

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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County Executive and Council recognize Safe Sleep, Breast Cancer Awareness Months

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Summit County Executive Shapiro and County Council are seeking to spread awareness of the importance of safe sleep practices in preventing avoidable infant deaths, by recognizing October as Safe Sleep and SIDS Awareness Month.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, SIDS is the leading cause of death in babies between 1 month and 1 year old in the United States. According to Full Term First Birthday (FTFB), 5,496 babies were born in Summit County in 2020. 30 of these babies did not reach their first birthday. 70% of these deaths were Black babies and 30% of these deaths were sleep related.

Summit County Public Health and the City of Akron, in partnership with several community organizations, formed Full Term First Birthday (FTFB) to reduce infant mortality. The group advocates for policies, educates the community, and informs the Greater Akron residents about programs that promote healthy, full-term pregnancies and ensure every child celebrates a first birthday.

"Keeping our babies safe and healthy is so important," said Executive Shapiro. "Our local partners work hard to make sure our community understands the ABCs of safe sleep and many other safe sleep practices, and how to implement them practically with the babies in our own lives."

Research has shown safe sleep practices, including always placing babies on their backs, removing all toys, pillows, blankets, and bumpers, prioritizing sleep in a crib, and using a pacifier at nap or bedtime, can all help prevent SIDS and other health risks.

Residents can learn more about maternal health education and resources for new and expecting parents at fulltermfirstbirthday.org.

Executive Shapiro and County Council are also recognizing survivors, caregivers, family members, and those lost to breast cancer, observing October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women worldwide and is the second leading cause of cancer death in women. In 2025, an estimated 316,950 women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, and 42,170 women will die from breast cancer in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society. Additionally, there are more than 4 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

Research shows that early detection is key to saving lives. When breast cancer is detected early, and is in the localized stage, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99%. Early detection means performing monthly self-exams and routine mammograms and clinical breast exams.

Residents are encouraged to wear pink on October 24, 2025, and check-in on their preventive healthcare checkups, especially routine mammograms and breast exams. Residents in need of breast or cervical cancer screenings should visit or call [Summit County Public Health](#) at 330-923-4891.

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