



## Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative

### **Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Other Sleep-Related Causes of Infant Death in Your Community**

The Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative is an effort created and supported by the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NICHD is a federal government institute that sponsors research on development before and after birth; maternal, child, and family health; reproductive biology and population issues; and medical rehabilitation. This initiative will support the anticipated launch of the Safe to Sleep campaign (formerly known as the Back to Sleep campaign).

#### **Background of the Safe to Sleep Campaign**

The NICHD, through its research on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and its SIDS outreach efforts, has been working to understand SIDS and behaviors to reduce SIDS risk since the 1970s. In 1994, the NICHD—in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration, First Candle/SIDS Alliance, and the Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs—launched the Back to Sleep campaign (<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/SIDS>) to educate parents and caregivers about ways to reduce the risk of SIDS.

In October 2011, the AAP released updated recommendations for reducing SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death, such as suffocation and strangulation. The AAP's updated recommendations are available at:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/128/5/1030.full.html>.

The Back to Sleep campaign, now known as the Safe to Sleep campaign, continues to spread messages on safe infant sleep to members of all communities.

#### **Purpose of the Safe to Sleep Campaign**

Since the start of the campaign, SIDS rates have declined by more than 50 percent across all populations in the United States. However, SIDS remains the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 1 year of age. In addition, some racial and ethnic groups experience greater incidence of SIDS deaths than others. Along with working with all communities to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death, the campaign aims to address these racial and ethnic disparities through tailored outreach and collaborations.

## Overview of the Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative

### Goal

The goal of the Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative is to share the campaign messages about SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death through the use of the media. The Safe to Sleep Champions will be the voice of the campaign by speaking with local media outlets during October, SIDS Awareness Month to raise awareness for the newly expanded campaign about safe infant sleep. **Each Champion will be tasked with the goal of obtaining at least two local media placements in his or her state during October.**

### Objectives

All Safe to Sleep Champions will be expected to:

- Become familiar with the updated AAP recommendations and the Safe to Sleep campaign.
- Work with local media to highlight the public health issue of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death with a focus on the Safe to Sleep campaign.
- Serve as a liaison to the NICHD for ongoing communication, tracking, and evaluation.

### Training Details

Safe to Sleep Champions will be required to attend a 1-day training, which will be held in Detroit, MI, on **Thursday, September 13, 2012**. The NICHD will cover travel expenses.

The training will include the following components:

- Background on SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death
- History of the Safe to Sleep campaign
- Media training.

### Resources and Support

For volunteering their time, Safe to Sleep Champions will receive the following:

- National recognition from the NICHD
- Access to NICHD resources and tools to support local community efforts and outreach
- Support through technical assistance, conference calls, and peer-to-peer learning
- Access to a network of other like-minded individuals and professionals
- Receipt of a \$50 honorarium for completing at least two media placements.

### Potential Candidates

A Safe to Sleep Champion can be a mother, father, grandparent, or other family member affected by SIDS or other sleep-related causes of infant death; a health care provider; a health educator; a representative from a local infant or family health organization or coalition; or a trusted community leader.

A Safe to Sleep Champion will reside in each of the following states with the highest rates of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington, D.C., West Virginia, and Wyoming.

## Application Process

To apply to become a Safe to Sleep Champion, please submit the following:

- Completed application form
- Brief essay (500 word maximum)
- One letter of recommendation.

All applications must be submitted by **Monday, July 30, 2012**. Materials may be sent by mail, e-mail, or fax. Champions will be selected based on their application; experience; knowledge of SIDS, infant and child health, or other health issues; and racial/ethnic and geographic diversity. Champions will be notified by August 13, 2012. Selected applicants will receive additional details about the training location and travel information.

Applications should be sent to Morgan Marshall at IQ Solutions. For e-mail and fax submissions, please include "Safe to Sleep Champions Application" in the subject line.

**Mail:**

Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative  
Attn: Morgan Marshall  
IQ Solutions  
11300 Rockville Pike, Suite 901  
Rockville, MD 20852

**Email:**

[safetosleep@iqsolutions.com](mailto:safetosleep@iqsolutions.com)

**Fax:**

(301) 984-1473

Should you have any questions related to the Safe to Sleep Champions Initiative, application process, or training details, please contact Morgan Marshall at (240) 221-4231 or at [safetosleep@iqsolutions.com](mailto:safetosleep@iqsolutions.com).