

HONOURING OUR BABIES: Safe Sleep Cards & Guide

Many Aboriginal teachings explain that babies are gifts of life from the Creator. Sadly, sometimes babies leave the circle suddenly and far too early as a result of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is the death of a baby under one year of age which is sudden, unexpected, and without a clear cause. SIDS usually happens during sleep or napping.

SIDS is the most common cause of death in babies between the ages of one month and one year. In Canada, approximately three babies die every week of SIDS. Research shows that in BC, Aboriginal babies are four times more likely to die from SIDS than non-Aboriginal babies.

Although the exact cause or causes of SIDS are not known, there are clear safe sleep practices that reduce a baby's risk for SIDS.



A new toolkit is available

Honouring our Babies: Safe Sleep Cards & Guide is a new set of culturally relevant, interactive, and evidence-informed education tools to help service providers discuss safe infant sleep with Aboriginal families and help reduce the risk of SIDS.

The tools include a deck of 21 discussion cards and seven illustrated cards that can be used to prompt and guide discussions with families about safe infant sleep.

The front side of each discussion card contains a question related to safe infant sleep, as well as other holistic aspects of infant health and safety. The front of each illustrated card shows key safe sleep practices as well as less safe sleep practices.

The back side of each card contains key messages to support service providers to discuss the topic and provide guidance to parents.

Both sets of cards incorporate cultural beliefs, practices, and issues specific to Aboriginal communities.

The tools also include a facilitator's guide that provides a greater degree of information on each card's topic and includes an appendix with additional research, resources, and graphics.



Babies are gifts, and all families share a goal to love, care for, and protect their babies. By sharing the key messages in this tool with families, service providers can play an important role to help families learn how to keep their precious babies safe while sleeping.

Honouring our Babies: Safe Sleep Cards & Guide can be used by anyone wishing to discuss safe infant sleep with Aboriginal parents and families.

These resources can be downloaded from the First Nations Health Authority website at www.fnha.ca.

Honouring Our Babies: Safe Sleep Cards & Guide is an initiative of the Tripartite First Nations and Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Strategy Area. This project was led by Perinatal Services BC, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, as part of the Tripartite Aboriginal Safe Sleep Initiative. For more information, contact:

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