

# Infant Sleep Position



## Introduction

The Florida Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is an ongoing surveillance system, designed to collect data on maternal behaviors and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy. Every year, approximately 2,500 new mothers in Florida are randomly selected to participate. In 2010, Florida PRAMS had a total of 1,400 respondents.

\* Data presented in this fact sheet are weighted to be representative of new mothers and infants in Florida.

## Background

It is recommended that placing infants to sleep on their backs is the safest position for healthy infants to sleep; decreasing their chances of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).<sup>1</sup> SIDS, the sudden and unexplained death of an infant under one year of age, is responsible for more infant deaths in the United States than any other cause during the first year of life.<sup>2</sup> The exact causes of SIDS are unknown but may be related to: the infant sleeping on his/her stomach or side, maternal smoking or breathing secondhand smoke during pregnancy, and the infant's exposure to secondhand smoke.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that healthy infants be placed on their backs to sleep, reducing the risk of SIDS.

This fact sheet examines the sleep positions of new infants in Florida.

The PRAMS sleeping position question is: "How do you most often lay your baby down to sleep?"

- On his or her side
- On his or her back
- On his or her stomach

## Results

- The proportion of mothers who place their infant on their back to sleep increased from 49% in 2000 to 65% in 2010 (Figure 1).
- The Healthy People 2010 and 2020 goal of infants sleeping on their backs is 70% and 76% respectively. Florida did not reach either of these goals.

Figure 1: Trend of Infant Back Sleep Position, Florida, 2000 - 2010

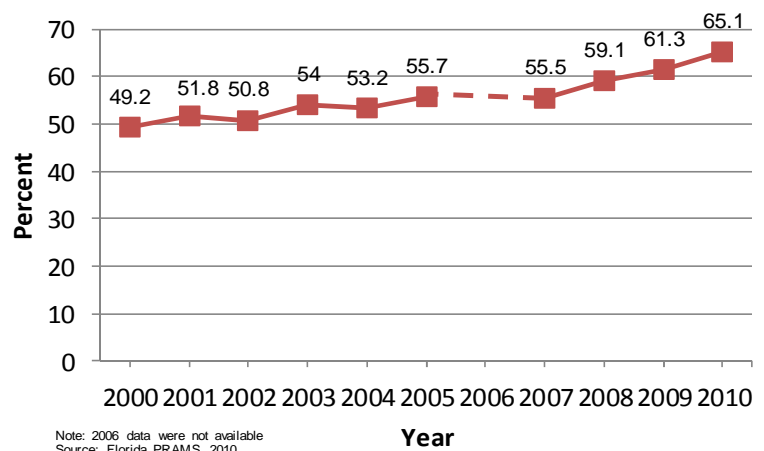
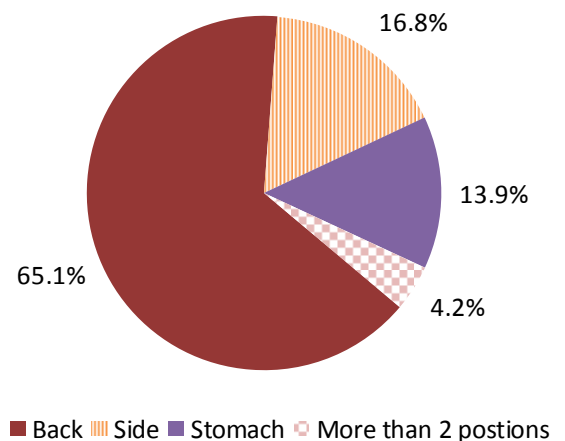


Figure 2: Percentage of Infant Sleep Position, Florida, 2010



- In 2010, 65% of new mothers in Florida placed her infant on their back to sleep; 17% placed her infant on their side to sleep; 14% placed her infant on their stomach to sleep, and 4% placed her infant in two or more positions to sleep (Figure 2).

