

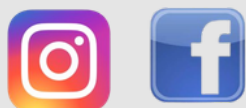
Iowa SIDS Foundation

What's INSIDE

- 2026 WALK INFO
- FAMILY SHARE STORIES
- ABC REFRESH
- REMEMBERING OUR BABIES
- SIDS RESEARCH
- NEW EDUCATION MATERIALS
- DONATIONS
- SUPPORTING GRIEVING FAMILIES
- POLICY UPDATE



- Volunteer at your local Walk.
- Host a fundraising event.
- Create a Facebook Fundraiser.
- Become a Peer Contact.
- Serve on the Board.
- Share and like our posts on social media.
- Complete your parental consent/volunteer form.
- Make a monetary donation.



Supporting Families Today, Educating for the Future

2026 Walk for the Future, Join us August 22, 2026



The 2026 Walk for the Future is right around the corner, and we're excited to welcome families, friends, and communities across Iowa on Saturday, August 22 as we walk in remembrance, in hope, and in support of all Iowa babies. The 2026 Walk will be held in five cities across the state including Cedar Rapids, Le Mars, Mount Ayr, Urbandale, and Washington.

This annual statewide event is one of the most meaningful days of the year for the Iowa SIDS Foundation. It's a chance to gather, connect, remember, and celebrate the lives of Iowa babies while also strengthening advocacy for safe sleep and raising essential funds for the mission of the Iowa SIDS Foundation.

The annual Walk plays a critical role in the functioning of the Foundation. Funds raised during the Walk directly support grief resources and programs for newly bereaved families, safe sleep education for Iowa healthcare and childcare providers, safe sleep support and programs for families, SIDS/SUID research, and the daily operations that allow us to serve families with compassion and care. Every registration, every donation, and every step taken helps us continue this vital work.

Registration is open now! All attendees must register and complete a liability waiver. Your registration fee serves as admission and directly supports families across Iowa. Registration will only be available online. The deadline to register with the option of receiving a 2026 Walk shirt is July 22nd. Shirts will NOT be available to those who register after July 22nd or on Walk Day at their location. Registration for a Walker wanting a shirt is \$35 (\$20 youth). Walkers also have the option to register for the Walk without a shirt for \$25 (\$10 youth). In addition to T-shirts, hooded sweatshirts will also be available for purchase on or before July 22nd.

Participants can register to attend the event after July 22nd including in-person on Walk Day but apparel will not be available. The registration fee (which covers admission to the event and supports our mission) after July 22nd is \$25 for adults and \$10. All attendees must register and complete a liability waiver. If you need assistance registering through our online system, don't hesitate to contact the office at 515-965-7655 or by email (info@iowasids.org). Register now by scanning the QR code!



Register TODAY. Online Registration is NOW OPEN!

Continued on page 2

2026 Walk Information Continued

If you are looking to get involved on Walk Day at your location, we would love to have the help! Each location welcomes volunteers, sponsors, and community partners who want to help make this year's Walk even more impactful. If you're interested in volunteering, reach out anytime at casey@iowasids.org to get connected to your preferred location.

Don't forget, rain or shine the Walks will still take place. If the Walk must be delayed due to dangerous weather, announcements will be posted on our website's event page and on social media. If dangerous storms are predicted to last all morning and the Walk must be cancelled due to safety, no refunds will be provided, and shirts will be given to those that registered by the July 22nd deadline.

Thank you to our 2026 Walk for the Future Sponsors!

Bronze Level

American Family Insurance Charles Kudej Agency, Bridgehaven Pregnancy Support Center, James George Attorney, Primebank, Dunes Dental 4 Kids, Kroese & Kroese PC, Cedar Memorial Funeral Homes, My Tree Guy LLC, Mckenzie Construction, Ringgold County Hospital, Taylor Maurer Photography, Golden Pheasant Steakhouse

Silver Level

American Bank, MCMIC, Rexwinkel Funeral Homes, Floyd Valley Hospital, Northwest Iowa Endodontics, Cumming American Legion Post 562, John and Lorene Rexwinkel, Fully Promoted Urbandale, Otten Family, Jensen Le Mars, Ed & Gerry Sue Krienert

