



NEW YORK STATE PERINATAL QUALITY COLLABORATIVE SAFE SLEEP PROJECT

The New York State Perinatal Quality Collaborative (NYSPQC) Safe Sleep Project, which was active from September 2015, to July 2017, aimed to reduce infant sleep-related deaths by improving safe sleep practices in NYS birthing hospitals.

Deaths from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome have declined dramatically since 1992 when the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended that all babies be placed on their backs to sleep. Sleep-related deaths from other causes, however, including suffocation, entrapment and asphyxia, have increased. In 2016, the AAP updated its guidelines on safe sleep for babies, with additional information for parents and caregivers on creating a safe environment for their babies to sleep.¹ Despite these recommendations, unsafe sleep remains the leading preventable cause of death for healthy infants.²

In response, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) launched the **NYSPQC Safe Sleep Project** in September 2015, to educate and support caregivers to reduce infant sleep-related deaths by improving safe sleep practices. The project aligned with the national *Infant Mortality Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (IM-CollIN)*.

Eighty-two NYS birthing hospitals from diverse geographic areas participated in the project, including: 17 Regional Perinatal Centers (RPCs); 29 Level III birthing hospitals; 15 Level II birthing hospitals; and 21 Level I birthing hospitals.

Goals & Strategies

*Reduce infant sleep-related deaths in NYS by improving safe sleep practices in NYS birthing hospitals.
This was accomplished by;*

- Implementing policies to support/facilitate safe sleep practices;
- Educating health care professionals so they understand, actively endorse and model safe sleep practices;
- Providing infant caregivers with education and opportunities so they have the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy to practice safe sleep for every sleep;
- Collaborating across hospital teams to share and learn; and
- Promoting one consistent safe sleep message: Babies should sleep **Alone**, on their **Back**, in a safe **Crib**, and in a **Smoke-free** home.



Project Data

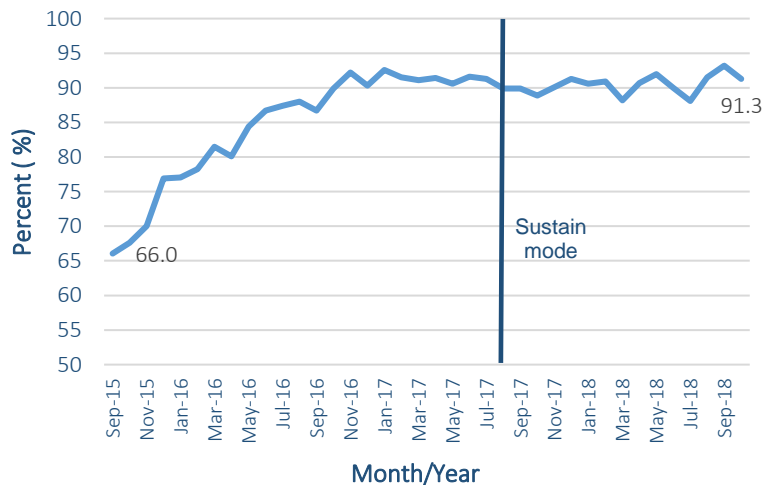
During the project period, key performance measures were evaluated during the birth hospitalization and included: percent of medical records with documentation of safe sleep education; percent of infants, sleeping or awake-and-unattended in a crib, positioned supine, in safe clothing, with head of the crib flat and the crib free of objects; percent of caregivers who reported receiving information on how to put their baby to sleep safely; and indicating they understand safe sleep practices (indicating the infant should be alone, on his/her back, in a crib, without items in the crib).

Data showed continuous improvement throughout the active phase of the project period. From September 2015, to July 2017, project participants reported:

- An 8% increase in participating hospitals' medical records indicating safe sleep education occurred during the birth hospitalization (90% to 98%);
- A 38% increase in the percent of infants, sleeping or awake-and-unattended in a crib, in a safe sleep environment during the birth hospitalization (66% to 91%);
- A 24% increase in the percent of primary caregivers indicating they understood safe sleep practices (72% to 88%); and
- Nearly all caregivers indicated they planned to practice safe sleep once discharged home.

Beginning in August 2017, the project entered sustain mode, and through October 2018, the percent of infants, sleeping or awake-and-unattended in a crib, in a safe sleep environment during the birth hospitalization remained stable at around 90% as reported by the sixty-seven hospital teams that continued to submit data.

Percent of infants sleeping or awake-and-unattended in a crib, in a safe sleep environment during the birth hospitalization



Wearable blankets are a safe alternative to using loose blankets in a crib.

Resources

The NYSDOH, in partnership with the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), has made safe sleep consumer education tools (brochures, mirror clings, magnets, posters, videos and anatomical diagrams) available in multiple languages. These can be downloaded and/or ordered from health.ny.gov/safesleep.

www.nyspqc.org

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1. AAP TASK FORCE ON SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME. SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment. *Pediatrics*. 2016;138(5):e20162938
2. CDC. Quickstats: Infant Mortality Rates for 10 Leading Causes of Infant Death- United States, 2005. *MMWR Weekly*. 56(42);1115. Accessed from: <https://cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5642a8.htm>