Alliance
- ◆ Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

# Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is ...



The sudden and unexpected death of an infant under 1 year of age for which no exact cause of death can be determined.

# SIDS Facts



- ◆ SIDS is the leading cause of death in babies between 1 month and 1 year of age.
- ◆ Most SIDS deaths occur in babies who are between 2 and 4 months old.
- ◆ Cribs do not cause SIDS, also called “crib death.”
- ◆ Currently, fewer than 3,000 SIDS deaths occur in the U.S. each year. Before the recommendation to place babies on their backs to sleep, over 5,000 babies died each year.
- ◆ More SIDS deaths occur in colder months.
- ◆ Babies placed to sleep on their stomachs are much more likely to die of SIDS than babies placed to sleep on their backs.
- ◆ SIDS occurs without warning—currently there is no way to tell in advance which babies will die.
- ◆ The number of African American babies dying from SIDS has decreased in recent years. However, African American babies are twice as likely to die from SIDS as white babies.

# SIDS Myths and Facts



## Myths

SIDS is not . . .

- ◆ Caused by vaccines or immunizations.
- ◆ “Caught” or contagious.
- ◆ Caused by child abuse or neglect.

## Facts

Remember that . . .

- ◆ Cribs do not cause SIDS, also called “crib death.”
- ◆ SIDS is currently unpredictable, but the risk can be reduced.
- ◆ SIDS is sudden and silent—the infant appears to be healthy prior to death.
- ◆ A SIDS death occurs quickly during sleep with no signs of suffering.

# How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk



- ◆ Place your baby on his or her back to sleep at nighttime and naptime.
- ◆ Place your baby on a firm mattress, such as in a safety-approved crib.
- ◆ Remove all fluffy and loose bedding from the sleep area.
- ◆ Make sure your baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep.
- ◆ Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby.
- ◆ Don't let your baby get too warm during sleep.
- ◆ Make sure you follow all of these risk-reduction recommendations if you have your baby sleep in your bed.

Finally, remember that most babies are born healthy and stay that way as they grow. Using these risk-reduction practices helps reduce your concern about SIDS so you and your family can enjoy your new baby!

# Help Spread the Word



## Talk to . . .

- ◆ Parents
- ◆ Grandparents
- ◆ Aunts and Uncles
- ◆ Siblings
- ◆ Childcare Providers
- ◆ Health Care Providers
- ◆ Teachers
- ◆ Clergy
- ◆ Foster Parents

. . . and everyone in the community concerned about the health and well-being of our babies.

# Each of Us Can Help



- ◆ First, talk about SIDS.  
Help increase community awareness.
- ◆ Then, talk about risk reduction.  
Share new ways to reduce the risk.
- ◆ And, for additional information on SIDS and the “Back to Sleep” campaign, call the toll-free ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB.



# **Reducing the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American Communities**

**A Training Guide for a 30-Minute  
Community Education Presentation  
on SIDS**

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)



## Goals and Objectives

### Introduction

As a result of this presentation, participants will be prepared to help increase awareness of SIDS in African American communities by talking with others about the impact of SIDS and risk-reduction behaviors.

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- ◆ Define Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
- ◆ Understand the impact of SIDS across the country and in African American communities.
- ◆ Apply the basic “Back to Sleep” risk-reduction practices that help reduce the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Identify and discuss other infant care practices that help babies stay healthy.
- ◆ Understand the impact that a SIDS death has on a family.
- ◆ Identify ways to increase awareness in their community.
- ◆ Know where and how to find more information and community resources about SIDS.

## Time and Audience Size

This is a **30-minute presentation** that will help you provide **an overview of SIDS**, explain the impact SIDS has on families, describe risk-reduction practices, and identify community resources. This presentation is designed for audience interaction and is recommended for groups of 30 or fewer. Clearly, as discussion increases, so will the amount of time it takes to present the material. Based on the size of your audience, determine in advance if you will have time to take questions during the presentation. If time allows, make yourself available after the presentation to answer additional questions.

## Preparation

Prepare for your training session by reviewing and becoming familiar with the packet before presenting the material.

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

(continued)



Put together a stapled packet of handouts 1–12 to give to each participant at the beginning of your presentation. These handouts include the major points that will be discussed during your 30-minute presentation. If you have access to an overhead projector, make overhead transparencies of the handouts to use during your presentation. Otherwise, refer to the numbered handouts as you discuss each one.

The other material found in the Resource Kit provides a wealth of additional information about SIDS that can help you prepare for your presentation. The handouts for this 30-minute presentation are based on these other materials. Depending on the group to whom you are presenting, you may want to make copies of some of these materials. If possible, get a VCR to show the videotape on reducing risk.

To help you identify local resources, contact the SIDS Alliance, the Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs, and/or the National SIDS and Infant Death Program Support Center. They are listed in the “SIDS Resources” section of this Kit. You might want to prepare a list of SIDS organizations and bereavement services as well as other programs that support family health in your community. Your state or local health department may also be able to provide information on additional community resources.

## Materials

You will need to make copies of the following handouts and information for your presentation. Save the brochures and other resource materials for the end of the session. To order additional brochures, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

- Handout-1 Welcome
- Handout-2 We Will Talk About . . .
- Handout-3 The “Back to Sleep” Campaign
- Handout-4 National Partners
- Handout-5 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is ...

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

(continued)



- Handout-6 SIDS Facts
- Handout-7 SIDS Myths and Facts
- Handout-8 Aspects of Family Grief
- Handout-9 How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk
- Handout-10 Good Health Care Helps Reduce Many Risks
- Handout-11 Help Spread the Word
- Handout-12 Each of Us Can Help
- Brochure: Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs: Reduce the Risk of SIDS

SIDS Resource List

Local Resource Lists (instructor to provide)

“Saving Babies in Our Communities” article

Order Form for Campaign Materials

## The Presentation

The essential information in the training curriculum is provided as “Core Content.” Presentation tips contain insight and advice to help you in your presentation. **Bold text** in the Core Content is identical to the text in the handouts. This will help you keep your place when you are providing additional information.

# Introductions and Agenda Overview—4 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-1 Welcome

### Handout-2 We Will Talk About . . .

### Handout-3 The “Back to Sleep” Campaign

### Handout-4 National Partners

### Presentation Tip

### Presentation Tip

## Core Content\*

- ◆ Introduce yourself. Explain your role and your organization’s commitment to community education and helping to reduce the risk of SIDS in African American communities.
- ◆ Review key points you will discuss and the overall goal.
- ◆ **The “Back to Sleep” campaign is a public health education campaign to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in the U.S.**
- ◆ **The goal of the campaign is to promote back sleeping as the safest sleep position for infants under 1 year of age.**
- ◆ These Partner Organizations are committed to helping African American families address a variety of health concerns. Increasing awareness of ways to reduce the risk of SIDS is an important health issue for African American families.

Reference the national organizations supporting the initiative in your community.

- ◆ Ask the audience:  
“How many of you know what SIDS is?” and/or  
“How many of you know someone whose baby died from SIDS?”