Gold Level

The Schon Family, Senior Savings Services, Tight Lines Consultancy, The House of Q2, The Family of Stevie Jeneary, Molina Healthcare

Diamond Level

Jeneary and Erdmann Integrative Dentistry, Family of Libbi Bendickson, Joe & Amanda Susemihl

Media Sponsors

KLEM Radio and KG95

2026 Walk Location Details

CEDAR RAPIDS

Noelridge Park — Creekside Pavilion
4900 Council St. NE
Registration 8:00am – Walk 9:00am
Activities: Memorial butterfly release, raffle, silent auction, food, balloon animals, chalk the walk and bubbles.

LE MARS

Le Mars Municipal Shelter House
813 Park Ln
Registration 8:30am – Walk 9:45am
Activities: Memorial balloon release, raffle, silent auction, lunch, bake sale, door prizes, visit from Santa.

MOUNT AYR

Poe Hollow — Hawkins Hideaway Shelter
2423 State Hwy 2
Registration 10:00am – Walk 11:00am
Activities: Memorial event, silent auction, food, games, rock painting, and photos.

URBANDALE

Walker Johnston Park — Giovannetti Shelter
8900 Douglas Ave
Registration 9:30 am – Walk 10:30am
Activities: Memorial butterfly release, silent auction, snacks, playground, kids' activities.

WASHINGTON

Sunset Park
Corner of W Madison St. & South Ave F
Registration 8:30 am – Walk 9:30am
Activities: Memorial event, raffle, silent auction, food and drink, chalk, and playground.



Honoring Our Babies Together: Share Your Story This Fall

Last fall, our community came together in a powerful way. Through the 2025 story-sharing campaign, families bravely opened their hearts and allowed us to share their babies’ stories across social media and educational spaces. The impact was extraordinary. Your voices reached hundreds of people, sparked meaningful conversations about SIDS awareness and safe sleep education, and helped the public understand that SIDS and SUID are not distant tragedies—they affect families right here in Iowa. We are deeply grateful to every family who chose to participate. It is an honor to remember your babies with you and to carry their stories forward in a way that brings awareness, compassion, and life-saving education to others.

This fall, we will once again be launching a statewide social media campaign using family-shared stories to raise awareness of SIDS and SUID and to help educate on risk reduction. Because last year’s outreach resonated so strongly, we hope to continue this meaningful work with your help. We are inviting families who feel ready to share their story in whatever way feels right for them. Whether your contribution is a few sentences, a full narrative, or a photo with a short message, each story helps the public understand the reality of SIDS and sleep-related deaths and encourages safer practices in our communities.

A guided form is available again this year to help families reflect on and share their experiences. Stories may be used in social media posts, awareness campaigns, trainings, and presentations to help professionals and community members truly understand the importance of safe sleep and risk reduction.

If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please reach out to casey@iowasids.org. We would be honored to remember your baby with you and to include your family’s voice in this year’s campaign.



Safe Sleep Refresher: Simple Steps That Save Lives

Creating a safe sleep environment is one of the most powerful ways we can reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths. As we move into the second half of the year, it’s a good time to revisit the basics and make sure everyone in your baby’s life is on the same page. Here are some clear reminders for families, caregivers and anyone who supports infant safety!

ABC of Safe Sleep

Babies should always sleep Alone, on their Back, in a Crib. This remains the foundation of safe sleep guidance and continues to be supported by research and national recommendations.

Keep the Sleep Space Clear

A firm mattress with a fitted sheet is all a baby needs. No pillows, blankets, stuffed animals, bumpers, or positioners. A clear crib is a safe crib.

Room-Sharing, Not Bed-Sharing

The safest place for a baby to sleep is in their own crib or bassinet in the same room as a caregiver for at least the first six months. Never share a sleep surface with baby.

Dress Baby for the Environment

Avoid overheating. A wearable blanket or sleep sack is a safer alternative to loose blankets.

Safe Sleep Applies to Every Sleep

Naps count too. Whether it’s nighttime sleep, a quick nap, or time with a babysitter or grandparent, the same safe sleep rules apply.

