



Sample Media Press Release

June 6, 2011

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Wichita, Kan.) – Babies are dying before their first birthday, born too soon and too small. The National Center for Vital Statistics ranks Kansas as the country's top state (worst) for black infant mortality rates (babies that die within their first year). In 2009, the national infant mortality rate, based on preliminary death data published by the National Center for Vital Statistics, was 6.24 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. Rates for Kansas (7.01) and Sedgwick County were higher (8.32), but the greatest cause for concern lies within the black community. Between 2000 and 2009, black infant mortality rates in Sedgwick County were 3.7 times higher than those of Caucasians.

While the root causes of the disparities in infant mortality are not thoroughly understood, the operating theory has been that the high incidence of infant deaths among black residents is attributed to stress, poverty, lower education levels, higher teen pregnancy rates, single motherhood, and - most recently suggested - genetic causes. Confronting the complex factors that contribute to health disparities in infant mortality needs a collaborative and committed community effort to bridge these gaps.

On Saturday, June 18, 2011 the Wichita Black Nurses Association is partnering with the National Association of Hispanic Nurses and the SIDS Network of Kansas to educate African American pregnant women and their support systems on safe sleep. This community baby shower will provide, based upon availability, a safe crib and wearable blanket to pregnant women who receive the safe sleep training.

The community baby shower will be held on June 18, 2011 at All Occasions Events Center, 4940 E. 21st Street, Wichita, KS at 3pm. The community baby shower is the second phase of the Healthy Baby Begins with You campaign that was kicked off April 2011 by Tonya Lewis Lee who rallied support for state and local programs and initiatives working to improve infant mortality rates in Kansas. **Do you know someone who could benefit?**

For additional information visit www.kidsks.org or contact Christy Schunn at the Kansas Infant Death and SIDS Network, Inc. 316-682-1301.