You may want to acknowledge each comment as it relates to your presentation.

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\* Bold text in this section is identical to text on handouts.

# What We Know About SIDS—8 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-5 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is . . .

### Presentation Tip

### Handout-6 SIDS Facts

### Presentation Tip

### Handout-7 SIDS Myths and Facts

### Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ SIDS, sometimes called “crib death,” is the number one cause of death in babies between the ages of 1 month and 1 year.
- ◆ Scientists have not yet been able to determine the exact cause of SIDS. In most cases, a diagnosis of SIDS is given after an autopsy, death scene investigation, and review of the infant’s medical history.

As you read the definition of SIDS, acknowledge how difficult SIDS is to understand for all concerned people.

- ◆ We do know that SIDS is not contagious and is not caused by child abuse, neglect, or “shaken baby syndrome.”

Read the “SIDS Facts” handout.

- ◆ Explain that this information has been gathered by scientists, doctors, researchers, and other people who are trying to understand the causes of SIDS.

- ◆ Families really can reduce their babies’ risk of SIDS but not “cure” or “prevent” it.

Read the “SIDS Myths and Facts” handout.

- ◆ Families around the world, including many African American families, have led the way in trying to find the cause of SIDS. Affected families have encouraged the scientific community to learn as much as possible.



## Handout-8 Aspects of Family Grief

- ◆ Families who have experienced this terrible loss often feel guilty and responsible for their baby's death. Yet, the experts who study SIDS are very clear that *no one is to blame* for a SIDS death, and it *cannot* be predicted.
- ◆ SIDS can happen to any family no matter their race, ethnicity, income, or where they live.
- ◆ SIDS deaths often create extreme grief reactions in families.
- ◆ **Guilt and feelings of responsibility.** Parents search for things that they did or did not do that might have caused the death.
- ◆ **No chance to say goodbye.** Because SIDS deaths are unexpected, parents have not had a chance to plan for the death or to say goodbye to their child (as in the case of some heart and lung diseases).
- ◆ **Siblings' fear of death for themselves or other siblings.** Siblings may fear that they too might die in their sleep or that their parents or other siblings may also die.
- ◆ **Despair at the lack of answers.** Because we do not know the exact cause of SIDS, it is difficult for families to understand why their baby died from SIDS.
- ◆ **Feeling of being under suspicion.** Further guilt may be caused by the "suspicion" some families experience during the necessary investigation that follows a SIDS death.
- ◆ **Extended family's feelings of anger or blame.** In an effort to make sense of this unexplainable syndrome, family members may look for others to blame. Others may express anger or fear that the parents did not properly take care of the baby, causing the death.



## Presentation Tip

As you review some of these issues, speak of the importance of helping families who have lost a baby find resources to support the parents, siblings, and extended family members. Refer to the list of local resources you have compiled.

- ◆ If you know of someone who has experienced a SIDS death, you can share the resource information that has been given to you today.
- ◆ The good news is that there are specific things we can all do to reduce the risk of SIDS in our community.

# Reducing Your Baby's Risk—10 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

Handout-9 How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk

Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ These risk-reduction behaviors are the ideal in terms of reducing SIDS risk.

As you discuss each behavior, make sure you provide a full and accurate description of what each behavior means and how to perform it.

- ◆ **Place Your Baby on His or Her Back to Sleep at Nighttime and Naptime.** U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher and the American Academy of Pediatrics say that back sleeping is the safest sleep position.
- ◆ People may be skeptical about changing their current practices because they learned them from people they respect and trust. For example, for years doctors (and many grandparents) recommended putting babies to sleep on their stomachs. However, based on the study of thousands of SIDS deaths, we know that back sleeping and these other risk-reduction behaviors can help save infant lives.
- ◆ The earlier you put your baby on his or her back to sleep, the more quickly the baby gets used to this position.
- ◆ If your baby cannot sleep on his or her back, discuss other sleep options with your doctor or health care provider.
- ◆ Placing babies to sleep on their backs is the *single most important* thing to do to reduce SIDS risk.
- ◆ **Place Your Baby on a Firm Mattress, Such as in a Safety-Approved Crib.** Your baby is safest on a firm surface. Do not place your baby on a soft mattress, sofa, cushion, waterbed, sheepskin, or other soft surface.



## Presentation Tip

For more information on safety-approved cribs, refer the audience to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Consumer Hotline: 1-800-638-2772.

- ◆ Some families may not have the money to buy safety-approved cribs. You can still create a safe, firm surface for your baby by eliminating soft, fluffy items from bassinets, cradles, and other sleep areas.
- ◆ Bedsharing poses risks for infants' safety. They can get trapped between the mattress and the structure of the bed or covered by an adult's blankets and pillows. If you choose to have your baby sleep in your bed, make sure you follow all of the risk-reduction recommendations, especially the back sleep position, for safe sleeping.
- ◆ **Remove All Fluffy and Loose Bedding from the Sleep Area.** Make sure that all pillows, quilts, stuffed toys, and other soft items are taken out of the crib and other sleep areas.
- ◆ Some parents may have emotional attachments to a handmade quilt, special toy, or clothing given to them by a cherished friend or family member. Create a safer environment by using these special gifts at times other than sleep time.
- ◆ **Make Sure Your Baby's Head and Face Stay Uncovered During Sleep.** If possible, use only sleep clothing with no other covering for your baby. This keeps the baby's nose and mouth clear during sleep.
- ◆ If you choose to use a blanket, make sure the baby's feet are at the foot of the crib, the blanket is no higher than the baby's chest, and the blanket is tucked in around the mattress, so the baby's head can't get covered by the blanket.
- ◆ Some infants who have died of SIDS have been found with soft coverings over their nose and mouth at the time of death.



- ◆ **Don't Smoke Before or After the Birth of Your Baby.** Your baby will be safest if you make sure no one smokes around your baby. Studies have shown an increased risk of SIDS in babies whose mothers smoke.
- ◆ **Don't Let Your Baby Get Too Warm During Sleep.** Babies need to be warm, but not too warm, during sleep. Make sure the baby's room temperature and clothing are the same as what makes you comfortable. Just like you, too many layers of clothing or blankets can overheat the baby and make the baby uncomfortable.
- ◆ Some people fear that babies are more affected by the cold than adults, and so may overdress or cover them in cold weather. But babies are not more sensitive to cold and should not be overdressed.
- ◆ **Make sure you follow all of these risk-reduction recommendations if you have your baby sleep in your bed.**
- ◆ **Finally, remember that most babies are born healthy and stay that way as they grow. Using these risk-reduction practices helps reduce your concern about SIDS so you and your family can enjoy your new baby!**
- ◆ SIDS risk-reduction education is not intended to cause greater fear for babies' health, but rather to inform families of the things they can do to help them feel more comfortable and secure about their baby's health.