Share What You Know

Many caregivers—especially grandparents or friends who raised children decades ago—may not be familiar with current recommendations. A gentle conversation can make a real difference.



Remembering Our Babies *Always remembered, always loved, never forgotten.*

Happy Birthday

July

Elizabeth Grace Atzen
Jerome Alexander Brown
Cole Edward Clark
Rylee Elizabeth Erwin
Owen Jay Fisher
Brennan Charley Godfredsen
Alana P. Gonzales
Ryder Martin Harnish
Kacy Lee Hartman
Zarena Rayne Jennings
Catherine Elizabeth Lafferty
Huxley Maytum
Shelby Jo McConnell
Ethan Daniel McDermott
Darian Bea O'Connell
Jessica Lynne Otto
Carson David Phillips
Joshwa Izaiah Rivera
Jaycee Marie Schilling
Jacoby James Sickels
Danielle Rae Thomas
Bryton Thompson
Jordyn N. Thompson
Easton Allin Werner

August

Braxton Timothy Charles Bell
Emmet Lee Woodyard
Zoey Kaye Bestland
Silus J Bigbee
Max David Bushlack
Abel Cenicerros
Johnathon Oscar Danner
Jennifer Lynn Dyar
Dash Riley Ellingworth
Kenna Reese Henss
Kingston Richard Hronik
Hattie Jo Jenkins
Freya Lynn Kay Keith
Evan Dean Klemme
Abigail Ilene Knoop
Maxwell Wayne Krueger
La'Tianna Jo'Nae Luten
Amara C. Magee
Maverick James Lynn Miller
Carly Ann Mordock
Paisley Marie Neis
Danielle Rose Noggle
Hope ElizaRae Ohrt
Kadyn Jo Pirie
Aaron Postel
Zachary Kyle Renaud
Aarie Jai Richardson
Analisa Ines Rodriguez
Maggie Amelia Rose Rogerson
Nolan Douglas Rubendall
Phoenix Isabelle Shank-Weaver
Hunter Dean Stevens
Cael Anthony Subject
Shane Adam Tate
Ella Elizabeth Timm
Kyle Anthony Timmons

Oakley Joe Van Patten
Shiana Lynn West
Kyler Lon Wilcox
Emmett Lee Woodyard

September

Dylan Peter Christian Andersen
Maria Irene Andersen
Lauralee Rose Bernau
Benjamin Blowers
Kayla Sue Brewer
Ariana Marie Bunch
Cody Michael Coleman
Kory Lynn Dunkin
Jennifer Lynn Dyar
Allison Renee Elliott
Kaleb Dean Hargens
Chelsea Miranda Jones
Dominic Joseph Laurenzo
Samaya Sue Lochner
Hailey Erin Lincoln
Jacob Anthony Lipski
Ross "Rosco" Jacob McGlothlen
Brenden Meinecke
Alex Ostlund
Knox Owen Palmer
Darran Dasan Perkins
Johnathan Danial Prescott
Ariel Faith Rattler
Ashton Lavail Seaton
Gavin Lee Sievers
Beth Marie Stukerjurgan
Alec Robert Wagner
Warren Edwin White
Alec Arlan Woerdehoff
Emmett Lee Woodyard
Noah James Zarate

October

Matthew James Avery
Cody James Beck
Robert Carl Davis III
Cara Lynn Eddie
Sullivan Garrett Hall
Waylon James Hay
Ryker Edward Huizenga
Alexa Jean Jonas
Peyton Jo Lehman
Dawson John Lewis
Quinten Matis
Justin Evan Miller
Robby Matthew Miller
Gunner Jacob Alex Nail
Madison "Maddy" Lynn Nesbitt
Avery Ann Palmer
Cameron Palmer
Samantha Alina Parks
Riley Jane-Marie Perkins
Isaac Thomas Pressley
Ryan Allen Robinson
DaeShawn Marquis Rodriguez

Jessica Lynn Sammons
Leavy Joel Simaj-Christianson
Kellan Rayne Christine Starrett
Erika Elizabeth Story



