

17,000 Cribs and Counting: Safe Sleep Reduces Infant Mortality

The infant mortality rate of Louisiana Healthcare Connections members decreased significantly since 2018, thanks to an innovative care management effort that provides safe sleep survival kits, including free cribs and educational materials, for expecting mothers in north Louisiana. Recently, the **17,000th** crib was delivered, marking a milestone of many more Louisiana babies waking up safe and healthy.

The Challenge: Disturbing Trend of Worsening Infant Mortality

Among all Louisiana residents, the mortality rate for infants in their first year in Louisiana is 7.6 per thousand, compared to a national average of 5.6. Louisiana has the second highest infant mortality rate in the country, according to the CDC. Shreveport and Monroe have been identified as two regions of the state with particularly high rates of infant mortality. Sleep-related incidents are the leading cause of death in babies up to the age of 12 months.

A Practical Solution to a Social Determinant of Health

To try to prevent these needless deaths, in 2018 Louisiana Healthcare Connections began distributing Safe Sleep Survival Kits to pregnant members in north Louisiana about a month before their due date. Each kit contains a portable crib and educational materials teaching sleep safety for infants, to ensure parents have the resources needed to provide safe sleep environments for their babies.

The early results were encouraging, and Louisiana Healthcare Connections quickly expanded the program statewide. Despite a slight uptick in infant mortality during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, overall, the program has noted a downward trend with almost 50% fewer infant deaths from pre-program levels.

“Data-driven insights help us target real-world problems with practical solutions,” noted Louisiana Healthcare Connections Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Stewart Gordon. **“This milestone crib marks many more babies waking up healthy throughout Louisiana today, and that’s the sort of healthcare that makes a difference.”**



Making a Difference for Louisiana's Moms

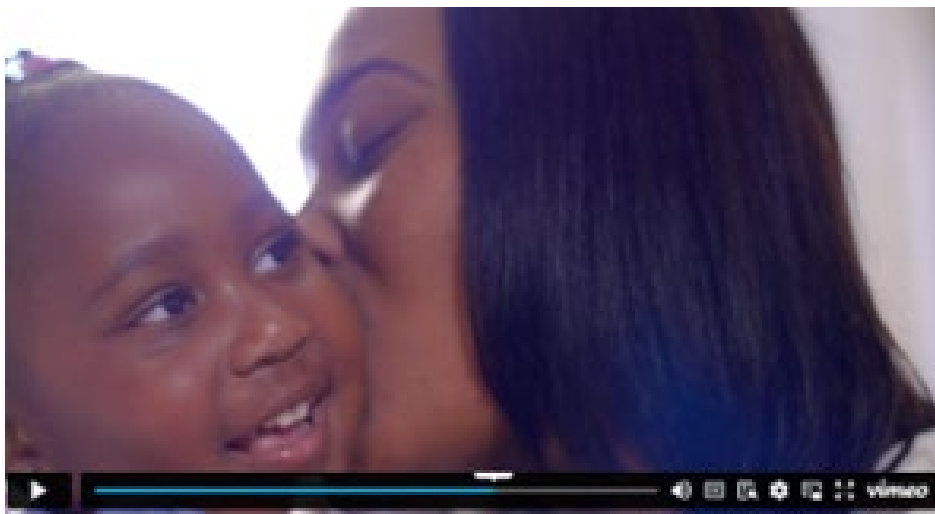
"We have had so many wonderful comments from happy, expectant members who received our safe-sleep kits," noted President and CEO, Jamie Schlottman. "It's why we do what we do: to bring smiles to our members and safer sleeping for their babies."

"I found a Cribs for Kids package on my porch this afternoon, and after I realized Louisiana Healthcare Connections had sent this item to me, I wanted to say how unbelievably kind and thoughtful it was for y'all to do this for us. It sure brought a smile to my face! Thank you from the bottom of my heart! ♥"

"It took me a moment to remember my case manager said I would receive a crib close to my due date. I turned the box over to see my name and was very excited to receive such a nice gift from Louisiana Healthcare Connections! It was a great way to end a difficult week I was having. Thank you."

Moneisha & Baby Tyler's Story

When Moneisha received her safe sleep survival kit, she was overjoyed. "When I received the crib from Louisiana Healthcare Connections...it lit up my day." With the recent loss of her apartment and car, "the cribette was a blessing... You have people out there who care about you and your kid and they're reaching out."



lahealth.cc/moneisha-crib

Moneisha and Reducing Infant Mortality in North Louisiana (30)