# Other Practices that Keep Our Babies Healthy—4 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

Handout-10 Good Health Care Helps Reduce Many Risks

## Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ **Much of what you probably do now to protect your baby's health also reduces the risk of SIDS.**
- ◆ **Get Good Health Care Before and During Pregnancy.** Good care for mothers, babies, and families starts even before pregnancy and includes eating the right foods, not smoking, and not taking drugs or drinking alcohol while pregnant.
- ◆ Continuing these practices after the baby is born helps maintain good health for the entire family.
- ◆ Some families may not have easy access to health care. Contact your local health department for clinics in your area.

Provide a local contact(s) for information on health care, if possible.

- ◆ **Breastfeed Your Baby if Possible.** Pediatricians believe that breastfeeding is good for babies. Breast milk helps to protect babies from some infections and helps keep babies healthy.
- ◆ Not all mothers *can* or *want* to breastfeed their babies. Health care providers can recommend formulas that will meet all the baby's nutritional needs to maintain healthy growth and development.
- ◆ **Take Your Baby for Scheduled Well-Baby Check-ups and Shots.** Well-baby check-ups are just that—a way to make sure babies are healthy and remain healthy. These check-ups provide a time for parents to discuss immunization shots for babies and any other concerns about the baby's health and development.
- ◆ Some parents may be concerned that immunizations for infants may be dangerous and cause problems rather than cure them. Families with these concerns should talk with their health care provider before making a decision. Many states require that infants receive certain shots.



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-11 Help Spread the Word

#### Presentation Tip

### Handout-12 Each of Us Can Help

#### Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ Anyone who is involved in the day-to-day care of infants should be aware of back sleeping.

Review the list of people that your audience can talk with to help spread the word.

- ◆ Unfortunately, babies in the African American community continue to die from SIDS more often than do white babies. An African American baby is currently 2 times more likely to die from SIDS than a white baby. So, spread the word about back sleeping to everyone you come in contact with.
- ◆ Remember, no one is to blame for SIDS deaths, but with increased community awareness, the risk of SIDS can be reduced for our generation and future generations.
- ◆ When we understand the serious nature of the SIDS problem in our community, each of us can become a valuable community resource.
- ◆ **First, Talk About SIDS. Help Increase Community Awareness.** Many people don't understand that SIDS affects the African American community in significant numbers. By discussing the problem with neighbors, childcare providers, health care workers, family members, and others, we can help increase community understanding.
- ◆ **Then, Talk About Risk Reduction. Share New Ways to Reduce the Risk.** Let people know that back sleeping is the single most important thing they can do to reduce the risk of SIDS.

Hold up and show your audience the “Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs” brochure as a good summary of all the information you've presented. If you were not able to give everyone a copy of the brochure, refer the audience to the toll-free “Back to Sleep” ordering line and the order form for African American campaign materials.



## Presentation Tips

- ◆ **And, for additional information on SIDS and the “Back to Sleep” campaign, call the toll-free ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB.**

If time remains and a VCR is available, you may want to show “Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: A Video on Helping to Reduce the Risk.”

Also, if possible, invite participants to ask you questions after the session.

# Welcome



## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS

Reducing the Risk in  
African American Communities

# We Will Talk About . . .



- ◆ What We Know About SIDS
- ◆ Reducing Our Babies' Risks
- ◆ Resources for Families and the Community

## Our Goal . . .

Each participant will be prepared to help increase awareness of SIDS by talking with others about the impact of SIDS and risk-reduction behaviors.

# The “Back to Sleep” Campaign



- ◆ The “Back to Sleep” campaign is a public health education campaign to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in the U.S.
- ◆ The goal of the campaign is to promote back sleeping as the safest sleep position for infants under 1 year of age.

# National Partners



- ◆ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- ◆ American Academy of Pediatrics
- ◆ Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs
- ◆ Chi Eta Phi Sorority
- ◆ Chicago Department of Public Health
- ◆ Congress of National Black Churches
- ◆ D.C. Department of Health
- ◆ Maternal and Child Health Bureau
- ◆ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- ◆ National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters
- ◆ National Black Child Development Institute
- ◆ National Coalition of 100 Black Women
- ◆ National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- ◆ National Medical Association
- ◆ Pampers Parenting Institute
- ◆ SIDS Alliance
- ◆ Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

# Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is ...



The sudden and unexpected death of an infant under 1 year of age for which no exact cause of death can be determined.

# SIDS Facts



- ◆ SIDS is the leading cause of death in babies between 1 month and 1 year of age.
- ◆ Most SIDS deaths occur in babies who are between 2 and 4 months old.
- ◆ Cribs do not cause SIDS, also called “crib death.”
- ◆ Currently, fewer than 3,000 SIDS deaths occur in the U.S. each year. Before the recommendation to place babies on their backs to sleep, over 5,000 babies died each year.
- ◆ More SIDS deaths occur in colder months.
- ◆ Babies placed to sleep on their stomachs are much more likely to die of SIDS than babies placed to sleep on their backs.
- ◆ SIDS occurs without warning—currently there is no way to tell in advance which babies will die.
- ◆ The number of African American babies dying from SIDS has decreased in recent years. However, African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies.

# SIDS Myths and Facts



## Myths

SIDS is not . . .

- ◆ Caused by vaccines or immunizations.
- ◆ “Caught” or contagious.
- ◆ Caused by child abuse or neglect.

## Facts

Remember that . . .

- ◆ Cribs do not cause SIDS, also called “crib death.”
- ◆ SIDS is currently unpredictable, but the risk can be reduced.
- ◆ SIDS is sudden and silent—the infant appears to be healthy prior to death.
- ◆ A SIDS death occurs quickly during sleep with no signs of suffering.

# Aspects of Family Grief



- ◆ Guilt and feelings of responsibility
- ◆ No chance to say goodbye
- ◆ Siblings' fear of death for themselves or other siblings
- ◆ Despair at the lack of answers
- ◆ Feeling of being under suspicion
- ◆ Extended family's feelings of anger or blame

# How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk



- ◆ Place your baby on his or her back to sleep at nighttime and naptime.
- ◆ Place your baby on a firm mattress, such as in a safety-approved crib.
- ◆ Remove all fluffy and loose bedding from the sleep area.
- ◆ Make sure your baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep.
- ◆ Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby.
- ◆ Don't let your baby get too warm during sleep.
- ◆ Make sure you follow all of these risk-reduction recommendations if you have your baby sleep in your bed.

Finally, remember that most babies are born healthy and stay that way as they grow. Using these risk-reduction practices helps reduce your concern about SIDS so you and your family can enjoy your new baby!

# Good Health Care Helps Reduce Many Risks



- ◆ Much of what you probably do now to protect your baby's health also reduces the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Get good health care before and during pregnancy.
- ◆ Breastfeed your baby if possible.
- ◆ Take your baby for scheduled well-baby check-ups and shots.

# Help Spread the Word



## Talk to . . .

- ◆ Parents
- ◆ Grandparents
- ◆ Aunts and Uncles
- ◆ Siblings
- ◆ Childcare Providers
- ◆ Health Care Providers
- ◆ Teachers
- ◆ Clergy
- ◆ Foster Parents

. . . and everyone in the community concerned about the health and well-being of our babies.

