There were 78 unexplained deaths in babies less than 6 months of age in Cook County in 2017 and 2018:

97% had at least one sleeping risk factor present

62% were co-sleeping

28% were sleeping with blankets, pillows, etc.

9% Other

Using data from the Illinois Violent Death Reporting System, we identified all cases of infants less than 6 months of age who died in Cook County due to non-natural causes in 2017 and 2018. These deaths occurred throughout Cook County but were most concentrated on the south side of Chicago.

Sleep-related deaths are preventable. For more information, including recommendations for parents and caregivers, and grief resources for people who have lost a baby, please visit:

American Academy of Pediatrics
AAP Policy Statement “SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment”

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome – CDC.gov/SIDS

Contact Information
For more information on the Illinois Violent Death Reporting System, please contact:

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