

October 21, 2016

Collier County Promotes Safe Sleep Awareness Month



Contact:

Paula Digrigoli, Executive Director
NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition of Collier County
Office. 239-624-4023 / Cell. 239-537-3436
Paula.Digrigoli@NCHmd.org

Naples, Florida-Since the year 2000, 43 babies under the age of one went to sleep and never woke up. *October is Safe Sleep Awareness Month.*

The Florida Department of Health in Collier County in conjunction with The Healthy Start Coalition of SWFL and The NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition of Collier County promotes community-based maternal and child health programs that focus on the reduction of infant mortality, racial disparities and low birth weight. The NCH birthing place gives out halo blankets, safe sleep literature and a copy of "Sleep Baby Safe and Snug," which gently reminds caregivers of best practices while putting baby to sleep. Through a grant from Trinity by the Cove Episcopal Church, The Florida Department of Health gives out free pack and plays to income qualified families in Collier County.

"Forty Countries have a lower infant mortality rate than the United States. This heartbreaking condition can happen in any family regardless of income, education or community." said Dr. Debra Shepard, Chair of Collier County Safe Sleep Committee. "Research shows that simple improvements in the sleep environment can decrease the risk of SUIDS, and educating parents and caregivers will save lives."

To ensure safe infant sleep, babies should always be put to sleep on their backs, alone in their own crib or bassinet, with no bumpers, pillows, quilts, comforter or other objects in the crib. Parents and caregivers should not bed-share with their babies; and anyone under the influence of drugs, alcohol or if they are smoking, should not rest with baby.

A Butterfly Release remembering the 43 babies lost to unsafe sleep practices since 2000 will take place October 27 at 9 a.m. at the NCH Garden of Hope and Courage, 332 8th Street N, Naples, FL 34102. Personal testimonies will be given by families.

Educating the public is the first step toward promoting safe sleep practice here in Collier County. Please join us for our Butterfly Release.

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