# Each of Us Can Help



- ◆ First, talk about SIDS.  
Help increase community awareness.
- ◆ Then, talk about risk reduction.  
Share new ways to reduce the risk.
- ◆ And, for additional information on SIDS and the “Back to Sleep” campaign, call the toll-free ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB.



**Reducing the Risk of  
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)  
in African American Communities**

**A Training Guide for a 60-Minute  
Community Education Presentation  
on SIDS**

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)



## Goals and Objectives

### Introduction

As a result of this presentation, participants will be prepared to help increase awareness of SIDS in African American communities by talking with others about the impact of SIDS and risk-reduction behaviors.

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- ◆ Define Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
- ◆ Understand the impact of SIDS across the country and in African American communities.
- ◆ Apply the basic “Back to Sleep” risk-reduction practices that help reduce the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Identify and discuss other infant care practices that help babies stay healthy.
- ◆ Understand the impact that a SIDS death has on a family.
- ◆ Identify ways to increase awareness in their community.
- ◆ Know where and how to find more information and community resources about SIDS.

## Time and Audience Size

This is a **60-minute presentation** that will help you provide an **overview of SIDS**, explain the impact SIDS has on families, describe risk-reduction practices, and identify community resources. This presentation is designed for audience interaction and is recommended for groups of 30 or fewer. Clearly, as discussion increases, so will the amount of time it takes to present the material. Based on the size of your audience, determine in advance if you will have time to take questions during the presentation. If time allows, make yourself available after the presentation to answer additional questions.

## Preparation

Prepare for your training session by reviewing and becoming familiar with the packet before presenting the material.

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

(continued)



Put together a stapled packet of handouts 1–12 to give to each participant at the beginning of your presentation. These handouts include the major points that will be discussed during your 60-minute presentation. If you have access to an overhead projector, make overhead transparencies of the handouts to use during your presentation. Otherwise, refer to the numbered handouts as you discuss each one.

The other material found in the Resource Kit provides a wealth of additional information about SIDS that can help you prepare for your presentation. The handouts for this 60-minute presentation are based on these other materials. Depending on the group to whom you are presenting, you may want to make copies of some of these materials. If possible, get a VCR to show the videotape on reducing risk.

To help you identify local resources, contact the SIDS Alliance, the Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs, and/or the National SIDS and Infant Death Program Support Center. They are listed in the “SIDS Resources” section of this Kit. You might want to prepare a list of SIDS organizations and bereavement services as well as other programs that support family health in your community. Your state or local health department may also be able to provide information on additional community resources.

## Materials

You will need an easel with paper or a chalk board for the audience participation exercises. You will also need to make copies of the following handouts and information for your presentation. Save the brochures and other resource materials for the end of the session. To order additional brochures, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

- Handout-1 Welcome
- Handout-2 We Will Talk About . . .
- Handout-3 The “Back to Sleep” Campaign

# Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

(continued)



- Handout-4 National Partners
- Handout-5 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is . . .
- Handout-6 SIDS Facts
- Handout-7 SIDS Myths and Facts
- Handout-8 Aspects of Family Grief
- Handout-9 How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk
- Handout-10 Good Health Care Helps Reduce Many Risks
- Handout-11 Help Spread the Word
- Handout-12 Each of Us Can Help
- Brochure: Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs: Reduce the Risk of SIDS

SIDS Resource List

Local Resource Lists (instructor to provide)

“Saving Babies in Our Communities” article

Order Form for Campaign Materials

## The Presentation

The essential information in the training curriculum is provided as “Core Content.” Presentation tips contain insight and advice to help you in your presentation. **Bold text** in the Core Content is identical to the text in the handouts. This will help you keep your place when you are providing additional information.

# Introductions and Agenda Overview–10 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-1 Welcome

### Handout-2 We Will Talk About . . .

### Handout-3 The “Back to Sleep” Campaign

### Handout-4 National Partners

### Presentation Tip

### Audience Participation

## Core Content\*

- ◆ Introduce yourself. Explain your role and your organization’s commitment to community education and helping to reduce the risk of SIDS in African American communities.
- ◆ Review key points you will discuss and the overall goal.
- ◆ **The “Back to Sleep” campaign is a public health education campaign to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in the U.S.**
- ◆ **The goal of the campaign is to promote back sleeping as the safest sleep position for infants under 1 year of age.**
- ◆ These Partner Organizations are committed to helping African American families address a variety of health concerns. Increasing awareness of ways to reduce the risk of SIDS is an important health issue for African American families.

Reference the national organizations supporting the initiative in your community.

The purpose of this interaction is to help determine what participants know about SIDS and to identify any misconceptions or misinformation they may have. Begin by asking:

“Can someone tell me what SIDS is?”

Write down responses. Then ask:

“What have you heard about SIDS?”

Write down all of the responses and review each one. Clarify any information that is incorrect or partially correct. As you review the responses, state

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\* Bold text in this section is identical to text on handouts.



that you will be covering information pertaining to all aspects of SIDS and that you will answer questions that arise throughout the presentation.

Then ask,

“Does anyone know someone who has lost a baby to SIDS?”

If anyone has, let them know that you will welcome their comments later during the presentation when you discuss the effect that losing a baby to SIDS has on a family.

# What We Know About SIDS—10 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

### Handout-5 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is . . .

### Presentation Tip

### Handout-6 SIDS Facts

### Presentation Tip

### Handout-7 SIDS Myths and Facts

### Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ SIDS, sometimes called “crib death,” is the number one cause of death in babies between the ages of 1 month and 1 year.
- ◆ Scientists have not yet been able to determine the exact cause of SIDS. In most cases, a diagnosis of SIDS is given after an autopsy, death scene investigation, and review of the infant’s medical history.

As you read the definition of SIDS, acknowledge how difficult SIDS is to understand for all concerned people.

- ◆ We do know that SIDS is not contagious and is not caused by child abuse, neglect, or “shaken baby syndrome.”

Read the “SIDS Facts” handout.

- ◆ Explain that this information has been gathered by scientists, doctors, researchers, and other people who are trying to understand the causes of SIDS.

- ◆ Families really can reduce their babies’ risk of SIDS but not “cure” or “prevent” it.

Read the “SIDS Myths and Facts” handout.

- ◆ Families around the world, including many African American families, have led the way in trying to find the cause of SIDS. Affected families have encouraged the scientific community to learn as much as possible.



