



In the 1980s, lawmakers and the public were becoming concerned with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the tragic death of a baby less than one year old that is unexplained, even after a thorough and complete investigation. California passed several laws to address the issue, including legislation to fund the California SIDS Program. The program has since increased its scope to include all forms of Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID), which can include accidental asphyxiation (suffocation), unknown causes due to incomplete investigations, and SIDS.

**Our goal:** To reduce the number of SIDS/SUID deaths by prioritizing helping families/caregivers cope with SIDS/SUID deaths, educating about the importance of safe sleep environments, and engaging in family-centered conversations to reduce risk of all sleep-related deaths.

**We serve:** All parents and caregivers of newborn infants in California.

**Service delivery:** Training of local SIDS coordinators and public health professionals at SIDS conferences and trainings;

The program offers education about this difficult topic, support services and training for health professionals, and counseling for parents and caregivers who may have lost a baby to any form of SUID.

While there is no known cause of SIDS, the program is committed to using data about SUID to carry out strategies and interventions to reduce infant death, including outreach and education about best practices for infant safe sleep to lower potential for SIDS and sleep-related suffocation, asphyxia and entrapment among infants.

participation in the state SIDS Advisory Council and two regional councils; providing grief and bereavement services/materials to families through local SIDS coordinators.

**Outcomes:** The Title V Block Grant identifies measures on key SIDS/SUID-related goals including: reducing the rate of SUID via promotion of infant safe sleep practices and offering grief and bereavement support services for parents and caregivers who suffer a loss due to SIDS/SUID.

**Funding:** Federal Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant.

## Local outreach & education

California's 61 local health jurisdictions (LHJs) are required to implement the California SIDS Program, with a goal of reducing the number of SIDS/SUID deaths in their communities and implementing outreach and education activities for families and organizations to support an infant safe sleep environment. Given each LHJ's unique community demographics, size, income and access to health care, local programs are tailored to the communities they serve. LHJs:

- develop and distribute SIDS/SUID literature at community events;
- adhere to the American Academy of Pediatrics Safe Sleep Recommendations;
- assess and support families' needs by providing safe sleep products such as bassinets, Baby Boxes, portable cribs;



- provide grief and bereavement support to parents and caregivers who suffer a SIDS/SUID loss;
- work with infant day care centers in collaboration with Department of Social Services; and
- ensure that Labor and Delivery hospitals in California provide safe sleep information and guidance to all parents and caregivers of newborns.

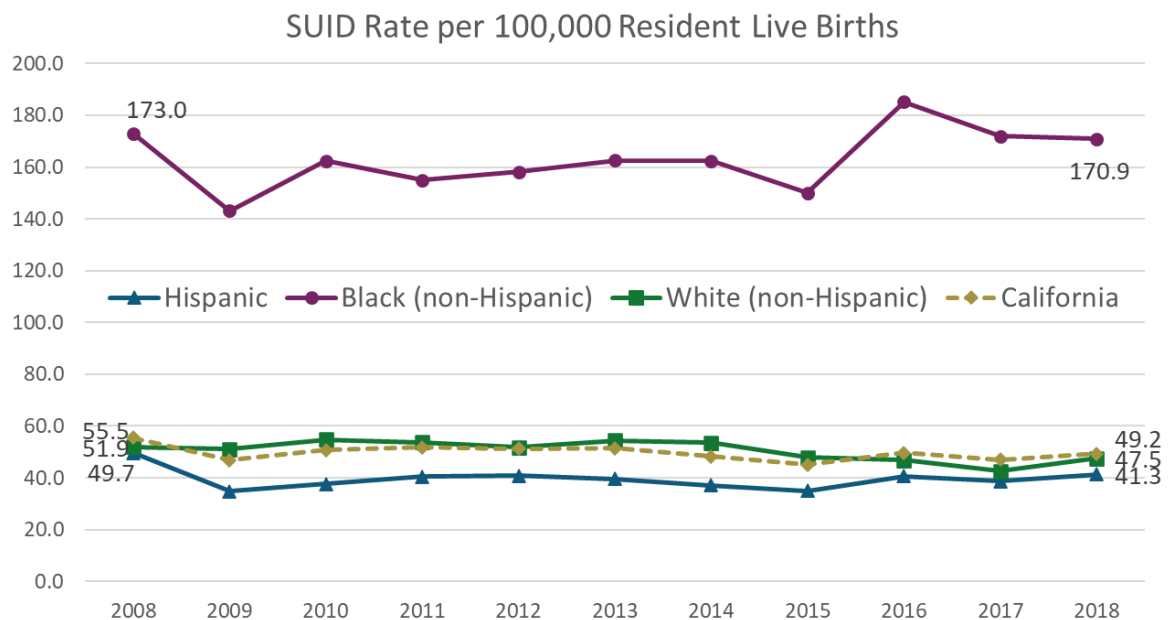
## The SIDS Advisory Council

To get SIDS community input, law mandates the appointment of the SIDS Advisory Council, a nine-member council of representatives from parent groups and professionals who provide services to families impacted by SUID. The council advises the California Department of Public Health on training and educational programs, recommends action to address disparities, and helps convene an annual statewide conference.

### Since 2008, SUID rates have declined for all race/ethnic groups.

Black infants remain three times more likely to die than Hispanic infants and twice as likely to die than White infants.

The Black SUID rate remains more than twice the California SUID rate.



Sources: California Department of Public Health: Birth Cohort File, years 2008-2018. SUID = ICD-10 Causes R95, R99, W75 combined. ICD-10 Code R95 (*Sudden Infant Death Syndrome - SIDS*); ICD-10 Code R99 (*Other Ill-Defined and Unspecified Causes of Mortality - Unknown/Undetermined*); ICD-10 Code W75 (*Accidental Suffocation and Strangulation in Bed - ASSB*). ICD-10 = International Classification of Diseases, 10<sup>th</sup> Revision.

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