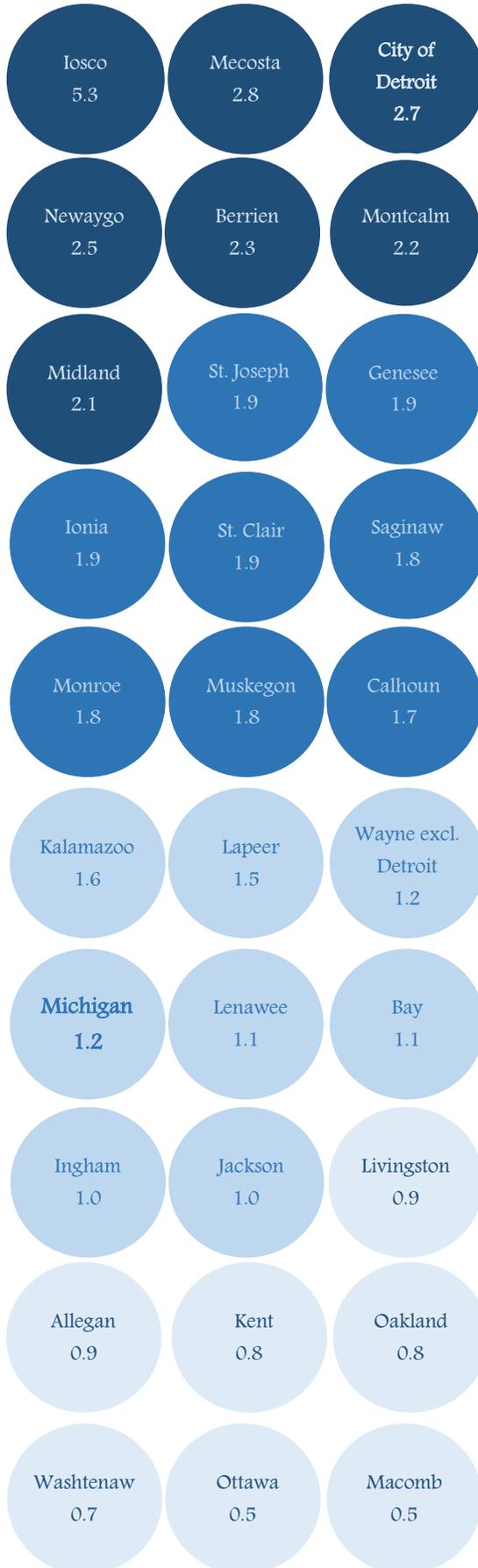


# Sleep-Related Infant Deaths in the City of Detroit

May 2016

## Sleep-Related Infant Death Rates\*, 2010-2014



Sleep-related infant deaths are those where the sleep environment was likely to have contributed to the death, including those ruled SIDS, SUID, suffocation, and other causes. The sleep-related infant death rate in the City of Detroit is **2.7 deaths per 1,000 live births**, which is more than twice the overall rate in Michigan (1.2 deaths per 1,000 live births).

**A safe sleep environment can reduce the risk of sleep-related infant deaths.** Infant safe sleep is a top priority in Michigan and is one of nine goals as part of Michigan's Infant Mortality Reduction Plan. Strategies within this plan include promoting safer infant sleep as well as addressing social issues and disparities that affect the infants' and mothers' health and well-being.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that infants: 1) sleep in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or portable crib with a firm mattress and tight-fitting sheet, 2) sleep on surfaces separate from adults or other children free of blankets, pillows, or toys, and 3) be placed on his or her back for every sleep time.

There are a variety of factors that impact a caregiver's choices regarding their child's sleep environment and its importance in the caregiver's daily life. For many caregivers, these include the challenges of caring for a new infant without basic needs such as a social support system, transportation, stable housing, and healthy food.

### In the City of Detroit:



**3 in 4 sleep-related deaths involve an infant sharing a sleep surface**  
Approximately 73% of sleep-related deaths occurred among infants who shared a sleep surface.



**4 in 5 sleep-related deaths occur in an unsafe sleep location**  
Approximately 54% of infants who died of sleep-related causes were placed in an adult bed, 23% were placed on a couch or floor, and 4% were placed in other unsafe sleep locations. Only 12% of infants who died of sleep-related causes were placed to sleep in a crib, bassinet or portable crib. A crib, bassinet or portable crib was not present in the home in approximately 24% of deaths.