## Handout-8 Aspects of Family Grief

- ◆ Families who have experienced this terrible loss often feel guilty and responsible for their baby's death. Yet, the experts who study SIDS are very clear that *no one is to blame* for a SIDS death, and it *cannot* be predicted.
- ◆ SIDS can happen to any family no matter their race, ethnicity, income, or where they live.
- ◆ SIDS deaths often create extreme grief reactions in families.
- ◆ **Guilt and feelings of responsibility.** Parents search for things that they did or did not do that might have caused the death.
- ◆ **No chance to say goodbye.** Because SIDS deaths are unexpected, parents have not had a chance to plan for the death or to say goodbye to their child (as in the case of some heart and lung diseases).
- ◆ **Siblings' fear of death for themselves or other siblings.** Siblings may fear that they too might die in their sleep or that their parents or other siblings may also die.
- ◆ **Despair at the lack of answers.** Because we do not know the exact cause of SIDS, it is difficult for families to understand why their baby died from SIDS.
- ◆ **Feeling of being under suspicion.** Further guilt may be caused by the "suspicion" some families experience during the necessary investigation that follows a SIDS death.
- ◆ **Extended family's feelings of anger or blame.** In an effort to make sense of this unexplainable syndrome, family members may look for others to blame. Others may express anger or fear that the parents did not properly take care of the baby, causing the death.



## Presentation Tip

As you review some of these issues, speak of the importance of helping families who have lost a baby find resources to support the parents, siblings, and extended family members. Refer to the list of local resources you have compiled.

- ◆ If you know of someone who has experienced a SIDS death, you can share the resource information that has been given to you today.
- ◆ The good news is that there are specific things we can all do to reduce the risk of SIDS in our community.

# Reducing Your Baby's Risk—10 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

Handout-9 How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk

Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ These risk-reduction behaviors are the ideal in terms of reducing SIDS risk.

As you discuss each behavior, make sure you provide a full and accurate description of what each behavior means and how to perform it.

- ◆ **Place Your Baby on His or Her Back to Sleep at Nighttime and Naptime.** U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher and the American Academy of Pediatrics say that back sleeping is the safest sleep position.
- ◆ People may be skeptical about changing their current practices because they learned them from people they respect and trust. For example, for years doctors (and many grandparents) recommended putting babies to sleep on their stomachs. However, based on the study of thousands of SIDS deaths, we know that back sleeping and these other risk-reduction behaviors can save infant lives.
- ◆ The earlier you put your baby on his or her back to sleep, the more quickly the baby gets used to this position.
- ◆ If your baby cannot sleep on his or her back, discuss other sleep options with your pediatrician or health care provider.
- ◆ Placing babies to sleep on their backs is the *single most important* thing to do to reduce SIDS risk.
- ◆ **Place Your Baby on a Firm Mattress, Such as in a Safety-Approved Crib.** Your baby is safest on a firm surface. Do not place your baby on a soft mattress, sofa, cushion, waterbed, sheepskin, or other soft surface.



## Presentation Tip

For more information on safety-approved cribs, refer the audience to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Consumer Hotline: 1-800-638-2772.

- ◆ Some families may not have the money to buy safety-approved cribs. You can still create a safe, firm surface for your baby by eliminating soft, fluffy items from bassinets, cradles, and other sleep areas.
- ◆ Bedsharing poses risks for infants' safety. They can get trapped between the mattress and the structure of the bed or covered by an adult's blankets and pillows. If you choose to have your baby sleep in your bed, make sure you follow all of the risk-reduction recommendations, especially the back sleep position, for safe sleeping.
- ◆ **Remove All Fluffy and Loose Bedding from the Sleep Area.** Make sure that all pillows, quilts, stuffed toys, and other soft items are taken out of the crib and other sleep areas.
- ◆ Some parents may have emotional attachments to a handmade quilt, special toy, or clothing given to them by a cherished friend or family member. Create a safer environment by using these special gifts at times other than sleep time.
- ◆ **Make Sure Your Baby's Head and Face Stay Uncovered During Sleep.** If possible, use only sleep clothing with no other covering for your baby. This keeps the baby's nose and mouth clear during sleep.
- ◆ If you choose to use a blanket, make sure the baby's feet are at the foot of the crib, the blanket is no higher than the baby's chest, and the blanket is tucked in around the mattress, so the baby's head can't get covered by the blanket.
- ◆ Some infants who have died of SIDS have been found with soft coverings over their nose and mouth at the time of death.



- ◆ **Don't Smoke Before or After the Birth of Your Baby.** Your baby will be safest if you make sure no one smokes around your baby. Studies have shown an increased risk of SIDS in babies whose mothers smoke.
- ◆ **Don't Let Your Baby Get Too Warm During Sleep.** Babies need to be warm, but not too warm, during sleep. Make sure the baby's room temperature and clothing are the same as what makes you comfortable. Just like you, too many layers of clothing or blankets can overheat the baby and make the baby uncomfortable.
- ◆ Some people fear that babies are more affected by the cold than adults, and so may overdress or cover them in cold weather. But babies are not more sensitive to cold and should not be overdressed.
- ◆ **Make sure you follow all of these risk-reduction recommendations if you have your baby sleep in your bed.**
- ◆ **Finally, remember that most babies are born healthy and stay that way as they grow. Using these risk-reduction practices helps reduce your concern about SIDS so you and your family can enjoy your new baby!**
- ◆ SIDS risk-reduction education is not intended to cause greater fear for babies' health, but rather to inform families of the things they can do to help them feel more comfortable and secure about their baby's health.

# Other Practices That Keep Our Babies Healthy—5 Minutes



## Handouts & Tips

Handout-10 Good Health Care Helps Reduce Many Risks

## Presentation Tip

## Core Content

- ◆ **Much of what you probably do now to protect your baby's health also reduces the risk of SIDS.**
- ◆ **Get Good Health Care Before and During Pregnancy.** Good care for mothers, babies, and families starts even before pregnancy and includes eating the right foods, not smoking, and not taking drugs or drinking alcohol while pregnant.
- ◆ Continuing these practices after the baby is born helps maintain good health for the entire family.
- ◆ Some families may not have easy access to health care. Contact your local health department for clinics in your area.

Provide a local contact(s) for information on health care, if possible.

- ◆ **Breastfeed Your Baby if Possible.** Pediatricians believe that breastfeeding is good for babies. Breast milk helps to protect babies from some infections and helps keep babies healthy.
- ◆ Not all mothers *can* or *want* to breastfeed their babies. Health care providers can recommend formulas that will meet all the baby's nutritional needs to maintain healthy growth and development.
- ◆ **Take Your Baby for Scheduled Well-Baby Check-ups and Shots.** Well-baby check-ups are just that—a way to make sure babies are healthy and remain healthy. These check-ups provide a time for parents to discuss immunization shots for babies and any other concerns about the baby's health and development.
- ◆ Some parents may be concerned that immunizations for infants may be dangerous and cause problems rather than cure them. Families with these concerns should talk with their health care provider before making a decision. Many states require that infants receive certain shots.



## Handouts & Tips

**Handout-11 Help Spread the Word**

**Presentation Tip**

## Audience Participation

## Core Content

- ◆ Anyone who is involved in the day-to-day care of infants should be aware of back sleeping.

Review the list of people that your audience can talk with to help spread the word.

