

National Action Plan to Increase Safe Infant Sleep

A Blueprint from the National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep

About the Plan

The NAPPSS Coalition is pleased to present the *National Action Plan to Increase Safe Infant Sleep: A Blueprint from the National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep*. The framework for the plan was developed by the Georgetown-led iteration of the NAPPSS project. The National Coalition generated ideas at a national action forum; the action steps for implementing the plan are based on these ideas. The National Coalition is comprised of more than 70 national advocacy organizations, professional associations, faith communities, and business groups with the active involvement of federal partners, including the Maternal and Child Health Bureau and NICHD's Safe to Sleep® campaign.

The *National Action Plan* was developed and will be implemented within the context of the layers of the conceptual model that informs the project. For additional background information about sudden unexpected infant death, safe sleep practices, and breastfeeding, please refer to our updated [NAPPSS-IIN Collaborative Charter](#) which puts the *National Action Plan* in context, and explains why we all must make safe sleep everybody's business

How to use

This action plan was created during the first iteration of NAPPSS and is being used as a guiding document for the currently established National Action Teams to identify and achieve their aims. If you are involved in making safe infant sleep or breastfeeding a national norm, you can begin by reading this plan's vision, mission, and strategies and seeing how your work fits into a national framework. Please keep in mind, the current National Action Teams (under NAPPSS-IIN) are working to align messaging about breastfeeding into this national action plan.

Vision

We envision a world where all babies sleep safely —each night and each naptime —and wake up healthy and strong.

Mission

The National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep (NAPPSS) will develop and implement a practical *National Action Plan to Increase Safe Infant Sleep* and partner to support breastfeeding by activating supports and services to systematically work together to make safe infant sleep a national norm.

Principles

Our National Action Partnership will be guided by six principles to help make safe infant sleep a reality for all families. Specifically, the partnership will:

1. Ensure that actions are designed to support all individuals and are effective for populations who experience the highest rates of sleep-related infant deaths.
2. Incorporate values and principles of cultural competency and ensure that actions are respectful and effective for people from all backgrounds.
3. Engage infant caregivers and their communities in designing, implementing and evaluating actions to promote evidence-based infant safe sleep practices.
4. Activate infant caregivers and services that touch families to work together to ensure that all babies sleep safely each night and each naptime.
5. Honor caregivers' experiences caring for infants by promoting breastfeeding to reduce SUID/SIDS deaths.
6. Recognize that families are the ultimate decision makers, each day and night, in the moments of personal choice about how to care for their infants.

Goals

The National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep (NAPPSS) will develop and implement a practical *National Action Plan to Increase Safe Infant Sleep* and partner to support breastfeeding by activating supports and services to systematically work together to make safe infant sleep a national norm.

Goal 1: Infant caregivers will understand the advantages of safe sleep and breastfeeding, develop positive perceptions of these practices, and adopt such practices.

Strategy 1.1: Share consistent and accurate information with infant caregivers about current safe sleep and breastfeeding recommendations and why they are important.

- Action 1.1.1: Create approaches to disseminating accurate and consistent information through mass media and advertising.
- Action 1.1.2: Reinforce awareness of the recommendations using appropriate images in media.
- Action 1.1.3: Create approaches to disseminate accurate and consistent information in social media.
- Action 1.1.4: Engage infant caregivers in the development of content and approaches to deliver information that addresses diverse beliefs, values and practices.
- Action 1.1.5: Mobilize national organizations of healthcare professionals and programs that serve infant caregivers and their communities to develop or update positions and policies.

- Action 1.1.6: Mobilize organizations of healthcare professionals and programs that serve infant caregivers and their communities to audit their websites, publications and media resources to ensure they reflect best practices in images and information.
- Action 1.1.7: Mobilize organizations of healthcare professionals and programs that serve infant caregivers and their communities to support training for their constituents on providing accurate and consistent information.
- Action 1.1.8: Create and implement policies in healthcare settings and other programs serving infant caregivers and their communities to provide consistent and accurate information and modeling.

Strategy 1.2: Promote actions that use shared decision-making with infant caregivers who identify their concerns and barriers to implementing behaviors and breastfeeding and that seek solutions, in partnership, to these challenges.

- Action 1.2.1: Create content and approaches for shared conversations that resonate with infant caregivers and reflect cultural beliefs, values and practices, and support them in creating goals.
- Action 1.2.2: Develop methods for implementing shared conversations through existing relationships and programs.
- Action 1.2.3: Train health care professionals and others who interact with infant caregivers on how to have conversations about safe sleep behaviors and breastfeeding.

Goal 2: Individuals and groups who are trusted by and who influence child-rearing beliefs and practices of infant caregivers will understand the importance of behaviors and breastfeeding and will effectively communicate the protective benefits of each.

Strategy 2.1: Engage these trusted individuals and groups in a nation-wide effort to promote safe sleep and breastfeeding.

