

Communication from the Milwaukee Health Department on Infant Safe Sleep

Submitted to Finance and Personnel Committee
October 15, 2013

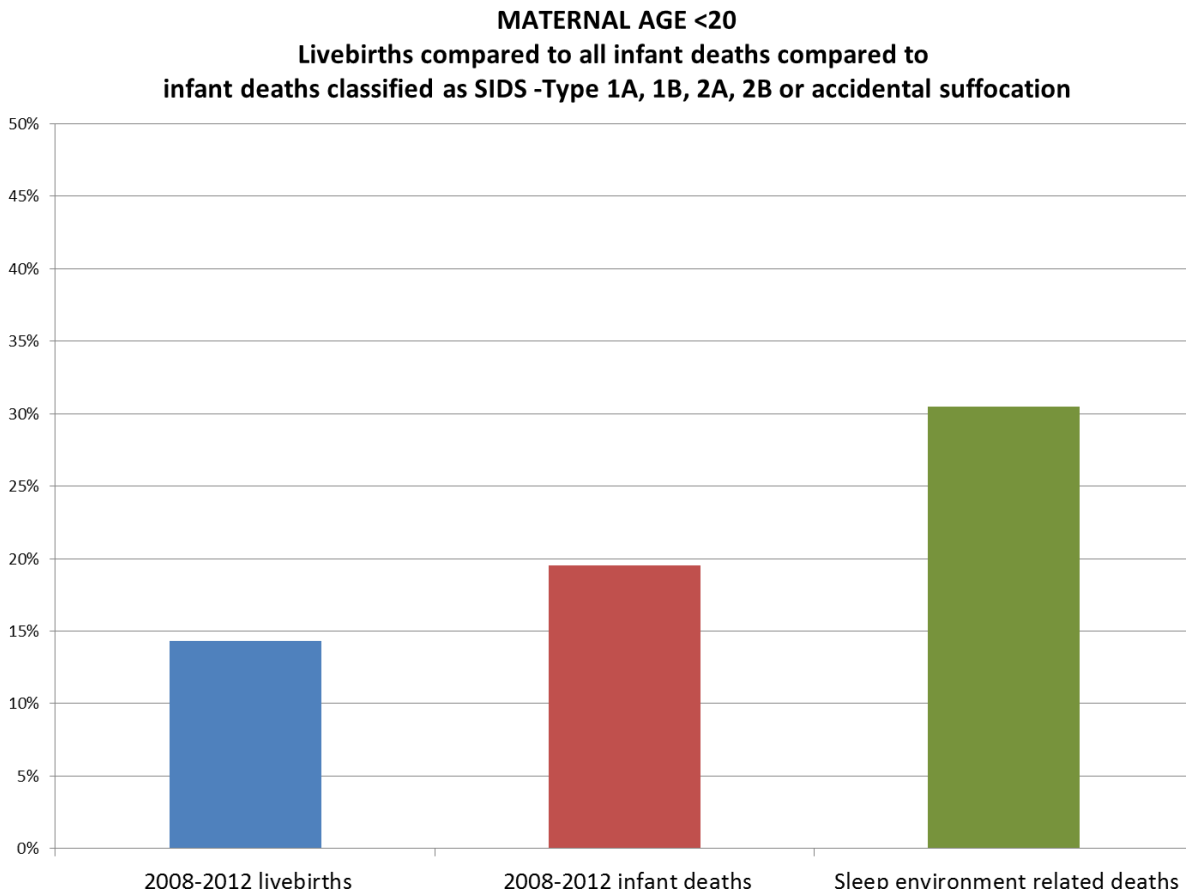
The City of Milwaukee Safe Sleep Partnership and Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) has reviewed the data from the deaths of 82 infants who died during their sleep before their first birthday between 2008 and 2012*.

During this five-year period, deaths that occur in unsafe sleep environments accounted for 15.4% of the total infant deaths. Of these, only 6% were true Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) deaths, where no unsafe sleep risk factors were present at the time of death. A total of 27% of the deaths were classified as positional or mechanical suffocation, overlay, or as undetermined. The remaining 67% of infant deaths were classified as SIDS or SUDI (Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy) with one or multiple risk factors present. Most of these deaths could have been prevented. This brief presents key points regarding the risk factors surrounding all 82 sleep-related deaths from 2008 to 2012.