- ◆ Unfortunately, babies in the African American community continue to die from SIDS more often than do white babies. An African American baby is currently 2 times more likely to die from SIDS than a white baby. So, spread the word about back sleeping to everyone you come in contact with.
- ◆ Remember, no one is to blame for SIDS deaths, but with increased community awareness, the risk of SIDS can be reduced for our generation and future generations.

Explain to the group that it is sometimes difficult to start a conversation about a health or safety topic, especially when it concerns infants. Tell participants that to help everyone feel more comfortable about “spreading the word,” you would like to divide them into four groups to do an exercise on “conversation starters”—things they can say to start a conversation about SIDS.

Ask the following questions:

“How do you think you would start a discussion about SIDS with someone you know?”

“How comfortable would you be talking about SIDS to someone you don’t know well?”

Use the following examples to explain how they might start a conversation about SIDS with someone they know.



“I just attended a presentation on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Do you know what SIDS is?”

“Did you know that babies should be placed on their backs to sleep?”

Assign each group one of the following categories—1) new or expecting parents, 2) grandparents, 3) daycare providers, and 4) teenage babysitters. Give each group a sheet of paper (easel paper, if available) and ask them to write down as many “conversation starters” as they can think of to initiate a discussion about SIDS with a person in the assigned category. (If there are more than 30 participants, you may want to add more groups.)

If the groups are having trouble getting started, give them the following examples.

**New parents:** “Did they talk to you about SIDS at the hospital?”

**Grandparents:** “There are so many things that have changed in caring for infants. Did you know that we are supposed to put babies to sleep on their backs?”

**Daycare providers:** “Have you received any material or training about SIDS?”

**Teenage babysitters:** “Have you ever heard of SIDS?”

Give participants 7 to 8 minutes to brainstorm and write down their suggestions. Have someone from each group present the group’s suggestions. Ask participants:

“How do you think people will respond to these conversation starters?”



## Handout-12 Each of Us Can Help

- ◆ When we understand the serious nature of the SIDS problem in our community, each of us can become a valuable community resource.
- ◆ **First, Talk About SIDS. Help Increase Community Awareness.** Many people don't understand that SIDS affects the African American community in significant numbers. By discussing the problem with neighbors, childcare providers, health care workers, family members, and others, we can help increase community understanding.
- ◆ **Then, Talk About Risk Reduction. Share New Ways to Reduce the Risk.** Let people know that back sleeping is the single most important thing they can do to reduce the risk of SIDS.

## Audience Participation

As we've discussed, many people need to know about SIDS and many people can help us raise awareness about SIDS. These include:

People who have infants or care for infants.

Community organizations, clinics, and businesses that might be willing to distribute information about SIDS, such as grocery stores and community centers.

People in the community who are in a position to talk with others about the importance of back sleeping, such as librarians and hair stylists.

Ask participants to think about the people they might contact after the workshop. (Give them about 30 seconds to think.) Ask for volunteers to share the people they have identified and to tell why they selected them.



## Presentation Tip

Hold up and show your audience the “Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs” brochure as a good summary of all the information you’ve presented. If you were not able to give everyone a copy of the brochure, refer the audience to the toll-free “Back to Sleep” ordering line and the order form for African American campaign materials.

- ◆ **And, for additional information on SIDS and the “Back to Sleep” campaign, call the toll-free ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB.**

## Presentation Tips

If time remains and a VCR is available, you may want to show “Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: A Video on Helping to Reduce the Risk.”

Also, if possible, invite participants to ask you questions after the session.

# Welcome



## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS

Reducing the Risk in  
African American Communities

# We Will Talk About . . .



- ◆ What We Know About SIDS
- ◆ Reducing Our Babies' Risks
- ◆ Resources for Families and the Community

## Our Goal . . .

Each participant will be prepared to help increase awareness of SIDS by talking with others about the impact of SIDS and risk-reduction behaviors.

# The “Back to Sleep” Campaign



- ◆ The “Back to Sleep” campaign is a public health education campaign to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in the U.S.
- ◆ The goal of the campaign is to promote back sleeping as the safest sleep position for infants under 1 year of age.

# National Partners



- ◆ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- ◆ American Academy of Pediatrics
- ◆ Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs
- ◆ Chi Eta Phi Sorority
- ◆ Chicago Department of Public Health
- ◆ Congress of National Black Churches
- ◆ D.C. Department of Health
- ◆ Maternal and Child Health Bureau
- ◆ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- ◆ National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters
- ◆ National Black Child Development Institute
- ◆ National Coalition of 100 Black Women
- ◆ National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- ◆ National Medical Association
- ◆ Pampers Parenting Institute
- ◆ SIDS Alliance
- ◆ Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

# Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is ...



The sudden and unexpected death of an infant under 1 year of age for which no exact cause of death can be determined.

# SIDS Facts



- ◆ SIDS is the leading cause of death in babies between 1 month and 1 year of age.
- ◆ Most SIDS deaths occur in babies who are between 2 and 4 months old.
- ◆ Cribs do not cause SIDS, also called “crib death.”
- ◆ Currently, fewer than 3,000 SIDS deaths occur in the U.S. each year. Before the recommendation to place babies on their backs to sleep, over 5,000 babies died each year.
- ◆ More SIDS deaths occur in colder months.
- ◆ Babies placed to sleep on their stomachs are much more likely to die of SIDS than babies placed to sleep on their backs.
- ◆ SIDS occurs without warning—currently there is no way to tell in advance which babies will die.
- ◆ The number of African American babies dying from SIDS has decreased in recent years. However, African American babies are twice as likely to die from SIDS as white babies.

# SIDS Myths and Facts



## Myths

SIDS is not . . .

- ◆ Caused by vaccines or immunizations.
- ◆ “Caught” or contagious.
- ◆ Caused by child abuse or neglect.

## Facts

Remember that . . .

- ◆ Cribs do not cause SIDS, also called “crib death.”
- ◆ SIDS is currently unpredictable, but the risk can be reduced.
- ◆ SIDS is sudden and silent—the infant appears to be healthy prior to death.
- ◆ A SIDS death occurs quickly during sleep with no signs of suffering.

# Aspects of Family Grief



- ◆ Guilt and feelings of responsibility
- ◆ No chance to say goodbye
- ◆ Siblings' fear of death for themselves or other siblings
- ◆ Despair at the lack of answers
- ◆ Feeling of being under suspicion
- ◆ Extended family's feelings of anger or blame

# How to Reduce Your Baby's Risk



- ◆ Place your baby on his or her back to sleep at nighttime and naptime.
- ◆ Place your baby on a firm mattress, such as in a safety-approved crib.
- ◆ Remove all fluffy and loose bedding from the sleep area.
- ◆ Make sure your baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep.
- ◆ Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby.
- ◆ Don't let your baby get too warm during sleep.
- ◆ Make sure you follow all of these risk-reduction recommendations if you have your baby sleep in your bed.

Finally, remember that most babies are born healthy and stay that way as they grow. Using these risk-reduction practices helps reduce your concern about SIDS so you and your family can enjoy your new baby!

