**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Date**

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# **Safest Sleep for babies**

***October is SIDS Awareness Month***

***[City and state of your organization]****- [Name of your organization]* and collaborating state and local organizations are encouraging our communities to recognize October as SIDS Awareness Month. Together we hope to ensure that every woman has a healthy pregnancy, learns about safe sleep for her baby, gets early prenatal care and support services and makes choices that promote healthy lifestyles for a lifetime.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of an otherwise healthy baby. According to the most recent data from 2011, 247 Kansas infants died before their first birthdays, representing an infant mortality rate (IMR) of 6.2 deaths per 1,000 live births. This rate of 6.2 was the lowest infant mortality rate in Kansas since record keeping began in 1912. Of the 247 deaths, 31 were attributed to SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths, or 12.6% percent of the infant deaths.

“This makes SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Deaths the third highest cause of death among Kansas infants,” said Dr. Moser, KDHE Secretary and Kansas Health Officer. “SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths rates are two times higher in the African American population when compared to the White non-Hispanic and Hispanic populations.”

SIDS is most common for infants two to four months of age who appear healthy, but die without warning during sleep. Since the Back to Sleep Campaign, SIDS deaths have decreased by about 50 percent. With the Back to Sleep campaign we learned babies who sleep on their tummies are at 5 times greater risk of SIDS and babies placed on their tummies to sleep who usually sleep on their backs are at an increased rate of 18 times greater risk. Research also found that 67 percent of the infants diagnosed with SIDS are found unresponsive in unsafe sleeping environments (in the prone position, in adult beds, in smoking environments, etc).

 “This is why it is especially important for everyone to follow the safe sleep recommendations,” said *[insert your organization director or local health official].*

As a direct response to the alarming rate of infant mortality in Kansas, Safe Kids Kansas, The SIDS Network and KDHE collaborated to create the *ABC’s of Safe Sleep for Babies* (Alone, on the Back, in a Crib)*,* a video to educate EVERYONE about safe sleep. Dr. Moser encourages everyone to view the video at: [Safesleepkansas.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CCMoyer%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CW6PE0RJ6%5CSafesleepkansas.org).

Over the next several months *[insert organization name]* along with the Blue Ribbon Panel on Infant Mortality will strive to increase public awareness and education about Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, prematurity and safe sleep.

“I ask you to join us in the effort to keep our youngest, most vulnerable community members safe,” said *[insert your organization director or local health official]*.

To learn more go to:

*[insert your organization’s website]*

[www.sidsks.org](http://www.sidsks.org)

[www.datacounts.net/infant\_mortality/](http://www.datacounts.net/infant_mortality/)

<http://www.kdheks.gov/bcyf/infant_mortality_campaign.htm>

On *[insert date, time, location], [insert your organization’s name and event or activity that will be held to promote SIDS awareness].*  Please join us in our efforts to address this important public health issue. For more information about the event please go to: *[insert organization website].*

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