



## **September is National Infant Mortality Awareness Month**

By the Guilford County Board of Commissioners  
Guilford County, North Carolina

**WHEREAS**, the death of a baby before his or her first birthday is called infant mortality and the infant mortality rate is an estimate of the number of infant deaths for every 1,000 live births; and

**WHEREAS**, the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services: Division of Public Health; the Guilford County Coalition on Infant Mortality; and the Guilford County Child Fatality Prevention Team are celebrating September 2019 as Infant Mortality Awareness Month by promoting safe sleep messaging throughout Guilford County; and

**WHEREAS**, Guilford County is one of the leading counties in the state for high infant mortality rates with 61 infants who died in 2017, at a rate of 9.8 per 1,000 births; and

**WHEREAS**, of the 61 infants who died, nine were from sleep-related deaths. Many of these deaths could have been prevented; and

**WHEREAS**, Public Health follows the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics which includes placing sleeping infants on a firm sleeping surface, such as a firm mattress in a crib, covered only with a snug-fitting fitted sheet. Firm sleeping surfaces are surfaces that keep their shape when the infant is placed on them. Loose bedding, mattress toppers, blankets, stuffed animals, bumpers, positioners, or any other soft object should be removed from the infant's sleeping area; and

**WHEREAS**, Public Health encourages all parents and caregivers to promote safe sleep by:

- Always placing your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night.
- Using a firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved crib, covered by a fitted sheet.
- Dressing baby in no more than one layer of clothing more than an adult would wear to be comfortable and leave the blanket out of the crib.
- Sharing your room, not your bed. Your baby should not sleep in an adult bed, on a couch, or on a chair alone, with you, or with anyone else.
- Not using pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area.
- Keeping the room at a temperature that is comfortable for an adult.
- Not allowing smoking or vaping around your baby.
- Breastfeeding because it reduces the risk of sleep related causes of infant death.

**Now, therefore, be it resolved** that Guilford County Board of Commissioners do hereby  
proclaim  
September 2019 as:

**National Infant Mortality Month**

This Board encourages all Guilford County residents to take steps to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of their families by making healthy personal lifestyle choices, seeking regular preventative health care and logging on to [www.guilfordcountync.gov](http://www.guilfordcountync.gov) for information and suggestions for maintaining and improving health.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my  
hand to this proclamation this 19th day of September

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J. Alan Branson, Chairman

Guilford County Board of Commissioners