In Loving Memory

July

Sydney Nicole Allen
Emmett Leo Clary
Cole Alexander Davis
Rowan James Dolezal
Bently Earl Ewoldt-Jacobsen
Owen Jay Fisher
Brooke Louise Goodyk
Marianna Sarina Guess
Maverick John Healey
Logan Grant Higginbotham
Ryan Dennis Mougin
Matthew Timothy Otten
Mariah Pickering
Kelly Ann Pitts
Alexis Deane Rudkin
Carson T. Sickler
Douglas Ronald Tietge
Lauren Elizabeth Nichole Viaene
Austin Micheal Vogt

August

Olivia Nora Aikey
Jerome Alexander Brown
Cheyanne Marie Camp
Joey Cusick
Jordan Lee Daniel
Caitlin Rose Davis
Joseph Laurence Devore
Caden DeVries
Parker G. Donaldson
Gavin Eli Gratz
Hensley Mae Harms
Devon James Hayes-Jones
Steven Michael Jeneary
Carson David Phillips
Thomas Jay Fallon Robinson
Tara Beth Schroeder
Justin Ryker Swick
Dawson Thomas Vandello
Jessica Lane VanMeighem
Caleb Richard Williams

September

Mason James Bauer
Johnathon Oscar Danner
Landon Davis
Jennifer Lynn Dyar
Alana P. Gonzales
Mattilynn Elizabeth Jade Goodner
Evan Dean Klemme
Ethan Troy Livingston
Sterling Grayson McFerren
Benjamin Scott Meints

Carly Ann Mordock
Hope ElizaRae Ohrt
Kaleb J. Peverill
Aarie Jai Richardson
Phoenix Isabelle Shank-Weaver
Jacoby James Sickels
Emily Rose Studer
Billie Jo Thul
Bryton Thompson
Andrew Jay "A.J." VanDerSchaaf
Zachary Richard VanVleet
Easton Allin Werner
Keaton James Wirtz
Emmet Lee Woodyard

October

Braxton Timothy Charles Bell
Zoey Kaye Bestland
Ariana Marie Bunch
Lane Kurt Carter
Thaddeus Charles Ernzen
Christopher Scott Evans
Bentley Earl Ewoldt-Jacobsen
Teagon Lee Fowler
Kingston Richard Hronik
Hattie Jo Jenkins
Zarena Rayne Jennings
Samaya Sue Lochner
James Allen Magruder
Noah Oliver Martinez
Jaxon Matt
Huxley Maytum
Ethan Daniel McDermott
Brenden Meinecke
Danielle Rose Noggle
Darian Bea O'Connell
Bjorn Kai Packard
Aaron Postel
Joshwa Izaiah Rivera
Mario Francisco Robles
Jaycee Marie Schilling
Sawyer Reign Springsteen
Hunter Dean Stevens
Archie Lee Talamantez
Jordyn N. Thompson
Oakley Joe Van Patten
Alec Robert Wagner
Sophia Halas Welch
Kyler Lon Wilcox

Supporting Critical Research Happening Here in Iowa

Families in our community have shown extraordinary strength, compassion, and resilience. Many have also expressed a desire to help advance understanding of sudden infant and childhood loss so that future families might be spared the same heartbreak. We want to make sure you're aware of an important research opportunity happening right here in Iowa, one that may be meaningful for some families to participate in, while also recognizing that this is a deeply personal decision.

The University of Iowa Department of Pathology is conducting a study to better understand how the parts of the brain that regulate breathing and heart rate may malfunction in infants and children who die suddenly and unexpectedly. This includes both Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC).

To support this work, researchers are asking families who have lost a child to SIDS or SUDC for permission to use brain tissue that was collected during autopsies. Families are eligible if their child passed away in Iowa and underwent an autopsy from 2005 onward. Tissue samples come from the archives of the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics or the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner, where they are routinely retained for clinical purposes as required by law.

The research team includes Dr. Kimberly Fiock and Dr. Marco Hefti at the University of Iowa, Dr. Robin Haynes and colleagues at Boston Children's Hospital's Roberts Program, and collaborators at the University of Missouri. Any tissue donated will also be made available to qualified SIDS researchers nationally and internationally. Importantly, participating in this study does not affect future diagnostic testing, researchers never use all of the stored tissue.