About the babies and their mothers

- Of the mothers of the infants who died during sleep, 30.5% were under age 20. (Figure 1)
- In 34.1% of these sleep-related deaths, the infant was put to sleep by someone other than the infant's mother. It may be that other caregivers are less aware of safe sleep guidelines.

Figure 1



*2011 and 2012 data are preliminary.

Unsafe sleep risk factors

Use of pillows, blankets, quilts, bumper pads

- 85.4% of the 82 sleep-related deaths from 2008-2012 had documented use of pillows, blankets, quilts, or bumper pads in the infant's sleep area. (Figure 2)

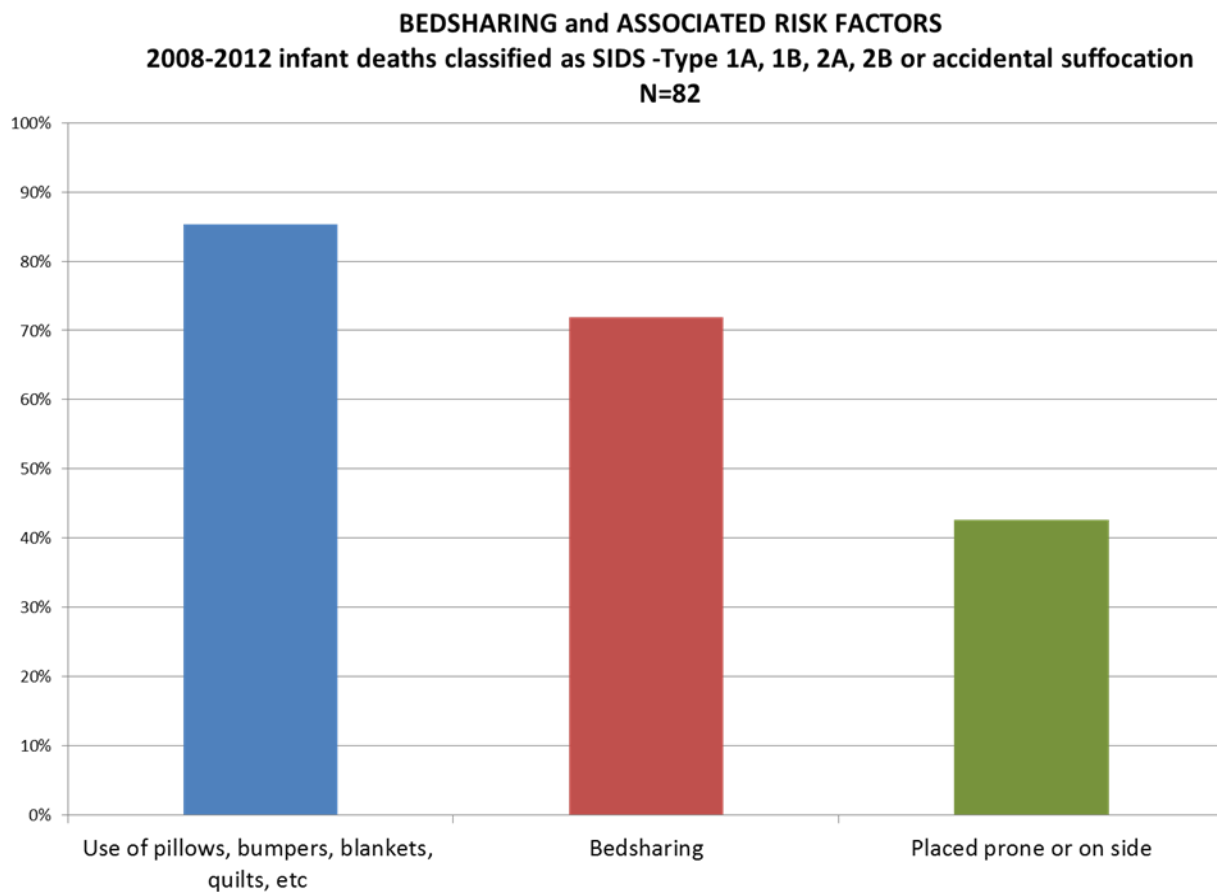
Bed-sharing

- 72% of all 2008-2012 sleep-related deaths showed that these infants were bed-sharing with adults or siblings at the time of their death. (Figure 2)
- Babies who sleep in an adult bed have a 20x greater risk of SIDS than babies who sleep alone in a crib or bassinet.

