Safe Sleep Project in the NICU

Promoting safe sleep practices through modeling and education

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SIDS/SUID: High Risk Population

- **NICU graduates higher risk for SIDS/SUID**
  - Low birth weight, premature birth
- **Fetal Infant Mortality Review – reports of unsafe sleep practices among NICU graduates**
- **Parents were seeing inconsistent modeling of safe sleep practices in the NICU**
  - Developmentally appropriate to place babies prone during intensive care phase, need to transition well before discharge
  - "Clutter" in the crib
  - "When you get home, you should…"

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Safe Sleep Project

Pilot - 2008

Expanded to entire unit - 2009

Staff Education

Family Education

Modeling

Evaluation

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Staff Education

- Trained 65 nurses (SIDS Mid-Atlantic)
- New nursing Fellows
- Annual nursing skills fair 2010– safe sleep included as a competency for all 32 intermediate care nurses
- NICHD Nursing Module available

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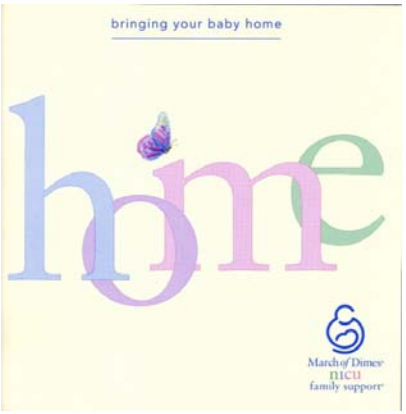
Family Education

Bedside Teaching by Nurses when a baby transitions to an open crib

Safe Sleep Kit (English and Spanish)

- Sleep sack™ (preemie and newborn size)
- Handout re: Safe Sleep Project (washing instructions)
- Back to Sleep campaign materials
- March of Dimes HOME booklet



March of Dimes Risk Reduction Class

CPR Classes

Materials in the Waiting Area

- **include materials for grandparents**

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Modeling

- Use sleep sacks™ as teaching tool and visual reminder
- Model Crib
- Change in daily nursing practice

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Evaluation

Observable difference in the NICU

- Less clutter in the cribs
- Consistent back to sleep
- Consistent parent education
- Feedback from staff and families

Follow up calls

- 209 out of 210 reported knowledge of safe sleep practices
- Most of the parents specifically mentioned the bedside nurses providing safe sleep instructions and all readily give examples of risk reduction strategies such as not using bumpers, supine sleeping and no extra items in the crib.

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Challenges

- **Large unit - ongoing staff education needed (float, agency)**
- **Confusing messages in the community:**
  - "If bumpers aren't safe, why do they sell them at the store?"
- **Funding for Sleepsacks™**
  - Private donation, corporate grant, NICU Family Support donations, donations from families
- **Storage and logistics**
- **Change in culture takes time**

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Resources

Staff Education:

SIDS mid-Atlantic http://www.sidsma.org

March of Dimes http://www.marchofdimes.com

First Candle http://www.firstcandle.org

NICHD nursing module http://www.nichd.nih.gov/SIDS/nursececourse/Welcome.aspx

Family Education:

Back to Sleep campaign http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/

March of Dimes http://www.marchofdimes.com/prematurity/21579.asp

Sleep sacks™:

Halo (discount to hospitals) https://www.halosleep.com/

Gently used sleep sacks are donated by graduate families

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Future

- Working to create a hospital wide policy
- Launder hospital sleep sacks™ on the unit
- Safe sleep kit as a discharge gift
- Ongoing staff training and support

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