



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**It's as easy as the ABCs: The guide to safe sleep for infants.**

**Monroe County, FL** – Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) refers to the sudden, unexplained death of infants under one year of age. Research indicates that creating a safe sleep environment can dramatically reduce the risk of SIDS. Parents and caregivers can help protect their baby during both naps and nighttime by following the ABCs of safe sleep.

The Florida Keys Healthy Start Coalition (FKHSC) is dedicated to promoting safe sleep practices for all babies in Monroe County. As part of this commitment, the Coalition provides “Welcome Baby” bags to all new mothers who deliver at Lower Keys Medical Center. For Upper Keys families in their 3rd trimester or who have recently given birth you can request a bag by emailing Alanna Dixon directly at [upperkeyscl@keyshealthystart.org](mailto:upperkeyscl@keyshealthystart.org). These bags include essential tools to help keep newborns safe and healthy, such as a safe sleep swaddle sack. These resources aim to reduce risks such as pre-term birth, low birth weight, infant mortality, and developmental issues by supporting pregnant women and babies under three years old. If you would like to support our Healthy Babies Program, please click this link to [donate](#).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), around 3,400 babies in the U.S. die each year due to sleep-related causes. To prevent this, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has established the ABCs of safe sleep: infants should sleep **Alone**, on their **Back**, and in a **Crib** free of extra items like pillows, blankets, bumper pads, toys, or loose objects. All caregivers should follow these guidelines until the baby turns one year old.

It's important to avoid using head-shaping pillows, weighted blankets, sleepers, swaddles, or any other weighted items near a sleeping baby, as they pose significant safety risks. Sheets, comforters, and blankets can also increase the likelihood of suffocation or overheating. The CDC and AAP recommend using swaddle sacks instead of blankets to ensure safe sleep and reduce the risks of SIDS, suffocation, and overheating.

Parents should use a firm, flat sleep surface such as a safety-approved crib mattress, bassinet, or portable crib to further lower the risk of SIDS. Maintaining a smoke-free environment is another key to safer sleep. Additionally, babies should not share a bed or sleep surface with adults or other children. Instead, it's recommended that the baby's bassinet or crib be placed in the parent's room for at least the first six months.

The FKHSC also provides pack 'n plays, cribs, and other safe sleep items to families in need. If you would like to make a monetary donation, donate a baby bed to a family in the Keys, or if you've recently welcomed a new baby and would like a “Welcome Baby” bag, please call 305-293-8424 or visit <https://www.keyshealthystart.org>. For those in need of a safe sleep swaddle sack, crib, or other baby essentials, the Coalition is ready to assist; [click here](#) to make a request.

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**Pictured:**

**THE ABC'S OF  
SAFE SLEEP**



**A**lone  
Babies should sleep by themselves, in their own sleep space with no other people.

**B**ack  
Place infants on their backs for sleep. They will eventually learn how to roll from back to tummy and tummy to back.

**C**rib  
Use a crib, bassinet, or portable play yard with a firm, flat mattress and a fitted sheet and no blankets or toys. That's it! The crib should not have anything attached to it.

**S**moke Free  
Do not smoke anywhere near your baby or their sleep space, this is not safe for your baby.

