

VANESSA SCOTT JAMES

October is National Safe Sleep Month. I reached out the UChicago Medicine to collaborate with DCFS on a community outreach event for 2015. We designed a workshop to teach new and expectant mothers safe sleeping fundamentals, highlighting results of a study of sleep-related infant deaths. "Dr. Poj" was a hit. The advisory below garnered media placements on WBEZ and Univision, a home run for us on the same day that the Cubs clinched the NL pennant. I designed the collateral materials and shared logistics responsibilities with the UChicago media relations team.

Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month in Illinois

Event Date:
October 14 at 10a on University of Chicago Hyde Park campus

Event Concept:

To highlight National Safe Sleep Month, DCFS child welfare experts and UChicago medical professionals will meet with a group of expectant mothers. The discussion will center on the dangers of putting an infant to sleep improperly and highlight practical sleep habits that keep infants safe.

- George Sheldon, DCFS Acting Director, will unveil a new study that quantifies the number of sleep-related deaths in Illinois that could have been prevented.
- Dr. Poj Lysouvakon, MD, Director of General Care Nursery University of Chicago Children's Hospital will describe the causes and risks of unsafe sleep practices.

DCFS/UChicago Medicine will:

- 1) show the group of new mothers how to properly dress a baby for sleep and how to place the child in a crib that has been set up appropriately
- 2) recap the ABCs of Safe Sleep: **Alone**, on the **Back** and in a **safe Crib**;
- 3) describe five common behaviors that may seem safe but aren't; and
- 4) provide local and web-based resources available to parents.

Key Messages:

- From 2009 to 2014, Illinois lost 149 children to sleep-related deaths. Experts believe accidental sleep-related deaths are severely underreported.
- In many cases, unsafe sleeping factors are believed to have contributed to the child's death including suffocation related to soft bedding and co-sleeping.
- Safe sleeping habits are easy to learn and to follow and can keep infants safe.

Resources available day of/in advance:

- Data from DCFS safe sleep study
- Graphics for ABC of Safe sleeping
- Media availability with George Sheldon and Dr. Poj Lysouvakon
- Access to expectant mothers learning how to keep their children safe

Contact:

Vanessa James, DCFS Communications at 773-401-3888 (m) or 312-814-8741 (o)

Learn to put your baby to sleep... SAFELY

Join us for a free workshop

- Lesson on safe sleep from UChicago Medicine experts
- Open discussion with child welfare professionals
- Demonstrations on safe sleep techniques
- Questions & Answers with pediatric staff
- Grand Prize drawing for a new portable crib

When: Wednesday, October 14, 2015

Where: Ronald McDonald House
5444 S. Drexel Blvd

Time: 9:30 - 11 a.m.

Breakfast will be served and each participant will receive a gift after the class.



October is "Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month"

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the University of Chicago Medicine are joining forces to help prevent sleep-related infant deaths. We are inviting new and expectant mothers to learn how to protect their babies from the dangers of unsafe sleep.

From 2009 to 2014, DCFS investigated 148 sleep-related infant deaths. The average age was just 72 days old.

Sleep-related infant deaths can be prevented. Learn how to keep your baby safe...

THE ABCs of Safe Sleep
Infants and babies should always sleep...



Registration Required: Vanessa.James@illinois.gov or 312-814-8741

