



Bedtime Routines for Toddlers

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Children's sleep issues are a commonly reported struggle for parents of young children.¹ Consistent bedtime routines are associated with improved infant and toddler sleep patterns and reduced maternal fatigue, anger, and tension.¹

The Oklahoma Toddler Survey (TOTS) asked mothers to report on whether or not their child has a bedtime routine, the number of hours of sleep the toddler had in 24 hours, if the toddler was sent to bed with a sippy cup or bottle and reading frequency during the week. This information helps describe what toddlers' sleep and preparation for sleep looks like for Oklahoma families.

Figure 1 highlights the number of hours per day mothers reported their toddler slept on average. Over 50% slept more than 12 hours per day, including naps and nighttime sleeping. However, 3.2% slept less than 9 hours

in a day. According to the National Sleep Foundation, toddlers ages 1-3 need between 12 and 14 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period.²

Overall, 82.5% of mothers with two-year-olds in Oklahoma reported their child had a bedtime routine. A bedtime routine was defined as the same set of planned activities generally done at or around the same time every night.

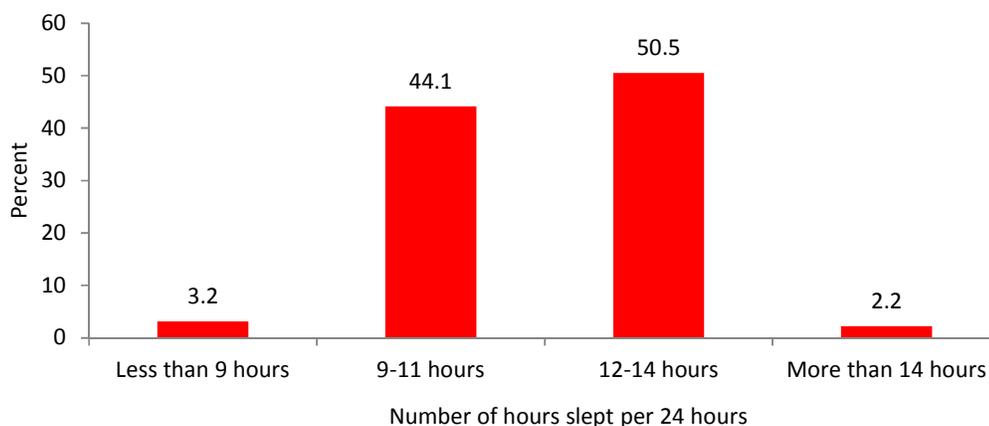
Differences in having a bedtime routine were significant:

- Married mothers were more likely to report a routine (87.0%) than unmarried mothers (76.3%).
- Mothers with more than a high school education were more likely to have a routine (90.0%) than mothers with a high school (78.0%) or less than a high school (67.1%) education.
- African American mothers were

In Oklahoma:

- 52.7% of toddlers got 12 hours or more of sleep per day (including naps).
- 82.5% of two-year-olds had a bedtime routine.
- Significant disparities existed in the presence of bedtime routines among maternal race and ethnic groups.
- 51.3% of two-year-olds were read books or stories by someone in their home everyday.
- 35.7% of two-year-olds went to sleep with a bottle or sippy cup every night.

Figure 1. Number of Hours Two-Year-Old Slept in a 24-hour Period, TOTS 2011-2012



less likely to have a routine (68.6%) than white (85.6%), American Indian (81.8%) and Other races (75.3%).

- Hispanic mothers had lower rates of bedtime routines at 58.7% vs. 86.4% for non-Hispanic mothers.

Another issue related to routines was how often the child was read to in a typical week. For some families, reading may have been incorporated into the toddler's bedtime routine. Figure 2 shows the frequency of being read to in a week. Mothers least likely to read to their toddlers everyday were mothers who were unmarried, had less than a high school education, were American Indian, and/or were Hispanic.

A drink before bed may have also been a part of a family's bedtime routine for their toddler. However, sending a toddler to bed with a bottle or sippy cup increases the likelihood of dental cavities and is not recommended by the American Dental Association.³ Oklahoma mothers reported that 35.7% of two-year-olds went to bed with a sippy cup or bottle. Of those, 60.8% contained milk, 20.3% had water, and 18.9% contained "Other." Write-ins for "Other" were primarily juice, but also included chocolate milk,

changes between milk and water, lemonade, and "whatever he wants."

Significant differences existed among mothers who did and did not send their toddler to bed with a bottle/sippy cup:

- Unmarried mothers were more likely to send a sippy cup/bottle to bed (44.1%) than married mothers (30.4%).
- American Indian mothers were more likely to send a sippy cup/bottle to bed (47.7%) than White (35.0%) and African American (13.6%) mothers.
- Hispanic mothers were more likely to send a sippy cup/bottle to bed (47.7%) than Non-Hispanic mothers (33.7%).

References:

1. Mindell J., Telofski L., Wiegand B., Kurtz E. A nightly bedtime routine: Impact on sleep in young children and maternal mood. *Sleep*. 2009;32(5):599-606.
2. National Sleep Foundation. Children and Sleep. Available at: sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep/page/0%2C2/ Accessed on June 2, 2014.
3. Hallett KB, O'Rourke PK. Early childhood caries and infant feeding practice. *Community Dent Health*. 2002;19:237-42.

The Oklahoma Toddler Survey (TOTS) is a two-year follow-back survey to the Oklahoma Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) survey.

Mothers with live infants who respond to the PRAMS survey are sent a TOTS survey the month their children turn two-years-old. TOTS is a mixed-mode surveillance system. Two mail surveys are sent in an effort to gain participation followed by telephone surveillance for non-respondents. The unweighted response rate for 2011-2012 data was 70.3% (n=2,663; excluding women ineligible to complete TOTS). Data were weighted to represent the two-year-old's birth cohort for those years. Prevalence rates were calculated using the Cochran-Mantel-Haenszel Chi-Square (χ^2) Test.

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Figure 2. Average Number of Times per Week Two-Year-Old Was Read to by Household Member, TOTS 2011-2012

