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Free Baby Boxes are Available – Baby Boxes Give Newborns a Safe Place to Sleep

Many young mothers may not have adequate resources or the needed knowledge to care for their newborns. For example, the lack of a place for the baby to sleep may lead to bed sharing which is a very unsafe sleeping arrangement for newborns. As a way to address these issues, University Settlement announced that they will be providing free Baby Boxes to provide a safe sleep space for newborns.

The idea for Baby Boxes started in Finland in the 1930s, and is largely attributable to that country achieving a sharp drop in sudden infant deaths. The Baby Box is constructed of a durable heavy-duty cardboard and comes with a custom mattress and fitted sheet. It also includes a complimentary newborn starter kit with educational materials and an array of physician-recommended childcare products for expecting and new parents. In most cases, a Baby Box can be used for the first six months of life.

“Every child, regardless of their circumstances, should get the best start in life,” stated Sharese Ryan, MEd., System of Care Manager, University Settlement, “we know that being a parent is a difficult job so it’s important that we give them as much support as possible. Baby Boxes can help as they are proven to offer a safe sleep environment to babies everywhere.”

University Settlement is one of just two distribution centers in Cuyahoga County making free Baby Boxes available to the families of newborns. To receive a Baby Box parents simply need to complete a parent education syllabus addressing safe sleep practices for infants and then answer a short quiz. With their certificate of completion they can pick up a box at University Settlement.

On July 22nd, at Bohemian Hall from 11am to 2pm the 3rd Annual Save Our Babies Community Awareness event will be held to help combat infant mortality in the Broadway-Slavic Village neighborhood. A panel of experts from the Board of Health, Cleveland Clinic Hospitals and 1st Year Cleveland will discuss infant care. The event will also include a resource fair with vendors on hand to provide patient education. During the event Baby Boxes (safe sleep spaces) will be distributed as an incentive for parents to attend.

About University Settlement

University Settlement is a nonprofit social service agency located in and serving Cleveland’s Broadway-Slavic Village community. Founded in 1926 by what is known today as Case Western Reserve University, the initial purpose of the organization was to assist Eastern European immigrants adjust to life in America. Over time, the demographics and needs of the community changed. In response, University Settlement refocused its services in the 1970s to meet basic needs and serve the most vulnerable populations. Now in its 91st year, University Settlement provides vital programs to serve youth, families, seniors, and the community-at-large. Through the support of its donors, numerous Foundations and Corporate partners University Settlement has been able to address some of the community’s most pressing needs, including hunger, housing and education. For more information, please visit www.universitysettlement.net.