# Good Health Care Helps Reduce Many Risks



- ◆ Much of what you probably do now to protect your baby's health also reduces the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Get good health care before and during pregnancy.
- ◆ Breastfeed your baby if possible.
- ◆ Take your baby for scheduled well-baby check-ups and shots.

# Help Spread the Word



## Talk to . . .

- ◆ Parents
- ◆ Grandparents
- ◆ Aunts and Uncles
- ◆ Siblings
- ◆ Childcare Providers
- ◆ Health Care Providers
- ◆ Teachers
- ◆ Clergy
- ◆ Foster Parents

. . . and everyone in the community concerned about the health and well-being of our babies.

# Each of Us Can Help



- ◆ First, talk about SIDS.  
Help increase community awareness.
- ◆ Then, talk about risk reduction.  
Share new ways to reduce the risk.
- ◆ And, for additional information on SIDS and the “Back to Sleep” campaign, call the toll-free ordering line at 1-800-505-CRIB.

# National Partners



## **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (AKA)**

5656 South Stony Island Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60637  
Phone: (773) 684-1282

## **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**

141 Northwest Point Boulevard  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
Phone: (847) 434-4000  
Fax: (847) 434-8000  
Web site: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

## **Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs (ASIP)**

c/o Minnesota SID Center  
Children's Hospitals and Clinics  
2525 Chicago Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Phone: (612) 813-6285  
Fax: (612) 813-7344

## **Chi Eta Phi Sorority**

3029 13th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: (202) 232-3858

## **Chicago Department of Public Health**

333 South State Street, 7th floor  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: (312) 747-9815  
Fax: (312) 747-9739

## **Congress of National Black Churches, Inc.**

1225 Eye Street, NW, Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (202) 371-1091  
Fax: (202) 371-0894

## **District of Columbia Department of Health**

Special Needs Unit  
825 North Capitol Street, NE, 3rd floor  
Washington, DC 20002  
Phone: (202) 442-9353  
Fax: (202) 442-4948

## National Partners (continued)



### **Maternal and Child Health Bureau**

Infant and Child Health Branch  
Division of Adolescent and Family Health  
Health Resources and Services Administration  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Room 18A39  
Rockville, MD 20857  
Phone: (301) 443-6600  
Fax: (301) 443-1296  
Web site: [www.mchb.gov](http://www.mchb.gov)

### **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**

National WIN Coordinator  
4805 Mount Hope Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21215  
Phone: (410) 358-8900  
Fax: (410) 486-9255

### **National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB)**

c/o Minnesota SID Center/ASIP  
Children's Hospitals and Clinics  
2525 Chicago Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Phone: (612) 813-6285  
Fax: (612) 813-7344

### **National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)**

1101 15th Street, NW, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (202) 833-2220  
Fax: (202) 833-2222  
Web site: [www.nbcdi.org](http://www.nbcdi.org)

### **National Coalition of 100 Black Women**

38 West 32nd Street, Suite 1610  
New York, NY 10001-3816  
Phone: (212) 947-2196

## National Partners (continued)



### **National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)**

c/o Back to Sleep/NICHD  
31 Center Drive  
Room 2A32  
Bethesda, MD 20892-2425  
Phone: (800) 505-CRIB (2742) (toll free to order materials)  
Phone: (301) 496-5133 (general information)  
Fax: (301) 496-7101  
Web site: [www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov)

### **National Medical Association (NMA)**

1012 10th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: (202) 347-1895  
Fax: (202) 842-3293

### **Pampers Parenting Institute (PPI)**

1 Procter & Gamble Plaza, C-4  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
Phone: (513) 983-7667  
Fax: (513) 983-7675  
Web site: [www.pampers.com](http://www.pampers.com)

### **SIDS Alliance**

1314 Bedford Avenue, Suite 210  
Baltimore, MD 21208  
Phone: (800) 221-SIDS (7437) (toll free)  
Phone: (410) 653-8226  
Fax: (410) 653-8709

### **Zeta Phi Beta Sorority**

1734 New Hampshire Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: (202) 387-3103



**These groups are dedicated to educating parents and others about SIDS.**

## **Alliance of Grandparents Against SIDS Tragedy (A.G.A.S.T.)**

353 East Verde Lane  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
Phone: (888) 774-7437 (toll free)  
Phone: (602) 604-8462  
Fax: (602) 604-8461  
E-mail: granmasids@aol.com  
Web site: [www.agast.org](http://www.agast.org)

## **Aiding Mothers and Fathers Experiencing Neonatal Death (AMEND)**

4324 Berrywick Terrace  
St. Louis, MO 63128  
Phone: (314) 487-7582

## **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**

141 Northwest Point Boulevard  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
Phone: (800) 433-9016 (toll free)  
Phone: (847) 434-4000  
Fax: (847) 434-8000  
Web site: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

## **Apnea Identification Program**

3901 Beaubian Boulevard  
Detroit, MI 48201  
Phone: (313) 745-4301  
Fax: (313) 993-2948

## **Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs (ASIP)**

c/o Minnesota SID Center  
Children's Hospitals and Clinics  
2525 Chicago Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Phone: (612) 813-6285  
Fax: (612) 813-7344



## **"Back to Sleep" Campaign**

31 Center Drive  
Room 2A32  
Bethesda, MD 20892-2425  
Phone: (800) 505-CRIB (2742) (toll free to order materials)  
Phone: (301) 496-5133 (general information)  
Fax: (301) 496-7101  
Web site: [www.nichd.nih.gov/sids](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids)

## **Bereaved Parents USA**

415 Mimosa Drive  
Denton, TX 76201  
Phone: (940) 387-1074  
Fax: (940) 387-1074

## **California SIDS Program**

5330 Primrose Drive  
Suite 231  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628-3542  
Phone: (800) 369-SIDS (within California)  
Phone: (916) 536-0146  
Fax: (916) 536-0167  
Web site: [www.caisprogram@sprintmail.com](mailto:www.caisprogram@sprintmail.com)

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

Maternal and Infant Health  
4770 Buford Highway, NE  
Mail Stop K23  
Atlanta, GA 30341-3724  
Phone: (770) 488-5187  
Fax: (770) 488-5628  
Web site: [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp)

## **Center for Infant and Child Loss**

630 West Fayette Street  
Room 5-684  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 706-5062  
Fax: (410) 706-0146

## **Center for Loss and Life Transition**

3735 Broken Bow Road  
Fort Collins, CO 80526  
Phone: (970) 226-6050  
Web site: [www.centerforloss.com](http://www.centerforloss.com)

# SIDS Resources (continued)



## **Maternal and Child Health Bureau**

Infant and Child Health Branch  
Division of Adolescent and Family Health  
Health Resources and Services Administration  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Room 18A39  
Rockville, MD 20857  
Phone: (301) 443-6600  
Fax: (301) 443-1296  
Web site: [www.mchb.gov](http://www.mchb.gov)

## **National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health**

2000 15th Street North  
Suite 701  
Arlington, VA 22201-2617  
Phone: (703) 524-7802  
Fax: (703) 524-9335  
E-mail: [info@ncemch.org](mailto:info@ncemch.org)  
Web site: [www.ncemch.org](http://www.ncemch.org)

