

Sudden Infant Death (SIDS) Program

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What is the SIDS Program?

- Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant the purpose of the program is to: Ensure compliance with the mandates of Ohio Revised Code 313.121, related to the reporting of sudden and unexpected infant deaths and the provision of support and bereavement services.
- In response to the needs created by the occurrence of SIDS and other infant deaths, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) created the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Program.



Purpose

- Ensure compliance with the mandates of Ohio Revised Code 313.121, related to the reporting of sudden and unexpected infant deaths and the provision of support and bereavement services.
- Provide expert consultation on SIDS; serve as a liaison with national and local SIDS organizations; and act as a resource for current information on SIDS research and risk reduction.
- ODH works closely with the Baby 1st Network, the Ohio Coroner's Association and local health departments to ensure appropriate service providers are alerted when there has been a sudden infant death in a community.
- Through relationships with national and state SIDS organizations and partners including the Baby 1st Network, the SIDS Alliance affiliates/chapters/support groups, local health departments, Child Fatality Review boards, Ohio Infant Mortality Reduction Initiatives and regional perinatal centers, ODH distributes educational and resource materials to the public and to professionals. Training sessions are offered to nurses, first responders, social workers, day care providers and others.

Contacts

- A toll-free hotline (1-800-477-7437) is available to provide support for families.

Ohio Department of Health
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Program
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Columbus, OH 43215

- Telephone: (614) 728-0773
Fax: (614) 564-2442
 - E-mail: matthew.slanoc@odh.ohio.gov
- Baby 1st Network

- <http://www.baby1stnetwork.org/>
- 1-800-477-7437
- e-mail: info@baby1stnetwork.org

Baby 1st Network



Baby 1st Network Mission Statement

The mission of the Baby 1st Network is to provide educational material and support for all who work to reduce Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID). We are committed to providing the tools necessary to empower and engage communities to keep their infants safe. We also provide compassionate support services to families who have experienced the sudden unexpected loss of an infant.

- The Baby 1st Network was selected to act as the agent of ODH to assure parents are offered bereavement and supportive services and to monitor and assure that coroners and local health departments (LHDs) are compliant in responding to SIDS.
- The network is to be notified of all sudden and unexpected infant deaths by the coroners at the time of death. The network identifies appropriate bereavement resources in the geographical locale of the family and sends a condolence letter and packet of grief-related materials to the families. The network then notifies the appropriate LHD so its staff may offer supportive services to the family as soon as possible.
- The network acts quickly to assure sympathy and support are provided to grieving families as soon as possible regardless of the final diagnosis. It is hoped that LHDs will also act quickly in responding to immediate needs of families at the time of a sudden unexpected infant death.
- By partnering with ODH, the Baby 1st Network serves as the state's expert consultant on SIDS, providing a liaison with national and local SIDS organizations; acting as a resource for current information on SIDS research and risk reduction; and distributing educational materials to health professionals and the public. The Network is also involved in helping communities develop sustainable and effective strategies to reduce the risk of SIDS.

Galion Statistics

- According to the 2016 Crawford County Health Assessment:
 - Children were put to sleep in the following places as infants: crib/bassinette (no bumper, blankets, stuffed animals) (51%), in bed with parent or another person (50%), crib/bassinette (with bumper, blankets, stuffed animals) (49%), car seat (49%), pack n' play (46%), swing (38%), couch or chair (23%), and floor (19%).
- Luckily, cases of Sudden Infant Death in Galion are rare
- In 2017, One notification of a Sudden Infant Death in Galion was reported to the Galion City Health Department

Role of the PHN

- The local health department is notified of a sudden, unexpected infant death by written correspondence from the Baby 1st Network.
- A designated public health professional should contact the family as soon as possible, ideally within 48 to 72 hours of the referral. A nurse or social worker must attempt to contact the family and fill out a **Report of Contact** form within **45 days** of the death. Although a home visit with the family is the preferred method of contact, it is understood that this may not be possible for every health department. In these instances, a phone call and/or letter of sympathy including local supportive services is acceptable with a future follow-up.
- The purpose of the family contact is to provide support, not to investigate or interrogate regarding the circumstances of the death.
- To schedule a home visit, the nurse/social worker introduces himself/herself and explains the purpose of the contact with an expression of sympathy, and offers to arrange a home visit to the newly bereaved family. The nurse/social worker should take the initiative in suggesting the date and time of the meeting as even minor decision-making is often difficult for families at this time.
- The nurse/social worker should attempt to visit when both parents and any other grieving family members are at home together, if possible.
- During a home visit or by phone contact, the nurse/social worker should provide information about the preliminary diagnosis, the grief process, and resources for supportive services.
- The nurse/social worker should provide the family with factual information about the preliminary diagnosis if appropriate, emphasizing that the diagnosis most likely may not yet have been confirmed by the coroner. She/he should make the parents aware that the autopsy report can be made available to them; however, it would be advisable for them to review the autopsy with their infant's physician and/or with the coroner or his designee.
- The nurse/social worker should provide information about peer support groups and other support services and should make referrals to appropriate community resources.
- The nurse/social worker should provide referral feedback to Baby 1st Network by completing the Report of Family Contact form. Fax, email or send one copy within the **45-day** deadline to:
Baby 1st Network PO Box 403 Toledo, Ohio Fax: 330-929-0593; email: info@baby1stnetwork.org

- Retain a copy at the local health department.

References

- A Guide For The Sudden Infant Death Family Contact. (Nov. 2016). Baby 1st Network. Ohio Department of Health.
- <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/Sudden-Infant-Death-Syndrome>