- Action 2.1.1: Utilize focus group and other methods to learn perceptions, beliefs and values of community members who influence infant caregivers to inform promotion efforts.
- Action 2.1.2: Provide trainings and toolkits for action to community groups and systems to integrate safe sleep and breastfeeding promotion into their policies and activities.

Strategy 2.2: Enlist these trusted individuals and groups as “champions” who have the motivation, knowledge and skills to engage in meaningful conversations with mothers, fathers and other infant caregivers to promote safe sleep behaviors and breastfeeding.

- Action 2.2.1: Utilize existing programs that support infant health to promote safe sleep and breastfeeding.

- Action 2.2.2: Engage and train community members to promote safe sleep and breastfeeding including but not limited to: EMS providers, childcare and early education providers, faith and cultural leaders, extended family, and social service providers.

Strategy 2.3: Actively promote breastfeeding within all programs that serve families with an emphasis on populations who experience the highest rates of sleep-related infant deaths.

- Action 2.3.1: Provide training and toolkits for action to state coalitions and programs, community groups, healthcare organizations, and other systems to integrate safe sleep and breastfeeding promotion into their policies and activities.
- Action 2.3.2: Empower childcare and early education providers with training to implement supportive policies and practices.
- Action 2.3.3: Mobilize national organizations of healthcare professionals and state and local programs that serve infant caregivers and their communities to share communications on safe sleep and breastfeeding through existing communication resources, social media, websites, newsletters, list serves, blogs, etc.
- Action 2.3.4: Engage state Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programs to explore how to integrate safe sleep and breastfeeding messaging into state and local MCH programs.
- Action 2.3.5: Convene gatherings of community leaders to promote infant health, safety and resilience among families adversely affected by health inequities.

Goal 3: Infant Caregivers will be empowered, through knowledge, access to resources and confidence, to integrate breastfeeding within the realities of their lives.

Strategy 3.1: Equip infant caregivers with the skills and supports to reach their goals for feeding and sleeping their infants.

- Action 3.1.1: Create content for conversations and a process to help infant caregivers develop individualized plans for implementing and sustaining behaviors to reduce the risk of SUID/SIDS.
- Action 3.1.2: Develop mechanisms to provide infant caregivers quick and easy access to resources and supports to deal with challenges encountered in implementing and sustaining breastfeeding.

Strategy 3.2: Provide access to best practice training and supports so that infant caregivers understand sleep/wake/feeding patterns in infancy and learn how best to comfort and settle their infants in ways that are consistent with safe sleep practices. Safe sleep practices refer to the most current recommendations of The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as promoted by the Safe to Sleep® campaign's educational materials and community outreach efforts.

- Action 3.2.1: Develop and deliver through health care professionals, state and community programs and electronic/social media information about realistic expectations for infant sleep and feeding patterns and coping with the challenges of parenting infants.

Strategy 3.3: Create processes for infant caregivers, regardless of their financial or housing status, to have safety-approved surfaces and equipment needed to support and sustain breastfeeding.

- Action 3.3.1: Provide a systematic process within communities to assess need for providing safe sleep surfaces and assure resources to provide them.
- Action 3.3.2: Provide a systematic process to help families understand and access breastfeeding equipment (e.g. breast pumps, etc.).
- Action 3.3.3: Engage cultural and community leaders to create culturally appropriate approaches to providing safe sleep surfaces.

Strategy 3.4: Engage community and supports as partners in promoting and breastfeeding to help families address housing insecurity, substandard housing, safe childcare, neighborhood violence, household violence and other threats to the safety and well-being of infants in their care.

- Action 3.4.1: Engage organizations at the national and local levels that address these issues to join coalitions to address safe sleep and breastfeeding.
- Action 3.4.2: Develop mechanisms to support families to deal with the socioeconomic challenges that impede safe sleep and breastfeeding practices.

What's next?

This action plan was created in the prior iteration of the project and will be used to influence and inform the work of the current NAPPSS-IIN National Action Teams. Armed with this resource, the NAPPSS team will focus on the next phase of the project—moving from awareness to action. As a colleague in the field – whether a NAPPSS-IIN Coalition Member, National Action Team Partner, or a Friend of NAPPSS – the project will be in communication with you to let you know of opportunities for collaboration in the project and for ways to advance project goals. If you have not already done so, please visit our website under “Stay Connected” where you can [sign up](#) to receive updates from the project.

You can also check back with this [online page](#) to see what's happening nationally, regionally and locally with each of the actions. As we learn more about what all of you are doing, we will add information to these sections and the *National Action Plan* will evolve into a roadmap for making safe infant sleep a national norm.

References

Bronheim S. 2015. [National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep \(NAPSS\) Social-Ecological Model](#) Washington, DC: Georgetown University.

Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Moon RY. 2011. SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths: Expansion of recommendations for a safe infant sleeping environment. *Pediatrics* 128(5):1030-1039 (policy statement); e1341-e1367 (technical report).
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