

Public Health Update – August 2021

**‘Plan a safe sleep, every sleep’ Campaign’**

Since June 2020, local agencies including Public Health, local midwifery services, 0-19 Public Health Nursing Services, the CCG, Police, Fire and Rescue, Northamptonshire Children’s Trust and the third sector have been working in collaboration to design a new safe sleep campaign for the county to raise awareness and promote safe sleeping practices to parents, guardians and family members.

Infant deaths linked to co-sleeping are generally low in Northamptonshire however during COVID-19 and lockdown there have sadly been a number of unexpected deaths of infants where unsafe co-sleeping has been identified as a contributory factor. Alcohol was also highlighted as a factor in a number of the incidents.

In order to develop the campaign, the group reviewed previous safe sleep promotion activities and the messages currently being given to families, as well as identified touch points within services where they are being delivered. The group also explored the evidence-based resources that could be used system wide to facilitate open conversations about safe sleep and ensure consistent messaging is being given to the public.

The *Plan a safer sleep, every sleep* campaign was delivered through social media; Facebook, Instagram and Twitter in two phases.

The first phase was launched on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020 and ran between Christmas and New Year. The posts were targeted to families with children 0-5 as well as grandparents and carers and included 3 key messages:

1. What is safe sleep and safe sleep environments for infants
2. Safe sleep for short periods of time (when out and about)
3. Unsafe sleep situations



The reach of the posts ranged from 15,000 to 180,000 which was really positive. The engagement and impact of the first phase was then reviewed, alongside with feedback from professionals and insight from the Communications Teams. This was used to assist planning for phase two and to help consider how the public could be supported to find and use evidence based information.

Phase two of the campaign was launched in June 2021 and included revised graphics and some additional graphics that each presented single messages as well as included links to PHE endorsed Lullaby Trust resources that parents and carers could click through to for more information.



Animated graphics were also used to make the unsafe sleep situations information more engaging to the public. Again this resulted in a minimum reach of 15,000 and involved more 'tags' and comments, offering other links to sources of support.

Overall this campaign was well received and has provided the opportunity for a multi-agency partnership approach to a very sensitive and emotive issue. It has contributed to improved consistency of messaging being delivered across sectors and between professionals, organisations and generations despite differing cultures, structures and functions and increased knowledge of the use of social media platforms and functions to deliver public health campaigns.