

Media Release
Attention Health Editors:

STOP SIDS ONE STEP AT A TIME!

TORONTO (**Date**)/ The Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths is holding their 3rd annual National Walk, **Stop SIDS One Step at a Time**. Local daycares, schools and families across Canada will hold a walk on Friday, May 12th to raise funds and provide information on reducing the risk of SIDS and establish back sleeping as a best practice for all infants. Walks times will vary for each community.

The rate of SIDS decreased , three babies still die each week because of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. There is an urgent need to educate families in the methods of SIDS risk reduction that will save the lives of babies.

In just one generation there have been significant changes in the way we parent our babies and children. The recommended practices today are based on extensive research. "It is crucial that all parents and other care givers - relatives, baby sitters, daycare workers and foster parents - be informed of this research which again confirms the importance of placing all babies on their backs to sleep at all times under all circumstances", explains Mary MacCormick, National Programs Manager for the Foundation.

"Three babies die from SIDS each week in Canada. It takes an incredible amount of courage to survive the death of an innocent and apparently healthy infant and there are too many families that are still suffering this devastating tragedy", says Rick Kaufman, Executive Director of the Foundation.

The Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths has launched the **STOP SIDS ONE STEP AT A TIME** walk in an effort to further reduce the tragic death of babies from SIDS or other unexplained deaths.

Background

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome refers to the sudden and unexpected death of an apparently healthy infant, one whose death remains unexplained even after a complete post mortem investigation that includes a full autopsy, an examination of the circumstances of the death, and a review of the case history.

A pattern of recurring features has emerged from the results of many SIDS research studies underway around the world. These sudden deaths are most likely to happen between the ages of 2 and 6 months, although both older and younger babies also die of SIDS. Usually the babies seem healthy or perhaps just recovering from a cold. Yet they are found dead unexpectedly. When babies who died of SIDS are compared with those who died suddenly of any other condition, or

with healthy alive babies, two key factors emerge: babies who sleep on their stomach or their side and babies whose mothers smoked during pregnancy are both at greater risk for SIDS.

Studies from several countries have reported a dramatic lowering of SIDS rates for all infants when the “tummy down” sleeping position is avoided. These results of research led to the present recommendations:

- Place babies to sleep on their back on a firm, flat surface.
- Provide a smoke-free environment before and after birth.
- Keep a baby’s crib free of such clutter as pillows, soft toys, comforters or duvets.
- Avoid overheating
- Breastfeed, if possible.

Since its inception in Canada in 1973, the Foundation has raised thousands of dollars to fund research, peer counseling, and awareness campaigns to reduce the risk of SIDS. With hundreds of members across the country, the Foundation provides important resources, information and peer support to families who are suffering from the tragedy of SIDS.

For more information contact:

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