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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFEST SLEEP FOR BABIES

October is SIDS Awareness Month

WICHITA, KS- The SIDS Network of Kansas and collaborating state and local organizations are encouraging our communities to recognize October as SIDS Awareness Month. Together we hope to ensure that every woman has a healthy pregnancy, learns about safe sleep for her baby, gets early prenatal care and support services, and makes choices that promote healthy lifestyles for a lifetime.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of an otherwise healthy baby. According to the most recent data from 2008, 303 Kansas infants died before their first birthdays, representing an infant mortality rate (IMR) of 7.25 deaths per 1,000 live births. Of the 303 deaths, 52 deaths were contributed to SIDS, or 17.2% of the infant deaths. This makes SIDS the leading cause of death among Kansas infants one month to one year of age. SIDS rates are highest among the African American population. The incidence of SIDS is 2 times higher in the African American population.

SIDS is most common for infants two to four months of age who appear healthy, but die without warning during sleep. Since the Back to Sleep Campaign, SIDS deaths have decreased by about 50%. With the Back to Sleep campaign we learned babies who sleep on their tummies are at 5 times greater risk of SIDS and babies placed on their tummies to sleep who usually sleep on their backs are at an increased rate of 18 times greater risk. Research also found that 67% of the infants diagnosed with SIDS are found unresponsive in unsafe sleeping environments (in the prone position, in adult beds, in smoking environments, etc). This is why it is especially important for EVERYONE to follow the safe sleep recommendations.

As a direct response to the alarming rate of infant mortality in Kansas, Safe Kids Kansas, The SIDS Network, and KDHE collaborated to create the ABCs of Safe Sleep for Babies (Alone, on the Back, in a Crib), a video to educate EVERYONE about safe sleep. Go to Safesleepkansas.org to view the video.

Over the next several months the SIDS Network of Kansas along with the Blue Ribbon Panel on Infant Mortality will strive to increase public awareness and education about Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, prematurity, and safe sleep. I ask you to join us in the effort to keep our youngest, most vulnerable community members safe.

To learn more go to:

www.sidsks.org

www.datacounts.net/infant_mortality/

www.kdheks.gov/bcyf/infant_mortality_campaign.htm

The SIDS Network of Kansas provides bereavement services to those who have experienced the sudden death of an infant and community awareness to reduce the risk of sudden infant death.