**5 in 9 infants found unresponsive are not on their backs**  
Approximately 50% of infants who died of sleep-related causes were found on their stomach and 7% were found on their side.

Note: Sleep surface sharing was unknown in 8% of deaths, sleep location was unknown in 7% of deaths, and found position was unknown in 15% of deaths.

\*Rate per 1,000 live births

## Other Factors Affecting Sleep-Related Infant Deaths

Besides safe sleep practices, other factors that may decrease the risk of sleep-related infant death include: breastfeeding, pacifier use at sleep time, and caregiver avoidance of smoking, alcohol and illicit drug use while caring for an infant.



59% of mothers of infants who died of sleep-related causes in the City of Detroit smoked during pregnancy. This compared to 18% of all Michigan mothers.<sup>2</sup>



38% of mothers of infants who died of sleep-related causes in the City of Detroit ever breastfed. This compared to 75% of all Michigan mothers.<sup>3</sup>

## What Can You Do?

### Health professionals can

- ✓ Encourage parents to always place their baby in a safe sleep environment
- ✓ Provide individuals caring for pregnant women, infants, and caregivers with strategies to promote a consistent safe sleep environment. Free online training is available through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services ([www.michigan.gov/safesleep](http://www.michigan.gov/safesleep)).
- ✓ Order brochures, posters, or DVDs about safe sleep through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Clearinghouse at [www.healthymichigan.com](http://www.healthymichigan.com)

### Parents can

- ✓ Always place your baby in a safe sleep environment
- ✓ Do not allow smoking around your baby
- ✓ Breastfeed your baby, if possible
- ✓ Offer a pacifier when placing your baby down to sleep
- ✓ Be sure that everyone who cares for your baby knows how to place your baby down to sleep in a safe sleep environment
- ✓ If you are feeling overwhelmed or exhausted, ask for help. There are early childhood home visiting programs designed to assist families in caring for infants. They can provide you with support and connect you to the resources you need. To find a program in your area, go to [www.michigan.gov/mihp](http://www.michigan.gov/mihp).

## Resources for Parents and Health Professionals

For more information on safe sleep, as well as tips for soothing a crying baby and product recalls by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, parents and health professionals can go to [www.michigan.gov/safesleep](http://www.michigan.gov/safesleep)

A number of free health resources for before, during, and after pregnancy are available by calling 2-1-1 or by going to [mihealthybaby.mobi](http://mihealthybaby.mobi)

Free resources to help you quit smoking are available by calling the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-Now or 1-855-DEJELO-YA

Information on breastfeeding and available breastfeeding support services can be found at [www.michigan.gov/wic](http://www.michigan.gov/wic) (click on 'Breastfeeding')

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Sleep-related infant deaths in Detroit from 2010-2014



Males accounted for more sleep-related deaths than females (51% vs. 49%)



5 in 8 infants died before the age of 4 months



1 in 4 infants was born preterm (less than 37 weeks)



1 in 10 infants was White and 9 in 10 infants were Black or multi-racial



97% of infants had publicly-funded health insurance



The average age of the mother was 25 years

<sup>1</sup>Sleep-related infant deaths are defined in Michigan as deaths to infants less than 1 year of age that occur suddenly and unexpectedly and include sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), undetermined/sudden unexplained infant death (SUID), suffocation/positional asphyxia, and other causes wherein the sleep environment was likely to have contributed to the death. Death data are by county of residence from CDC SUID Case Registry, Michigan Public Health Institute, 2016. Birth data are from Michigan Resident Birth Files, Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, Michigan Department of Community Health, 2016.

<sup>2</sup>2014 Michigan Resident Birth Files, Division for Vital Records & Health Statistics, Michigan Department of Health & Human Services; retrieved at [www.mdch.state.mi.us/pha/osr/Chi/births14/frameBxChar.html](http://www.mdch.state.mi.us/pha/osr/Chi/births14/frameBxChar.html)

<sup>3</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2015; [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/2014breastfeedingreportcard.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/2014breastfeedingreportcard.pdf)

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