Prone or side sleep position

- 42.7% of infants who died during sleep were placed on their stomachs or their sides in 2008-2012. (Figure 2)
- Babies who sleep on their tummies or sides have a 5x greater risk of SIDS or accidental suffocation than babies who sleep on their backs.

Figure 3

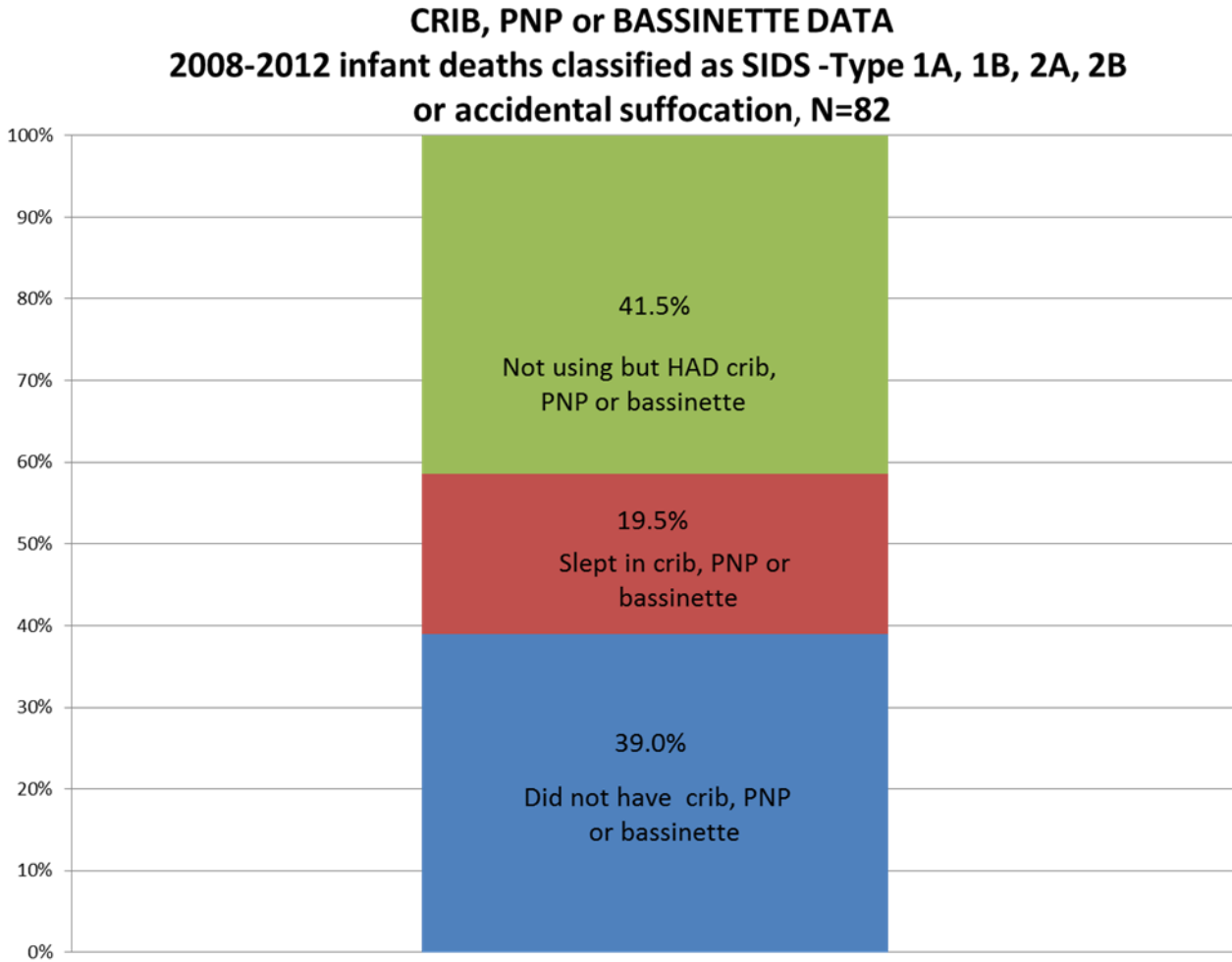


*2011 and 2012 data are preliminary.

Sleeping on surfaces not intended for sleep

- 80.5% of these infants who died during sleep (2008-2012) were placed to sleep somewhere other than a crib, Pack ‘n Play, or bassinette. (Figure 3)
- 20.7% of these infants who died during sleep (2008–2012) were placed to sleep on a couch, chair or in a car seat or swing.

