



## Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative

### **Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Other Sleep-Related Causes of Infant Death in Your Community**

The Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative is an effort created and supported by the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) of the National Institutes of Health. The NICHD is a Federal government institute that sponsors research on development before and after birth; maternal, child, and family health; reproductive biology and population issues; and medical rehabilitation. This initiative supports the newly expanded Safe to Sleep campaign (formerly known as the Back to Sleep campaign).

#### **Background of the Safe to Sleep Campaign**

The NICHD, through its research on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and its SIDS outreach efforts, has been working to understand SIDS and behaviors to reduce SIDS risk since the 1970s. In 1994, the NICHD—in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration, First Candle/SIDS Alliance, and the Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs—launched the Back to Sleep campaign (<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/SIDS>) to educate parents and caregivers about ways to reduce the risk of SIDS.

In October 2011, the AAP released updated recommendations for reducing SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death, such as suffocation and strangulation. The AAP's updated recommendations are available at:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/128/5/1030.full.html>.

In October 2012, the NICHD launched the newly expanded Safe to Sleep campaign, which incorporates the most recent safe infant sleep recommendations from the AAP to address the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. Along with the recommendation to place infants on their back to sleep at all sleep times, the campaign emphasizes placing infants in their own safe sleep environment without any soft bedding, such as blankets or quilts, and separate from an adult bed. It also emphasizes breastfeeding, when possible, which has been associated with reduced SIDS risk, and eliminating such risks to infant health as overheating, exposure to tobacco smoke, and a mother's use of alcohol and illicit drugs. The campaign continues to spread messages on safe infant sleep practices to members of all communities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Reproductive Health, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have joined as collaborators to support the campaign's efforts.

Since the start of the Back to Sleep campaign, SIDS rates have declined by more than 50 percent across all populations in the United States. However, SIDS remains the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 1 year of age. In addition, some racial and ethnic groups experience greater incidence of SIDS deaths than others. Along with working with all communities to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death, the campaign aims to address these racial and ethnic disparities through tailored outreach and collaborations.

## Overview of the Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative

### Goal

The goal of the Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative is to share campaign messages about SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death through the use of the media and community outreach. The Safe to Sleep Champions will be the voice of the campaign by speaking with local media and community members to raise awareness about the newly expanded campaign. **Each Champion will be tasked with the goal of completing at least two outreach events or activities to educate the media and/or their local communities about safe infant sleep practices.**

### Objectives

All Safe to Sleep Champions will be expected to:

- Become familiar with the updated AAP recommendations and the Safe to Sleep campaign.
- Educate parents and other caregivers, child care providers, health care providers, and other community members about safe infant sleep practices by working with local media and/or conducting community outreach to highlight the public health issue of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death with a focus on the Safe to Sleep campaign.
- Serve as a liaison to the NICHD for ongoing communication, tracking, and evaluation.

### Training Details

Safe to Sleep Champions will be required to participate in a one-hour webinar training conducted by the NICHD.

The training will include the following components:

- Background on SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death
- History of the Safe to Sleep campaign
- Media training
- Community outreach training.

Trainings will be held on the following dates:

- Tuesday, February 26, at 12 p.m. Eastern/ 11 a.m. Central/ 10 a.m. Mountain/ 9 a.m. Pacific
- Tuesday, March 5, at 3 p.m. Eastern/ 2 p.m. Central/ 1 p.m. Mountain/ 12 p.m. Pacific
- Thursday, March 14, at 8 p.m. Eastern/ 7 p.m. Central/ 6 p.m. Mountain/ 5 p.m. Pacific

Each Champion will be required to participate in one of the scheduled webinar trainings.

## Resources and Support

For volunteering their time, Safe to Sleep Champions will receive the following:

- National recognition from the NICHD
- Access to NICHD resources and materials to support local community efforts and outreach
- Support through technical assistance, conference calls, and peer-to-peer learning
- Access to a national network of other Safe to Sleep Champions.

## Potential Candidates

A Safe to Sleep Champion can be a mother, father, grandparent, or other family member; a physician or other health care provider; a health educator; a representative from a local infant or family health organization or coalition; or a trusted community leader who is dedicated to reducing the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death.

## Registration Process

To volunteer as a Safe to Sleep Champion, please complete the attached registration form.

Forms may be sent by mail, e-mail, or fax to Morgan Marshall at IQ Solutions. For e-mail and fax submissions, please include "Safe to Sleep Champions Webinar Training Registration Form" in the subject line.

### Mail:

Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative  
Attn: Morgan Marshall  
IQ Solutions  
11300 Rockville Pike, Suite 901  
Rockville, MD 20852

### E-mail:

[safetosleep@iqsolutions.com](mailto:safetosleep@iqsolutions.com)

### Fax:

301-984-1473

Should you have any questions related to the Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative, registration form, or training details, please contact Morgan Marshall at 240-221-4231 or at [safetosleep@iqsolutions.com](mailto:safetosleep@iqsolutions.com).