



News Release

Russell M. Pry – Summit County Executive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Summit County Child Fatality Review Board, County Executive Russell M. Pry Stress the Importance of Infant Safe Sleep Practices

On Friday, March 26, 2010, the County of Summit Child Fatality Review Board (CFRB), along with Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry, hosted a press conference to stress the importance of infant safe sleep practices. The event was held at The Job Center, located at 1040 E. Tallmadge Avenue in Akron.



The Child Fatality Review Board is charged with the responsibility of reviewing all child deaths and serious injuries throughout Summit County.

Representing the CFRB on the panel were Mental Health America Director Angela Tucker Cooper, Summit County Medical Examiner Lisa Kohler, M.D. and Akron Childrens Hospital Children At-Risk Evaluation Center Director R. Daryl Steiner, D.O.

"Since 2001, there have been 63 infant unsafe sleep related deaths in Summit County," said Child Fatality Review Board Chair Daryl Steiner, D.O. "We have thoroughly reviewed each of the deaths, and I speak for the entire board when I say that these deaths are largely preventable."

To prevent sleep related deaths, the Summit County Health District recommends the following infant safe sleep tips:

- Place the baby on his/her back to sleep
- Put the baby down to sleep alone in a safety approved crib with a tight fitting sheet
- Keep other items out of the crib
- Do not smoke in the house
- Tell everyone who cares for the baby

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To help deliver their message, the CFRB enlisted the help of Lisa West. Since the passing of her infant son, Dayton Lee West-Mullen (June 14, 2002 - October 27, 2002), Lisa has dedicated her life to educating citizens about the dangers of co-sleeping.

"Never, in a million years, did I think that co-sleeping with my baby would lead to his death, but it happened," stated West with deep sorrow. "I share my experience so I can save lives and help prevent this nightmare from happening to other families."

Upon completion of the press conference, Lisa West shared her heart wrenching story again with health care professionals participating in the Ohio SIDS Risk Reduction & Infant Safe Sleep Practices community outreach and training event sponsored by the Ohio Department of Health and the Sudden Infant Death Network of Ohio.

"I want these individuals to leave the training event and share my experience with others," added West. "I sure wish someone would have told me."

"Each year, we have about six infants die from an easily prevented situation," stated Summit County Medical Examiner Lisa Kohler, M.D. "We hope that by increasing awareness more citizens will take the safety precautions needed to avoid these types of tragedies from happening."

In 2005, the County of Summit CFRB collaborated with the Summit County Health District to launch a Safe Sleep public information campaign. The Summit County Health District continues to operate a speaker's bureau on the topic. Citizens interested in scheduling a FREE speaker presentation may call 330-926-5629.

"I would like to thank the members of the Child Fatality Review Board for continuing to stress the importance of infant safe sleep practices," stated Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry. "I would also like to thank Canton mother, Lisa West, for bravely coming forward and helping us deliver this important message to citizens."

To learn more about infant safe sleep practices visit <http://www.schd.org/>. Citizens without access to the Internet may call 330-923-4891.

