



NC Department of Health and Human Services

# North Carolina SIDS Grief Counseling Program

**Rebecca Severin**

**Maternal Health Program Manager  
Women's Health Branch**

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# History

- **Established July 1, 1975**
  - **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner within the Division of Public Health**
- **November 1, 1977 transferred to the Maternal and Child Health Branch, which is currently the Women's Health Branch.**
- **For optimal statewide coverage utilizing volunteers among the health department staff was best practice.**

# Program Objectives

- **Provision of timely grief support to families affected by an infant deaths that may be attributed to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or other sleep- related cause of death;**
- **Ongoing knowledge of and referral to a support network of parents who have experienced an infancy death event who are interested in helping other families;**
- **Training of new local SIDS Counselors as the need arises and annual continuing educational opportunities for current SIDS Counselors to enhance their knowledge and improve counseling skills;**
- **Education about SIDS and other sleep related cause of death in infancy for health professionals, public safety officials, and other community members;**

# Services

- **Each county in the state of North Carolina has a lead and backup SIDS counselor or has an agreement in place to provide a trained grief counselor for their community.**
- **Notification of an infant death happens at both the state and local level**
  - **OCME**
  - **Outreach**
- **The SIDS Counselor assigned to the case receives support from the Program Manager at the Women’s Health Branch**

# Services

## – Outreach

- Condolence letter
- Refresher letter

## – Initial Home Visit

- Build rapport
- Referrals for immediate needs

## – Subsequent Home Visit(s)

- Review Autopsy report
- Follow up on referrals

## – Documentation

# Training

- **1-day face to face training**
  - Skill development in regard to providing grief support
  - Reading and understanding Autopsy reports
- **Annual webinar**
  - NC Safe Sleep Campaign at UNC Center for Maternal and Infant Health
- **Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development**

Feel free to contact me with further questions:



## **Rebecca Severin**

**Maternal Health Program Manager**

**Women's Health Branch**

**5601 Six Forks Rd Raleigh, NC 27609**

**[Rebecca.severin@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Rebecca.severin@dhhs.nc.gov)**

**919-707-5680**