Our organization is proud that this groundbreaking work is being led in our state, and we were honored to make a donation this year to support the study's progress. We believe deeply in the importance of research that brings us closer to answers, healing, and hope. If you have questions, want to understand what participation involves, or would like help connecting with the research team, you are welcome to reach out. Families can contact Dr. Marco Hefti directly at marco-hefti@uiowa.edu or by phone at (319) 335-8427. Signing up involves a simple consent form completed by the legal next of kin.

The research team is also working on additional studies involving genetic testing of family members. Families can indicate on the consent form whether they would like to be contacted about future opportunities.

If you'd like to talk with us first, we are here to support you. You can reach out to learn more about the study or explore whether participating feels right for your family. Together, we continue working toward a future where SIDS and SUDC are fully understood and ultimately one day completely prevented.



New Safe Sleep Educational Resources Now Available for Iowa Professionals

We're excited to share four new safe sleep resources released this spring to support both families and child care professionals across Iowa. In May, we introduced two tools for child care providers, and more than 600 have already been distributed!

Safe Infant Sleep for the Child Care Professional is a spiral pocket guide with safe sleep policies, communication tips, and unresponsive infant procedures and our *Unresponsive Infant Emergency Procedures Poster* is a 8.5" x 11" color poster outlining steps to take if an unresponsive infant is found. These tools help ensure that safe sleep practices are consistent, clear, and accessible in environments where many Iowa babies spend their days.

In April, we released two new family handouts created with the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. More than 1,500 copies have already been shared. The *Make a Plan for Safe Sleep* handout encourages families to think ahead about how they will keep their baby safe during sleep, even when facing exhaustion or unexpected situations and the *Share a Room, Not a Bed* resource explains the risks of bed-sharing and offers safer alternatives that still support bonding and nighttime care. Both handouts are available in English, Spanish, Burmese, and Arabic and are excellent additions to our existing safe sleep brochure.

If you'd like copies of any of these materials or are interested in safe sleep training opportunities reach out any time. All resources are free in any quantity to any Iowa provider. Contact us at info@iowasids.org or scan the QR code.



Thank You... *The Iowa SIDS Foundation wishes to thank the following donors for their generous gifts made March-May 2026.*

Gifts Given in Memory of:

Lindsey Marie Krusemark

Joel Krusemark

Toby Daniel Sejkora

Gary & Pamela Sejkora

Alex Thomas Marker

Gary & Delanie Marker Sr.

Isaac Francis Stecker

Amanda Stecker

Colin Michael McGaffin

Pam Strum

Zachary Richard VanVleet

Diana VanVleet

*in
loving
memory*

Ryan Dennis Mougín

Wayne & Dee Simon

Your donation, given in tender remembrance, becomes a ripple of compassion. Because of you, this child's memory continues to inspire healing, love, and meaningful change. Thank you for your support.

General Donations May-March 2026:



American Academy of Pediatrics Iowa Chapter

American Online Giving Fund

Benevity

Blackbaud Giving Fund

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Principal Financial

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United Way of Central Iowa

United Way of Atlanta

United Way of Siouxland

Words Worth Repeating

We need your support to continue to make a difference for Iowa Families!

Every day, our small organization does big work but we can't do it alone. If you believe in our mission of supporting families and educating communities, we're asking for your support today. Your donation, no matter the size, keeps our mission moving forward and truly makes a difference. If you're able, please consider giving now to help us continue this work for our community.

How You Can Help:

- Donate online today! Scan the QR code or visit our website.
- Host a Facebook fundraiser.
- Ask your employer about matching donations.
- Contact local restaurants or businesses that host give back events (Pizza Ranch, Panera, Chipotle, Freddy's, Applebees, Taco Johns, just to name a few!).
- Send a check to our office 2963 100th St. Ste 2 Urbandale 50322.
- Invite friends, family, and coworkers to the Walk for the Future.
- Consider signing up for automatic monthly donations on our website.