Figure 3

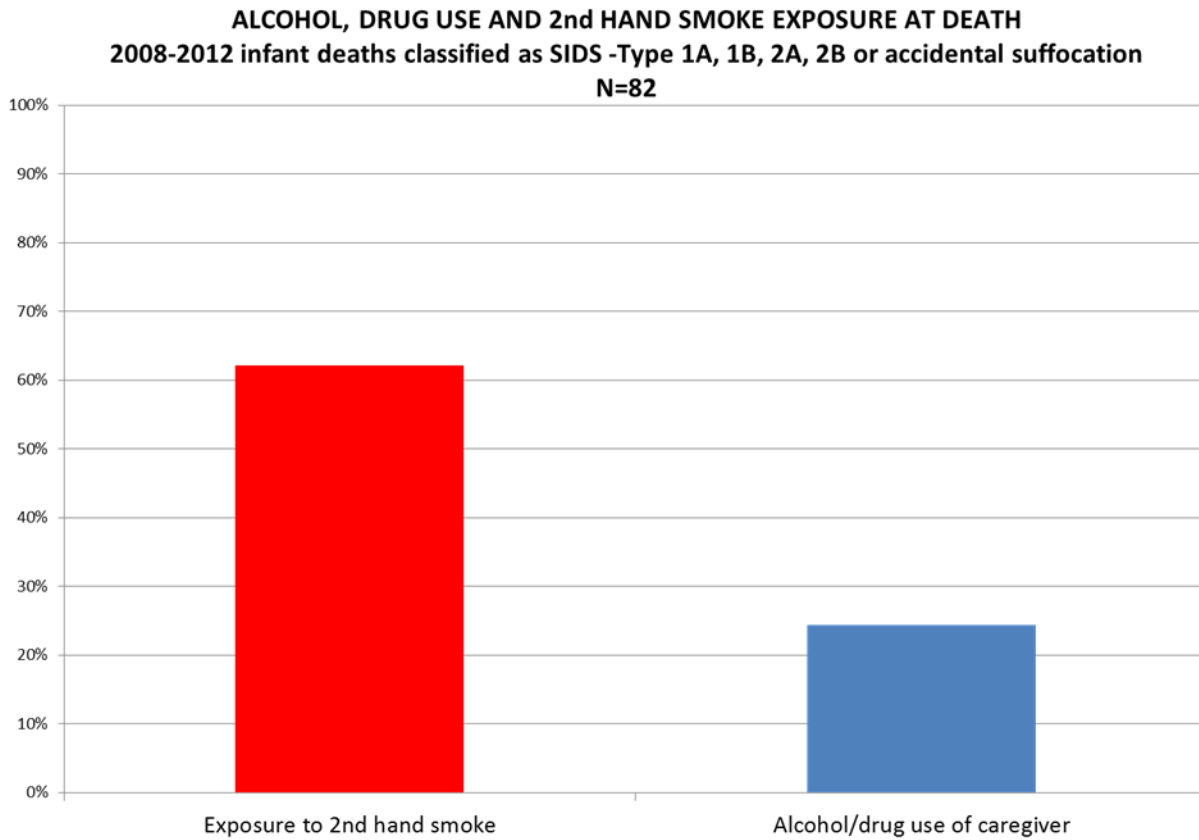


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Caregiver use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs

- 24.4% of the adults taking care of these infants who died during sleep from 2008-2012, admitted to using alcohol or drugs immediately preceding the time of death. (Figure 4)
- 62.2% of infants involved in a sleep-related death were exposed to secondhand smoke. (Figure 4)

Figure 4



*2011 and 2012 data are preliminary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the City of Milwaukee Health Department make the following recommendations:

- Share a room with your baby, not a bed.
- A crib, bassinet or Pack 'n Play® should not have pillows, blankets, quilts, top sheets, bumper pads or toys in it.
- Do not expose a baby to secondhand smoke, including marijuana.
- Only place a baby on his or her back to sleep.
- Never place a baby to sleep on a couch, chair, or in a bouncy seat or car seat.
- Never care for a baby if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, including certain prescription drugs.
- Share the basics of safe sleep with everyone who cares for your infant.

Remember the ABC'S of safe sleep: Babies should sleep Alone, on their Backs, in a Crib, pack 'n play or bassinet, in a Smoke-free home.

For more information about how you can become involved, call (414) 286-6636.