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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE: 09/08/2017**

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### **SAGINAW COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH RECOGNIZES INFANT SAFE SLEEP AWARENESS MONTH**

September is Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month and to recognize this important observance, the Saginaw County Department of Public Health is reminding parents and caregivers of techniques that can help to substantially reduce the infant death rate in our county and state.

From 2010 to 2015 in Saginaw County, there were 27 sleep-related infant deaths, which is a rate of 2.0 deaths per 1,000 live births. Sleep-related deaths are those where the sleep environment was likely to have contributed to the death. In Saginaw County, suffocation is the most common cause of sleep-related death. A safe sleep environment can reduce the risk of all sleep-related infant deaths.

All babies should always be placed to sleep on their backs, never on their sides or tummies, in their own crib. Other lifesaving steps parents and caregivers can take to protect their baby include:

- Never put the baby to sleep with adults or other children as the practice exponentially increases the chance of a tragedy occurring.
- Put babies in cribs of their own, never on adult beds, pillows, or couches.
- Use a firm mattress with a tightly-fitted sheet.
- Ensure that the crib does not contain any extra items -- including pillows, crib bumpers and stuffed animals -- and use a safe sleep sack instead of blankets.
- Place the baby to sleep on his or her back, not on the stomach or side.
- Do not overheat baby.
- Make certain that no one smokes around baby.

There are many resources available. For more information, parents, professionals and others can visit [www.michigan.gov/safesleep](http://www.michigan.gov/safesleep). The Saginaw County Department of Public Health also has programs and services available for families wanting to know more about safe sleep. Call 989-758-3845 or visit [www.saginawpublichealth.org](http://www.saginawpublichealth.org). Be Wise. Be Well.

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