



When Generosity Carries Sweet Dreams

Donations and a simple book are keeping newborns safe as they sleep.

As a first-time expectant mom, Sarah was getting a lot of advice from family and friends about how she should care for her new little bundle of joy. People had opinions on everything from what the baby should eat, what the baby should wear, what to do when the baby cried, and even how and where the baby should sleep. But, no one would have guessed the best advice she'd get would come from a simple children's book that donors have helped make available for new parents at Parkview LaGrange Hospital.

"My mom raised five kids and we all made it to adulthood," Sarah said with a little laugh, "so I felt like I should listen to her about a lot of things. But times have changed, too, and we know more now about what's best and safest for a baby."

We now understand that in order to prevent accidental suffocation, the safest way for a baby to sleep in by itself, on its back, and in a sleep sack. In addition, there should be no stuffed animals, blankets, or pillows in the crib that might block the baby's mouth or nose, thereby restricting its breathing.



Unfortunately, Indiana has the second highest rate in the nation of infant deaths from accidental suffocation due to unsafe sleep practices.

Nurses Alex Larson and Tarah Levitz (left to right).

"When I heard that [statistic], I knew I couldn't listen to my mom on this one," said Sarah. "And one of the things that really helped me convince my mom was the *Safe Sleep* book I received at the Parkview LaGrange Birthing Center when my daughter was born."

Although the *Safe Sleep* book is meant to be read aloud to a baby, it also tells a new mom and anyone else who takes care of a baby the best way to put the baby down to sleep. "It's been a really big help to me in getting my mom to go along with my wishes on this," said Sarah, "Kind of a gentle reminder every time she reads to my daughter."

The *Safe Sleep* book is part of a goody bag of items provided to new mothers at the Parkview LaGrange Birthing Center. Each goody bag is funded and made available to families through the generous contributions of individual donors to the Parkview LaGrange Foundation.

It's so much more than a nice gift. Through the generosity of others, the *Safe Sleep* books are helping keep newborns safe and bringing sweet dreams to families throughout our community.

For more information about how
your generosity heals, please visit
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Donors Enhance the Quality of Life in the Final Moments

Liz and Virgil were able to spend their last few days together at home because of your gifts.

Virgil and Liz Hershberger were having a rough year. After a period of remission, Liz's cancer—non-Hodgkin's lymphoma—had come back with a vengeance and the prognosis was not good.

"The worst part was that she was in a lot of pain," Virgil said. "Oral medication helped but not enough."

When Liz suffered a series of seizures, Virgil and the couple's daughter took her to the Parkview LaGrange Hospital emergency department. By that time, the family knew there was nothing medicine could do to prolong Liz's life but they were desperately hoping there was some treatment that would at least allow her to enjoy a good quality of life until the end. Sadly, it was not to be. Tests showed the cancer had spread to her bones, which was the cause of her intense pain and the seizures that racked her body. Only heavy medication and constant care would make her last days bearable, but neither Liz nor Virgil wanted her to spend the time she had left in the hospital.

Liz wanted to go home. "But we knew we couldn't handle the pain on our own," said Virgil.

That's when Parkview Home Health and Hospice—which operates through the support of the local donations from generous funders—entered their lives. A hospital bed and all the equipment needed to manage Liz's pain were installed in the Hershberger's

living room, and the hospice nurse and the volunteer caregiver visited them every day.

"They didn't just provide medical care and make sure Liz wasn't in pain," Virgil said. "The caregiver did things I didn't think to do, or know to do. Like, one day, the caregiver washed Liz's hair. She didn't have to do that. She did it out of the kindness of her heart because she knew it would make Liz feel better."

Liz passed away a week later, at home, surrounded by her loving family, just the way she wanted.

"For me, the hospice folks were angels of care. They were so gentle with Liz. And so kind to all of us," said Virgil. "They have a heart that goes deeper than most people."

Donations to Parkview LaGrange Foundation helped to make these genuine expressions of kindness possible. Your generosity gave Liz, Virgil and their family the compassionate care they needed in the moments that mattered the most.



Liz Hershberger (above)

Contact Your Parkview Foundation

Sherri Johnston
Parkview LaGrange Foundation Director
(260) 463-9004
Sherri.Johnston2@parkview.com

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"The Foundations of Parkview Health inspire the generous spirit of our community that brings gifts of healing and comfort to everyone Parkview serves."

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