



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Bois Forte Tribal Government, located in Nett Lake, is the local sponsor of *Spring-for-SIDS Day*. This is a SIDS awareness and fundraising event being held on April 18, 2008, to benefit The American SIDS Institute. "We are proud to be a part of this nation-wide event," explains **Patti Wilkie, Director of HR.**

SIDS or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is the name given to a mysterious baby killer that takes the lives of between 2000 and 3000 infants each year in the US. It is the number one cause of death in infants between one month and one year of age. SIDS is sudden and unexpected *and* even after an autopsy no cause of death is found. In a typical situation, parents go to check on their infant they think is sleeping only to find their baby dead. There is no greater tragedy!

Spring-for-SIDS Day is especially important to Bois Forte Tribal Government. One of our employees, Toni Wakemup and her life partner Stacy Dotts, lost a baby to SIDS in January of 2007. Here is how Toni describes of how SIDS took the life her baby.

On the morning of January 07, 2007, I was woken up by Stacy screaming my name. I jumped out of bed went into the livingroom and Stacy was saying "Ra'Qalil he isn't breathing." I took Ra'Qalil from him and immediately started infant CPR on him and called 911. I could still feel warmth from his little body. The paramedics arrived and to me seemed like they just pushed me out of their way. I remember a woman paramedic holding Ra'Qalil and going out the door to the ambulance. Stacy and I rode to hospital in a police squad car. When we arrived at the hospital we were not allowed to be in the room with Ra'Qalil, the doctors and nurses. They tried for one hour to resuscitate Ra'Qalil but were unable to. I was numb, confused, angry and couldn't believe that he was gone. When the autopsy was complete we received the phone call that the cause of death Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Every day unfortunate parents all over the world experience this heartbreak. Dr. McEntire, with the American SIDS Institute has worked with SIDS since 1976. "We have seen a tremendous decline in the incidence of SIDS since I began", she explained. "However, we still cannot tell parents why their infant died. They are left with no closure."

We don't know the exact cause of SIDS, and there is no way to guarantee an infant will not die," says Dr. McEntire. "However," she explains, "there are proven ways to reduce the risk of an infant dying of SIDS". "Don't smoke during pregnancy and don't let anyone smoke around your baby. Always place your baby to sleep on his or her back in a bare crib. Keep the crib close to the parents' bed. Instead of using cover, put enough clothing on the baby to keep him/her warm but not too warm." For a full list see www.sids.org.

In exchange for a \$5 donation you will be given a SIDS information card, a decorative sticker and invitation to the Mardi Gras Spring-for SIDs event. Please contact anyone in Tribal Government HR office for information on how to make your donation.