



# Partnering with Hotel/Motel Owner-Operators to Promote Safe Sleep

## ABSTRACT

Every 4 days a baby dies with a sleep related risk factor, which means in Kentucky, an infant is 70 times more likely to die from unsafe sleep than from a motor vehicle collision. The rate of SUID in Whitley County, Kentucky is twice that of other counties within the state. Based on the high rate of SUID in the county, the Child Fatality Review board chose to focus efforts on reducing this rate. The overall goal of the project was to take a novel approach to safe sleep education thereby reaching a population that would normally be overlooked.

## INTRODUCTION

The Child Fatality Review Board consists of individuals from specific agencies within the county that are concerned about the welfare of the community's children. Agencies represented include, Public health, child and family services, school systems, EMS, law enforcement, court officials and the coroner. This board seeks to reduce/prevent child deaths by reviewing the circumstances surrounding the death and developing interventions to mitigate the risk factors surrounding the death. Through investigation it was discovered that the County's SUID rate was more than double that of any other county in the state as well as many of the SUID deaths occurred due to co-sleeping, unsafe sleep surfaces and sleep positioning. It was also discovered that one of the deaths occurred in a local hotel/motel due to co-sleeping in an adult bed. It was this discovery that prompted the board to chose a novel approach to safe sleep education and target a population that would normally be overlooked, visitors to local hotel/motels. To accomplish this. Fact sheets titled: What Safe Sleep Looks Like were printed for distribution to each establishment and cribs that these establishments had on hand to loan to visitors would be surveyed to determine the quantity on hand, their condition as well as if they met current requirements for safe sleeping.

## RESULTS

This novel approach allowed Whitley County CFR to place safe sleep educational material in approximately 715 guest rooms in the county, 100 of those rooms are located at Cumberland Falls State Resort Park which hosts hundreds of visitors a year. Area hotel/motels host visitors from across the nation for events such as the annual Jeep Jamboree,

## DISCUSSION

This partnership was easily formed as all of the establishment owner/operators were very receptive to joining in this effort. The only minor barrier experienced was getting permission from the corporate offices of the national chain establishments to place materials in their facilities.

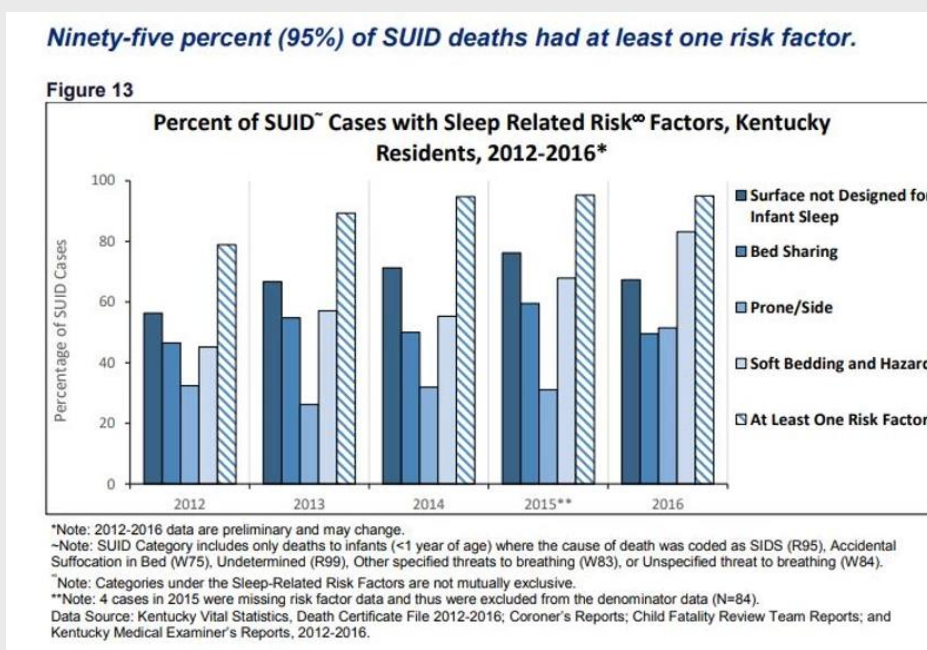


## CONCLUSIONS

This could be an ongoing activity provided there would be funding for printing the material and continued buy-in from hotel owner/operators. It could also be expanded to include hospital labor and delivery rooms as well as pediatric offices for patients to read while waiting.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

This project began with a letter to all hotel/motel owner/operators informing them of the make up and the mission of their local CFR Board. Included in the letter were statistics regarding risk factors in Kentucky that contributed to deaths and local statistics to highlight the high rate of SUID in Whitley County. The letter was used as an invitation to partner with Whitley County CFR Board and the health department to work toward reducing the risk of infant death due to unsafe sleep. The letter was followed up with a visit to each establishment to survey their interest in participating in the project. After making the determination that all the establishments voiced buy-in, the board chose to use a fact sheet published by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, kyhealthnow, The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and SafeSleep Kentucky titled What Does a Safe Sleep Surface Look Like?. These were copied and distributed to 13 establishments with a total of 715 guest rooms, allowing easy access for guests. This includes rooms and cabins at Cumberland Falls State Park. Extra copies were sent to Baptist Health Labor and Delivery Floor to be placed in bedside tables or posted where new mothers have access to the information before taking home their new baby.



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