



Jennifer Marafka, MSN, RN, CBC  
Mary Jo MacPherson MEd, BSN, RN, CBC

# SAFE TO SLEEP

## Background:

**OH BABY!**

The Eunice Kennedy Shriver U.S. National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NIH), defines Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) as "a term used to describe the sudden death of a baby younger than one year of age."

According to the Task force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (2022), >3,500 infants die annually of SIDS, (as classified by the 10<sup>th</sup> Revision [ICD-10] R-95, R-99, and W-75.)

Thanks to Safe Sleep education, there was a dramatic decrease in SIDS-related deaths in 1990-2000's. However, SIDS rates have stagnated in recent years.

## Barriers:

**CHALLENGES**

*oh baby*

- Exhausted parents, anxious to take Baby home, already overwhelmed by a steep learning curve.
- Pre-existing family cultural traditions & beliefs.
- Extra task for Nursing staff.
- Unit financial resources.

## Interventions:

**"NOT Safe to Sleep Crib"**

- Built proactive parental skills to initiate good health decision practices.
- Tactile, experiential novel self-education for families is a more effective tool for already overwhelmed learners.

**Staff Education:**

Motivational Interviewing (using open-ended questions and non-judgmental active listening to help families explore their own motivations for change).

**"Safe to Sleep Crib" Cards**

Visually & emotionally appealing educational cues prompt educational scaffolding that resembles a keepsake for their child's Baby Book, while promoting educational buy-in.

## Outcomes:



**SOLUTIONS**

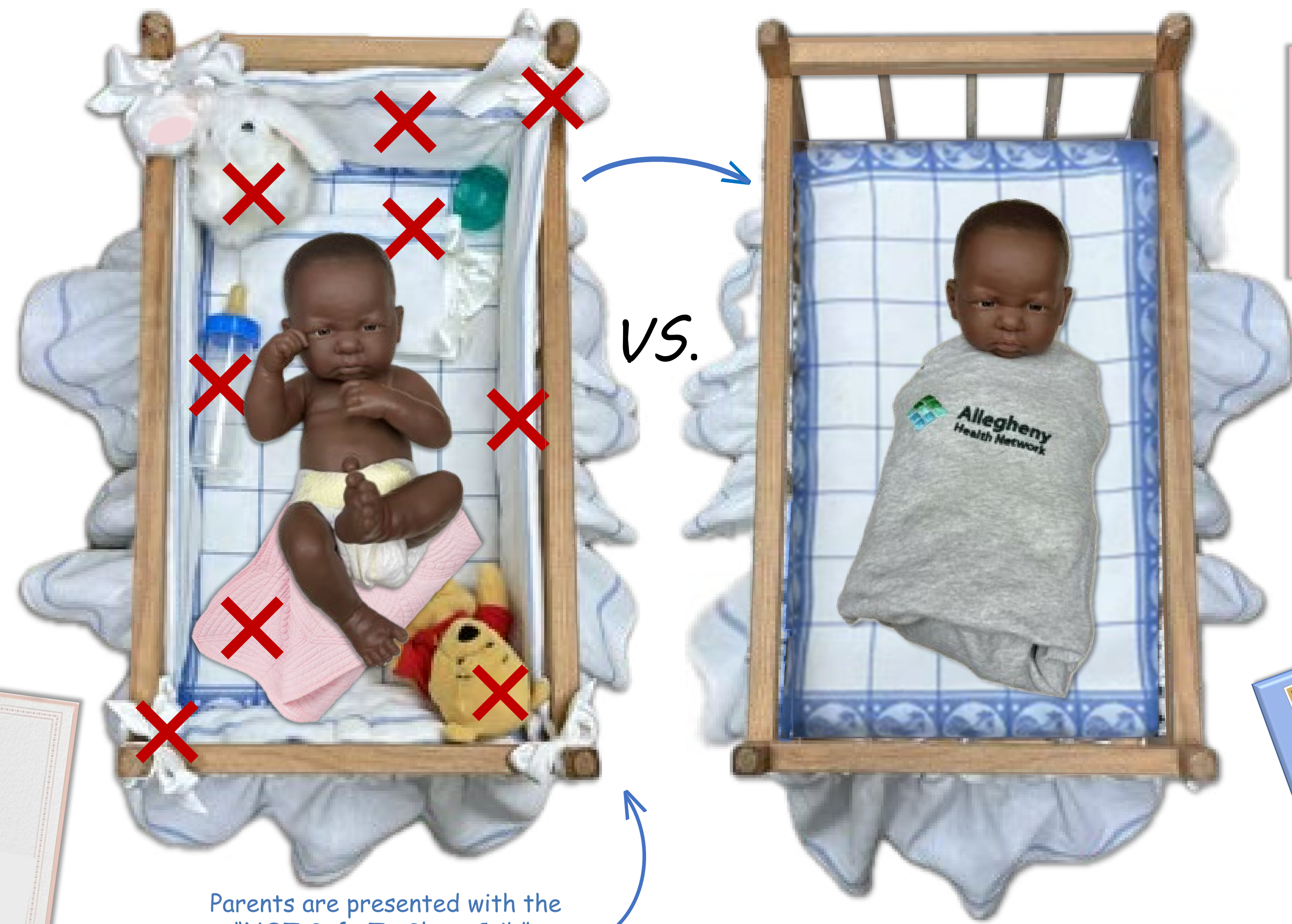
- After reviewing the suboptimal outcomes from the earlier Safe Sleep project at this center, a new project Team was formed (4/2025)
- Utilizing enhanced evidence-based Nursing research + Quality Improvement methodologies, the new educational strategy will include a simple to execute self-contained intervention bundle.

## Project GOALS:

To provide simple, engaging tools to assist staff in educating families regarding the dangers of unsafe sleep practices for infants.

To empower new parents to protect & proactively prevent unnecessary & tragic infant death.

To build parental child-advocacy skills by offering tactile, experiential, kinesthetic tools at a point of optimal learning readiness.



Parents are presented with the "NOT Safe To Sleep Crib", and asked to make it into a "Safe Sleep" crib by removing Bumpers, Blankets, Toys, etc.

**SMART AIM**

Number of infant families receiving Safe Sleep education prior to discharge will increase from 26% to 80%, within 9 months of project re-boot.

**References**

The Eunice Kennedy Shriver U.S. National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NIH). 2025. Retrieved April 28, 2025. <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/reduce-risk/FAQ>

Moon, R.Y., Carlin, R.C., Hand, L., (2022). Sleep-related infant deaths: Updated 2022 recommendations for reducing infant deaths in the sleep environment. *Pediatrics* (2022) 150 (1): e2022057990. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2022-057990>

United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS); Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS); Office of Analysis and Epidemiology (OAE); Division of Vital Statistics (DVS). <http://xander.cdc.gov/> Accessed April 25, 2025.