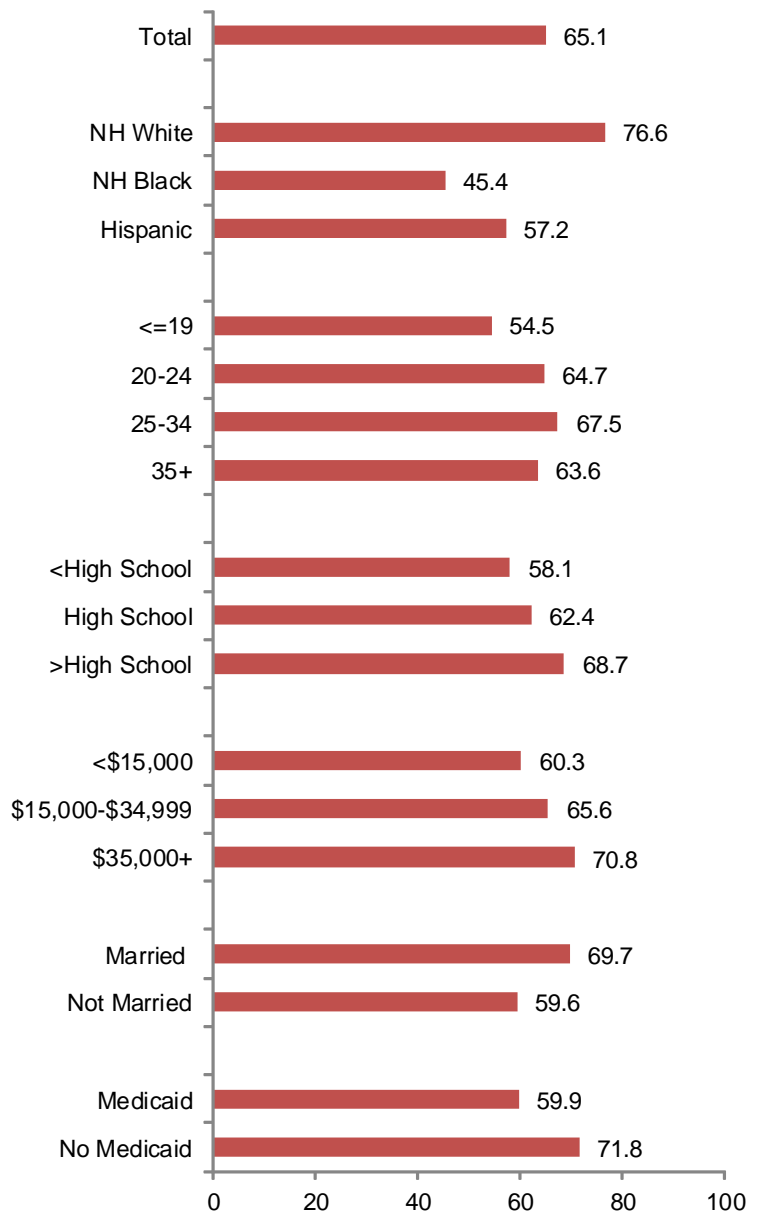
The proportion of infants placed on their backs to sleep among Florida PRAMS participants were:

- Significantly higher among non-Hispanic (NH) whites compared to Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks.
- Lower among mothers 19 years old and younger.
- Higher among mothers with more than a high school education.
- Significantly higher among mothers with an annual family income of \$35,000 or more compared to mothers with an annual family income of less than \$15,000.
- Significantly higher among married mothers compared to their unmarried counterparts.
- Significantly higher among mothers without Medicaid compared to mothers with Medicaid (Figure 3).

### Summary

- The proportion of mothers using the infant back sleep position increased from 2000 to 2010. In 2010, approximately 65% of new mothers in Florida reported placing her infant on their back to sleep. Florida has not reached the target goal of Healthy People 2010 of 70%.
- The proportion of back sleep position use among infants was higher among non-Hispanic whites, mothers 20 years old and older, mothers with more than a high school education, mothers with an annual family income of \$35,000 or more, married mothers, and mothers without Medicaid.

**Figure 3. Proportion of Back Sleeping Position Among Infants Who Are Living With Their Mothers By Demographic Characteristics, Florida, 2010**



Source: Florida PRAMS, 2010

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### Selected Citations

1. American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP]. (2012). *Sleep position: Why back is best*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/Sleep-Position-Why-Back-is-Best.aspx>
2. AAP Policy Statement. (2005). The changing concept of sudden infant death syndrome. *Pediatrics*, 116, 1245-1255.

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