

Insights

Safe Sleep and Breastfeeding Initiative Invites Advocates to Join Communities of Practice

Community organizations will be key to shaping next phase of NAPPSS-IIN project

January 22, 2021



A multi-year initiative to improve infant safe sleep and breastfeeding is launching sector-specific Communities of Practice in 2021 to address policies, improve skills, and learn from other advocates' experiences. A virtual [kickoff meeting on Jan. 28](#) will highlight the work of NAPPSS-IIN to date, provide an opportunity to hear from constituents, and help identify community-level organizations interested in joining.

“We are intentionally prioritizing Black and Indigenous families in this work to acknowledge the undue burden of sudden and unexplained infant deaths caused by structural racism and other forms of oppression,” said Senior Project Director Stacy Scott, PhD, MPA. “We seek to work in authentic partnership with community-based organizations and hospitals as we mutually share knowledge, attitudes, and practices to address structural inequity’s disproportionate impact on babies and families of color.”

The launch of these Communities of Practice is the next phase of the NICHQ-led National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep Improvement and Innovation Network (NAPPSS-IIN), funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau. The partnerships of [more than 70 cross-sector, national level organizations on the National Coalition and Action Teams](#) support the initiative’s ambitious aim to make safe sleep and breastfeeding the norm in states and communities across the country.

NAPPSS-INN invites community-level safe sleep and breastfeeding organizations and advocates from the following groups to participate in quarterly sharing sessions:

- **Birthing Professionals:** Healthcare, public health, and community workers who are directly involved in prenatal and postpartum support of the pregnant person, including physicians, prenatal/postpartum providers, midwives, doulas, and prenatal/postpartum providers
- **Community Advocacy Organizations:** Agencies that support and advocate for the health and wellness of the community, including churches, community centers, and social services
- **Community-based Home Visitors:** Organizations that provide in-home/place-based services for prenatal and postpartum individuals and family units, including CHWs, home visitors, LSWs, and nurse home visitors
- **Early Childcare Providers:** Providers of childcare services during the first year of life, including daycare centers and in-home care providers

These quarterly sessions will begin in March 2021.

[Register here](#)

Additionally, two groups will meet biannually:

- **First Responders:** Law enforcement, firefighters, paramedics/EMTs, medical examiners, and coroners
- **Researchers:** SIDS/SUID and breastfeeding professional and academic researchers

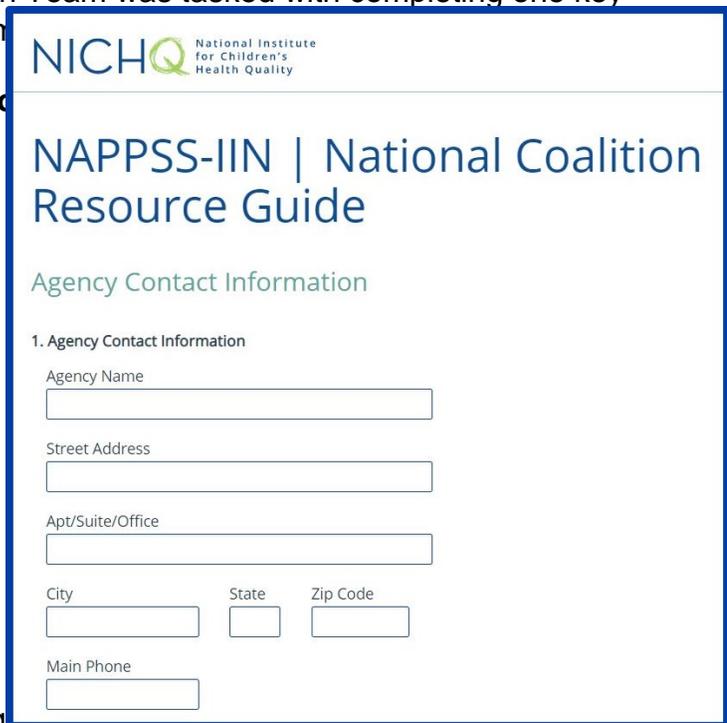
Communities of Practice will be interactive in format, combining discussion and professional Q&A panels. Topics will be informed by ongoing participant surveys, a series of listening sessions with community partners, and an environmental scan of community organizations. Listening sessions and the environmental scan will be conducted by NICHQ’s Data, Applied Research, and Evaluation (DARE) team, led by Senior Analyst Meera Menon, PhD.

