

Wake Safe

Helping babies
sleep safely



In South Dakota, from 2020-2024:

There were **93 infant deaths** related to sleeping or the sleep environment.

Of the 93 sleep-related deaths:

Over half (**66%**) of infants were sharing a sleep surface* with another adult and/or child when found.

87% of these sleep-related deaths were potentially preventable.

*Sleep surfaces - couch, chair, bed, floor, mattress

Cases reviewed by ICDR only include infant deaths that occurred post-hospital discharge in South Dakota.

Several factors increase risk when bed or surface-sharing:

Very high risk

More than 10X the baseline risk

- Using a soft sleep surface such as a waterbed, old adult mattress, couch, or armchair
- Adult is overly tired, taking medication that makes them drowsy, using substances like alcohol, or otherwise under-responsive
- Adult smokes cigarettes or uses tobacco products (even if they do not smoke in bed)

High risk

5-10X the baseline risk

- Baby is younger than 4 months old
- Adult is not the baby's parent but is another caregiver, such as a grandparent or sibling

Higher than average risk

2-5X the baseline risk

- Baby was born preterm (before 37 weeks) or at a low birth weight
- Sleep area includes unsafe items like pillow or blankets

How providers can help:

- Teach families the ABCs of safe sleep (**A**lone, **B**ack, **C**rib).
- American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment to Reduce the Risk of Sleep-Related Infant Deaths (2022) should be distributed to healthcare professionals, and the recommendations should be shared with parents/ caregivers of newborns before leaving the hospital.
- If you work at a birthing hospital, consider becoming Cribs For Kids Hospital Safe Sleep certified. For more information, contact DOHMCHBG@state.sd.us
- If a family is unable to afford a safety-approved crib, contact the South Dakota Department of Health at **1-800-305-3064**.

Alone

Place baby by themselves, and keep their sleep area clear of soft bedding such as blankets, pillows, bumper pads, and plush toys.

Back

Whether at night or going down for a nap, place baby on their back every time they sleep.

Crib

Always set baby on a firm, safety-approved sleep surface such as a crib, bassinet, or play yard.



Grief/Loss Resources



Safe Sleep
DOH SD



Lach's
Legacy



NIH
Infant Loss

Safe Sleep Resources



Safe Sleep
DOH SD



NIH
Safe Sleep

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