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Contact: Deborah Lopez
Illinois DCFS
312-937-0050

Illinois DCFS reminds parents of the ABCs of Safe Sleep

CHICAGO – Unsafe sleep is a leading cause of death for children one year old and younger, and while families are spending more time at home together, Illinois DCFS reminds parents of three simple steps they can take to ensure their infants are put to sleep safely.

“It is vitally important for parents and caregivers to learn and use the ABCs of Safe Sleep,” said Illinois DCFS Acting Director Marc D. Smith. “A baby should sleep **Alone**, on his or her **Back** in a safe **Crib** – it’s that simple.”

Between January 1 and June 30, 2019, 53 infants in Illinois under the age of 1 died as a result of being put to sleep unsafely, including being placed to sleep in locations other than a crib, bassinet or pack and play; in positions other than on their back or 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 put to sleep on an adult bed or couch.

“During these uncertain times, parents may rightfully be experiencing increased stress and exhaustion, so creating a safe sleep environment for their babies is more important than ever,” said Smith.

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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