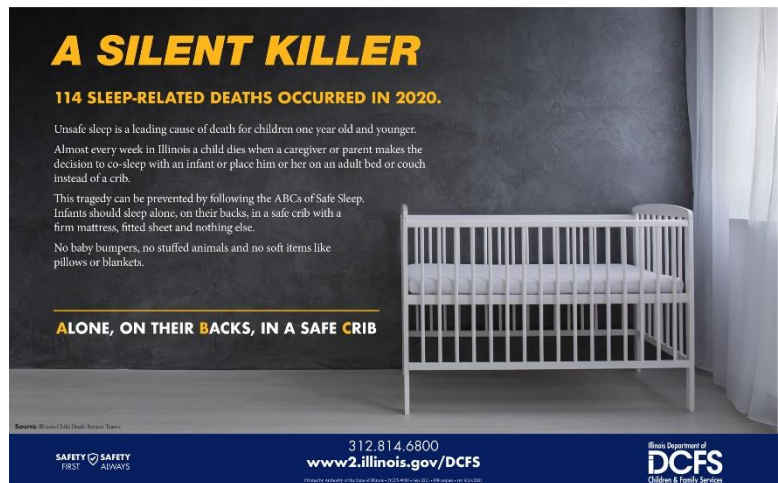


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## October is Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month: *Illinois DCFS distributes posters to 8,000 day care providers statewide*

(CHICAGO) – Unsafe sleep is a leading cause of death for children one year old and younger; and during Infant Safe Sleep Awareness month Illinois DCFS is mailing English and Spanish posters to 8,000 day care providers across the state and asking for them to be displayed in a high-traffic area to remind parents and caregivers of three simple steps they can take to create a safe sleep environment for infants in their care. Infants should always sleep **A**lone; on their **B**acks; in a safe **C**rib.



“Thousands of families entrust licensed day care providers with the lives of their children every day and look to them for guidance and support,” said Illinois DCFS Director Marc D. Smith. “Unsafe sleep deaths are preventable; and day care providers can play an integral role in keeping infants safe by modeling safe sleep practices in their centers and reinforcing the importance of following the ABCs of safe sleep with families every time they put their infant to sleep at home.”

In 2020, 114 infants in Illinois under the age of 1 died as a result of being put to sleep unsafely. Ninety-seven were found in locations other than a crib, bassinet or ‘pack and play;’ 73 were found in positions other than on their back; and 83 were co-sleeping with another individual at the time of death.

Infants sleep safest alone in a crib with a firm mattress and tightly fitted sheet. The crib should be free of pillows, blankets, bumper pads, stuffed animals and toys. Infants should never be placed on an adult bed or couch to sleep. If parents of young children are traveling, they should call ahead to make sure their accommodations include a crib and bring a ‘pack and play’ if one is not available.



*About the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Founded in 1964, DCFS is responsible for protecting children from abuse or neglect by responding to calls received on the Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873). With the goal of keeping children safe, DCFS strengthens and supports families with a wide range of services. When keeping a child safe means removing them from the home, DCFS makes every effort to reunite them with their family. When the best interest of the child makes this impossible, DCFS is committed to pursuing adoption by loving families to provide children with a safe and permanent home. DCFS is also responsible for licensing and monitoring of all Illinois child welfare agencies.*

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