

# document 1

Background

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#### **Our Babies: Safe and Sound**

*Our Babies: Safe & Sound* is a campaign that was initiated in 2010 to educate West Virginia parents and caregivers of infants under the age of one as well as expectant parents, professionals and the public about the (1) importance of safe sleeping for infants and (2) coping with infant crying to reduce the incidence of Shaken Baby Syndrome / abusive head trauma. Both areas are priorities for action to prevent and reduce injuries and deaths of infants in WV in their first year of life. The campaign is sponsored by TEAM for WV Children and funded through the generous support of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the WV Children's Trust Fund and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources. Additional funding partners have included the Walmart State Giving Foundation, the Parkersburg Area Community Foundation and the West Virginia Perinatal Partnership.

#### **Say YES To Safe Sleep For Babies**

Over 250 community partner organizations have used the *Our Babies: Safe and Sound* educational materials with their families. In spite of this concerted effort, incidents of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death with unsafe sleep conditions continue to occur. Data from the WV Vital Registration Office revealed 34 such cases in 2014 and 23 in 2015, with bed sharing and hazardous bedding as key factors. In order to continue the important efforts of community partners while also specifically focusing on education and awareness close to the time of birth, in 2013 a new *Say YES To Safe Sleep For Babies* initiative was piloted in 12 birthing hospitals and 20 home visitation programs serving those areas. The pilot reached about 8,000 or 38% of WV births in 2014 and laid significant groundwork to incrementally expand the initiative statewide. In 2017, the number of partners increased to 23 birthing hospitals and 32 home visitation programs, with capacity to reach 97% of the annual births in West Virginia.

Also in 2017, an initiative was piloted with pediatricians as educators of infant safe sleep as a foundation for expansion to other pediatricians across West Virginia.

#### **Purpose of the Guide and Toolkit**

The purpose is to provide guidance for continuation of existing *Say YES To Safe Sleep For Babies* initiatives in West Virginia and to prepare additional hospitals and home visitation programs as well as new partners such as other health providers and local organizations serving families with infants, to plan and implement the program in their communities. The Guide and Toolkit is based on the learnings from the initial years, evaluation results and best practice feedback. It will be updated as new information becomes available and *Say YES To Safe Sleep For Babies* participants will be notified so they may be able to download and print affected pages.

For more information, see [www.safesoundbabies.com](http://www.safesoundbabies.com) .