## **National SIDS and Infant Death Program Support Center**

1314 Bedford Avenue  
Suite 205B  
Baltimore, MD 21208  
Phone: (800) 638-7437 (toll free)  
Phone: (410) 415-6628  
Fax: (410) 415-5093  
E-mail: [sds62@aol.com](mailto:sds62@aol.com)

## **The National SIDS Resource Center**

2070 Chain Bridge Road  
Suite 450  
Vienna, VA 22182  
Phone: (703) 821-8955 ext. 249  
Fax: (703) 821-2098  
E-mail: [info@circsol.com](mailto:info@circsol.com)

## **Pampers Parenting Institute (PPI)**

1 Procter & Gamble Plaza, C-4  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
Phone: (513) 983-7667  
Fax: (513) 983-7675  
Web site: [www.pampers.com](http://www.pampers.com)

## SIDS Resources (continued)



### **Pen Parents, Inc.**

P.O. Box 8738  
Reno, NV 89507-8738  
Phone: (702) 826-7332  
Fax: (702) 829-0866  
E-mail: penparents@aol.com  
Web site: www.penparents.org

### **RAINBOWS**

2100 Golf Road  
#370  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008  
Phone: (800) 266-3206 (toll free)  
Phone: (847) 952-1770  
Fax: (847) 952-1774

### **SHARE Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support**

St. Joseph's Health Center  
300 First Capitol Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63301  
Phone: (800) 821-6819 (toll free)  
Fax: (636) 947-7486

### **The SIDS Alliance**

1314 Bedford Avenue  
Suite 210  
Baltimore, MD 21208  
Phone: (800) 221-SIDS (7437) (toll free)  
Phone: (410) 653-8226  
Fax: (410) 653-8709  
E-mail: sidshq@charm.net  
Web site: www.sidsalliance.org

### **SIDS Network**

P.O. Box 520  
Ledyard, CT 06339  
E-mail: sidsnet@sids-network.org  
Web site: www.sids-network.org

# BACK TO SLEEP Order Form

## Free Campaign Materials

### African American Outreach Program Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

ITEM	NO. OF COPIES
<p>Parent Brochure—<i>Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs</i>: Talks about SIDS risk factors and ways to help reduce the risk of SIDS. Written for a general audience, including parents, family members, child care providers.</p>	
<p>Refrigerator Magnet, 4" x 6": Lists ways to reduce the risk of SIDS.</p>	
<p>Parent Video Tape—<i>Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: A Video on Helping To Reduce the Risk</i>: English, continuous play of 4-minute video for 1 hour, VHS format. Intended for a general audience. (Limit 10)</p>	
<p><i>Resource Kit for Reducing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in African American Communities</i>: Kit includes materials for community-based training sessions, 15-minute, 30-minute and 60-minute training modules, background material on SIDS, resources, 10 brochures, 10 magnets, and 1 video. (Limit 10)</p>	
Order Form	

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

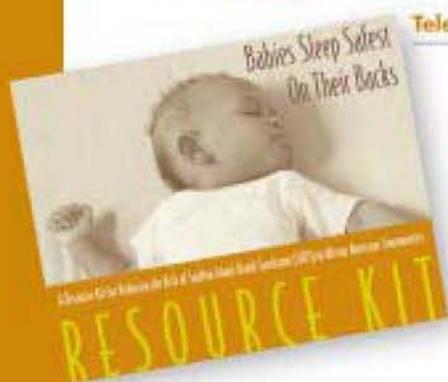
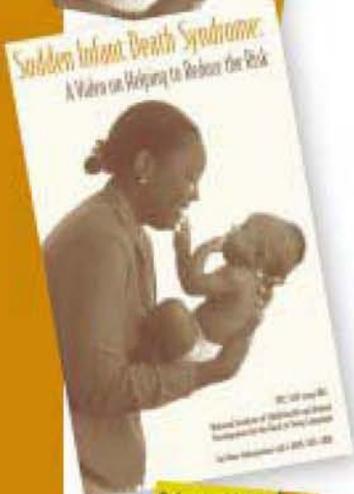
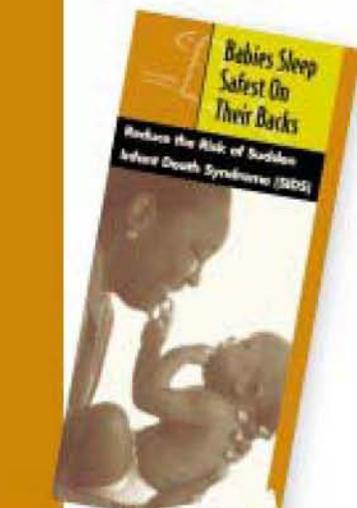
**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### To order materials:

**Mail:** NICHD/Back to Sleep  
31 Center Drive, Room 2A32  
Bethesda, MD 20892-2425

**Call:** 1-800-505-CRIB

**Fax:** 301-496-7101





# Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs

Reduce the Risk of  
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome — SIDS

For more information on SIDS call

**1-800-505-CRIB**



This space is provided by WMATA as a public service. WMATA does not endorse any product, service, event or ideology conveyed in this message.

# Partners Evaluation Form

Please help us determine the usefulness of these materials so that we can continue to effectively raise awareness about reducing the risk of SIDS.

Name	Title			
Organization Name and Address	Phone & Fax Numbers			
Please check the most appropriate response to evaluate each Kit piece.				
	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful
How to Make This Kit Work for You				
SIDS Facts				
Myths and Facts About SIDS				
Actions to Reduce the Risk of SIDS				
Responses to Questions About SIDS				
Babies Sleep Safest on Their Backs: Reduce the Risk of SIDS Brochure				
Refrigerator Magnet				
How to Promote Back Sleeping in Your Community				
Sample Community Flyer				
Sample Display Ad				
SIDS: A Video on Helping to Reduce the Risk				
How to Work with the Media—Radio, TV, Print				
Sample Media Release				
Sample Radio Public Service Announcements				
National Partners				
SIDS Resources				
Training Materials – evaluate the guide(s) you used.				
Training Guide 1 – 15 minutes				
Training Guide 2 – 30 minutes				
Training Guide 3 – 60 minutes				
Did the Guides provide enough information to answer all questions raised? If no, what additional information would be helpful? (Use back of form if needed.)			Yes	No
Do you require any additional instructional information? If yes, please describe. (Use back of form if needed.)			Yes	No
How many training presentations did you conduct?				
What length sessions did you use?				
Approximately how many people attended each session?				
Did you encounter resistance to any of the information you presented? If yes, please describe. (Use back of form if needed.)			Yes	No

**Please mail this form to: NICHD/BTS Evaluation, 31 Center Drive, Rm. 2A32, Bethesda, MD 20892-2425. You may also fax this survey to 301-496-7101.** We appreciate your efforts to provide this valuable feedback.