



Public Health
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Shawnee County Health Department

Shawnee County Health Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
08/23/2024

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MEDIA RELEASE

Annual Community Baby Shower on Safe Sleep - Saturday August 24, 2024

Topeka, Kan. – The Community Health Improvement Plan has identified infant mortality as a major health concern for Shawnee County and the LiveWell Shawnee County Healthy Babies workgroup has been working on ways to help inform expecting families on safe sleep practices. On Saturday, August 24th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. the workgroup will host its annual Community Baby Shower on Safe Sleep for Shawnee County. The event will be held at the [Shawnee County Health Department - 2600 SW East Circle Drive, Topeka, Kansas 66606](http://www.shawneehealth.org).

The Healthy Babies workgroup operates as the Community Action Team for the Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Program which focuses on turning recommendations into new actionable interventions that benefit the community.

Kansas Health Matters reports that the rate of infant deaths, which includes newborns through one year of age, is 7.9 deaths per 1,000 live births in Shawnee County ([KHM-2024](#)). This does NOT meet the objective of the Healthy People 2030 goal of 5.0 deaths per 1,000 live births and is higher than the rate of Kansas as a whole at 5.9 deaths per 1,000 live births. Additionally, there is an alarming disparity where Black/African American babies die at a rate more than 4.7 times the rate of white babies in Shawnee County.

While the root causes in infant mortality are complex, the high incidence of infant deaths can be attributed to factors in addition to unsafe sleep environments such as stress, poverty, and access to preventative health care. Confronting the complex factors that contribute to infant mortality needs a collaborative and committed community effort to bridge these gaps.

The shower is open to any expecting families in Shawnee County. **Pregnant women who attend the shower and receive the safe sleep training will receive a free portable crib, diapers, and a wearable blanket, while supplies last.**

The Shawnee County Health Department (SCHD) will be onsite to offer **FREE Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) for eligible pregnant mothers and caregivers.**

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Shawnee County Health Department is committed to working in partnership with our community to promote and protect the optimal health of all people by bridging gaps to eliminate health inequities through adaptive and innovative processes while respecting the diversity of our community.

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