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Indian Health Service Press Release

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IHS Receives First SIDS Risk Reduction Resource Kit From the CJ Foundation

Dr. Craig Vanderwagen, Acting Chief Medical Officer for the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is presented with the first CJ Foundation for SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) Risk Reduction Resource Kit. The presentation was made at the IHS Headquarters in Rockville, Md., by R. Mona Rosenman, Director of Strategic Communications and Policy, with the CJ Foundation for SIDS. Also present were other employees of the IHS.

“The information contained in these kits plays a vital role in the effort to eliminate SIDS in American Indian and Alaska Native communities,” stated Dr. Vanderwagen. “Putting an infant to sleep on its back can save the infant’s life and the parents a lifetime of grief.”

The “Face Up to Wake Up” SIDS Risk Reduction Resource Kit is an outcome of a public-private partnership to support the reduction of SIDS among American Indians and Alaska Natives. The nationwide SIDS rate for American Indian and Alaska Native infants in the IHS service population is more than twice the U.S. all races rate.

In 2003, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy G. Thompson and the CJ Foundation for SIDS announced their partnership in providing a \$100,000 HHS grant and a \$100,000 grant from the CJ Foundation for SIDS to support Tribal efforts in programs to reduce the risk of SIDS. The CJ Foundation, the leading SIDS organization in the United States, then awarded \$200,000 total in grants to the Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council, Lac Du Flambeau, WI; the University of North Dakota Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Center, Grand Forks, ND; and the Aberdeen Area Tribal Chairmen’s Health Board, Aberdeen, SD. These organizations serve populations that suffer some of the highest SIDS rates in the country. For calendar years 1996 to 1998, the SIDS rate in the Aberdeen IHS Area was 4½ times the U.S. all races rate, and in the Bemidji IHS Area the SIDS rate was more than 3 times the U.S. all races rate.



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The grants were used to develop culturally appropriate materials to support activities to reduce alcohol use by pregnant women, reduce maternal and second hand smoke, increase the knowledge of SIDS among pregnant and teenage mothers, and enhance local Back to Sleep campaigns. The material also provides information to Indian women on what they can do before becoming pregnant and during their pregnancy to reduce the infant’s risk of dying of SIDS.

“The CJ Foundation provided an additional \$200,000 to collect the materials and develop the ‘Face Up to Wake Up’ SIDS Risk Reduction Resource Kit to disseminate materials across Indian Country, free of charge,” said Rosenman. The CJ Foundation is dedicated to eliminating SIDS across the country in all communities.

The “Face Up to Wake Up” SIDS Risk Reduction Resource Kit includes a manual for educators to use for counseling and in classroom instruction. Also included in the kit are videos and CDs that contain files for culturally appropriate posters, brochures, flyers, and other educational materials that are ready to be printed.

These kits will be distributed to midwife programs; Tribal and private daycare centers; Early Head Start programs; and Women, Infants, and Children programs; and will be made available at powwows, schools, and community centers.

Information about the CJ Foundation and how to obtain a resource kit is available at <http://www.cjsids.com>.

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