Supporting Grieving Families: How to Show Care That Truly Helps

When a family experiences the loss of a baby to SIDS or SUID, their world changes forever. Grief is not something to “get over,” and there is no timeline for healing. But compassionate support from friends, relatives, and community members can make an enormous difference. Read more to find gentle guidance on how to be present for families walking through unimaginable loss.

Acknowledge Their Baby

One of the most meaningful things you can do is speak their baby’s name. Acknowledging their child affirms that their baby’s life mattered and continues to matter. Simple statements like “I’m thinking of your baby today” can bring comfort.

Listen Without Trying to Fix

Grieving parents don’t need solutions, they need space. Let them share memories, emotions, or silence. Listening without judgment or advice shows deep respect for their experience.

Offer Specific, Practical Help

Instead of “Let me know if you need anything,” offer something concrete:

- “I can bring dinner on Tuesday.”
- “I’m going to the store, can I pick up groceries for you?”
- “Would it help if I handled yardwork this weekend?”

Practical support eases daily burdens during an overwhelming time.



Remember Important Dates

Anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays can be especially difficult. A message, card, or small gesture on these days reminds families they are not alone and that their baby is remembered.

Respect Their Grief Journey

Every family grieves differently. Some want to talk often; others need quiet. Some participate in events; others step back. There is no “right” way. Follow their lead and honor their pace.

Continue Showing Up

Support often fades after the first few weeks, but grief does not. Checking in months or years later even with a simple “Thinking of you today” can mean more than you realize.

Research & Policy Update: What’s New in SIDS & Safe Sleep

Staying current on SIDS and SUID research is essential to our mission. Each year, new studies and policy developments help us better understand infant sleep safety and guide the recommendations we share with families and caregivers. Here’s a brief overview of recent updates shaping the conversation around safe sleep and risk reduction.

Recent studies continue to highlight the importance of safe sleep environments and consistent adherence to evidence-based practices. Researchers are exploring neurological and genetic factors that may contribute to vulnerability in some infants, while reaffirming that safe sleep practices significantly reduce risk. Although no single cause of SIDS has been identified, the growing body of research strengthens understanding and supports ongoing prevention efforts.

Federal agencies have increased oversight of infant sleep products, leading to recalls of items that do not meet safety standards. Families are encouraged to stay informed about recalls and avoid products marketed for sleep that do not meet current safety guidelines. A safe sleep space remains simple: a firm mattress, fitted sheet, and nothing else.

National organizations continue to emphasize the ABCs of safe sleep (Alone, on the Back, in a Crib) as the cornerstone of risk reduction. Newer guidance also reinforces the importance of:

- Avoiding commercial products that claim to reduce SIDS risk
- Ensuring caregivers follow safe sleep practices for every sleep
- Using wearable blankets instead of loose bedding

These updates help families navigate a marketplace full of mixed messages and keep babies safer.

Every advancement in research and policy helps us better protect infants and support families. By staying informed and sharing accurate information, our community plays a vital role in reducing sleep-related infant deaths and promoting safer environments for all babies.



Iowa SIDS Foundation

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515-965-7655

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Cedar Rapids—Le Mars—Mount Ayr—Urbandale—Washington

Registration now open!

Register by July 22nd

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Karen Weiskircher

General Submissions

The Iowa SIDS Foundation offers all parents, grandparents, relatives, childcare providers and friends the opportunity to submit information for the newsletter. This may include letters, poems, sharing your family's story or perspective, or highlights of events held in your local community to benefit the Foundation or to bring awareness to SUID and SIDS. Please note that due to space limitations, submitted material may have to be edited or held until a later newsletter.

It is our hope to give as many parents and family members the opportunity to share. For additional information or to submit your story, please contact the Iowa SIDS Foundation by calling 515-965-7655 or by email at info@iowasids.org.

Remembering Our Babies

If you would like to honor your baby in our Remembering Our Babies section of the newsletter, we do require a written parental consent to be on file. Consents may be printed from our webpage or can be mailed or emailed to you by contacting our office by phone or email.

UNSUBSCRIBE: If you would like to have your name removed from the Iowa SIDS Foundation mailing database, please notify us at 515-965-7655 or info@iowasids.org.

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