The community listening sessions that begin in March 2021 will capture the wisdom of community-driven organizations working to promote safe sleep and breastfeeding. These organizations know best which areas need support, and NICHQ will document the successes and challenges in their work. The accompanying environmental scan will assess the readiness of potential community partners to participate in Cohort C, a 6-month quality improvement collaborative focused on increasing adherence to safe sleep and breastfeeding recommendations in the community setting. Nine hospital teams who previously participated in an 18-month collaborative have committed to continue participation in NAPPSS-IIN. Cohort C engagement includes attending Action Period calls and Learning Sessions, working on PDSAs, and sharing quarterly data. Cohort C is accepting applications until March 30, 2021.

UPDATES FROM NAPPSS-IIN NATIONAL ACTION TEAMS

Since the inception of the National Coalition in 2016, originally housed at Georgetown and rehomed at NICHQ in 2018, four National Action Teams focused on driving measurable change in four priority areas. Each National Action Team was tasked with completing one key deliverable in 2020 to support cohort teams.

Aligning National, State, and Local Efforts



The image shows a screenshot of a web form titled "NAPPSS-IIN | National Coalition Resource Guide". The form is for "Agency Contact Information" and is part of a questionnaire. The form includes the following fields:

- Agency Name
- Street Address
- Apt/Suite/Office
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Main Phone

The form is framed by a blue border. The NICHQ logo is visible in the top left corner of the form area.

Led by co-chair Misty Wilder, the Aligning

National, State, and Local Efforts Action Team's goal has been to maintain a shared vision for success between the breastfeeding and safe sleep communities. Alignment between these two health improvement efforts helps coordinate the different messages new families are hearing to ensure parents understand how to promote breastfeeding and keep their babies safe. The Action Team is completing a National Coalition Resource Guide Questionnaire that will provide the NAPPSS-IIN community with information about organizations that promote safe sleep and breastfeeding. Organizations who would like to be included in this Resource Guide can [submit information here](#).



modules

Led by team co-chair Dr. Suzanne M. Bronheim, the Promoting

Conversation Modules Action Team has been focusing on reinforcing the consistent use of the [Building on Campaigns with Conversations](#) learning modules across multiple care settings. Originally developed by the National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health (NCEMCH), the modules serve as a guide for stakeholders who interact with families on the topics of safe sleep and breastfeeding. The modules support professionals to become more aware of the importance of integrated breastfeeding and safe sleep behaviors, reinforce evidence-based policies and practices, and promote an empowering, problem-solving approach for families to adopt. The Action Team has completed [a draft guide for using the conversation modules](#) in community settings.

Supporting Early Child Care and Education



Co-chaired by Barb Himes and Dr. Cassandra Jackson,

the Supporting Early Child Care and Education Action Team is focused on ensuring that all childcare facilities understand and promote safe sleep and have policies aligned with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines. This Action Team developed a [Frequently Asked Questions Guide](#) about safe sleep and breastfeeding that can be shared with childcare providers as well as parents and caregivers. An included infographic shares data about safe sleep and breastfeeding in an engaging format. Additionally, the group is creating a series of Myths and Facts documents that can be used to address misconceptions about safe sleep and breastfeeding.

Public Media and Media Relations

Co-chaired by Bonnie Kozial and Alison Baker, MS, the Public Media and Media Relations Action Team focuses on spreading a common message about safe sleep among key stakeholders, including infant product manufacturers, retailers, and consumers. The goal is to increase awareness of use of images and products that abide by AAP recommendations for infant safe sleep to mitigate the mixed messages parents and caregivers see in the public sphere, especially with the presence of social media. This Action Team is creating a Baby Registry Guide that emphasizes the importance of safe sleep practices and environments, makes recommendations, and addresses challenges such as inconsistent advice, parental fatigue, maintaining breastfeeding, and unexpected changes as babies grow. The Baby Registry Guide will help parents and caregivers understand product safety standards, direct new moms and parents to a safe sleep product registry and connect parents and caregivers to local service providers.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Look for more resources and related insights as the Communities of Practice convene in March, June, and September and April and August, respectively. Community-based organizations interested in participating in a Community of Practice or quality improvement collaborative are encouraged to attend the Jan. 28 webinar to learn more.

Are you part of a national organization interested in working to make safe sleep and breastfeeding a national norm? Please email your interest to nappss@nichq.org

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