

# Sleep-Related Infant Deaths in Berrien County (2010-2017)

Between 2010 and 2017, **there were 31 sleep-related infant deaths in Berrien County**, which is a rate of 2.1 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Sleep-related infant death is a leading cause of death among infants less than 1 year of age. Sleep-related infant deaths are those where the sleep environment was likely to have contributed to the death.<sup>1</sup> In Michigan, comprehensive information about the circumstances associated with sleep-related infant deaths has been tracked through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) Case Registry since 2010.

**To reduce the risk of sleep-related infant death, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that:**

**1**

Infants be placed to sleep on their back at nap time and bedtime

**2**

Infants sleep in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or portable crib with a firm mattress and tight-fitting sheet

**3**

Infants sleep on a surface separate from adults, animals, and other children that is free of blankets, pillows, or toys

**4**

Infants be exclusively breastfed or fed with expressed milk

**5**

Smoke exposure is avoided during pregnancy and in the infant's environment after birth

***A safe sleep environment can reduce the risk of all sleep-related infant deaths. In Berrien County...***

***32% of infants found unresponsive were not on their backs***



When a baby is on his back, the air tube (trachea) is on top of the food tube (esophagus). If a baby spits up while on his back, the food/fluid run back into the stomach and not to the lungs. When a baby is on his stomach, the esophagus is on top of the trachea and any food/fluid that is spit up can more easily pool at the opening of the trachea, making it possible for the baby to choke.

Order brochures, posters, or DVDs about infant safe sleep through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Clearinghouse at [www.healthymichigan.com](http://www.healthymichigan.com)

***71% of sleep-related deaths occurred in an unsafe sleep location***



Sitting devices, such as car seats, strollers, swings, infant carriers, and infant slings, are not recommended for routine sleep in the hospital or at home. A crib, bassinet or portable crib was not present in the home in 16% of deaths.

For additional resources, find your local health department at [https://www.michigan.gov/mdhh/s/0,5885,7-339-73970\\_5461\\_74040---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdhh/s/0,5885,7-339-73970_5461_74040---,00.html)

***42% of sleep-related deaths involved an infant sharing a sleep surface***



The majority (36%) of sleep-related deaths occurred in an adult bed. Of the deaths where objects were known to be in the sleeping environment, the majority involved two or more objects. Of these, the most common objects were adults and/or other children, mattresses, thin blankets/flat sheets, comforters, and pillows.

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

***26% of infants who died of sleep-related causes had ever been breastfed***



In comparison, 71% of all mothers in Berrien County planned to or initiated breastfeeding.<sup>2</sup> The protective effect of breastfeeding increases with exclusivity. However, any breastfeeding has been shown to be more protective against deaths from sleep-related causes than no breastfeeding. Consider offering a pacifier at nap time and bedtime once breastfeeding is firmly established.

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

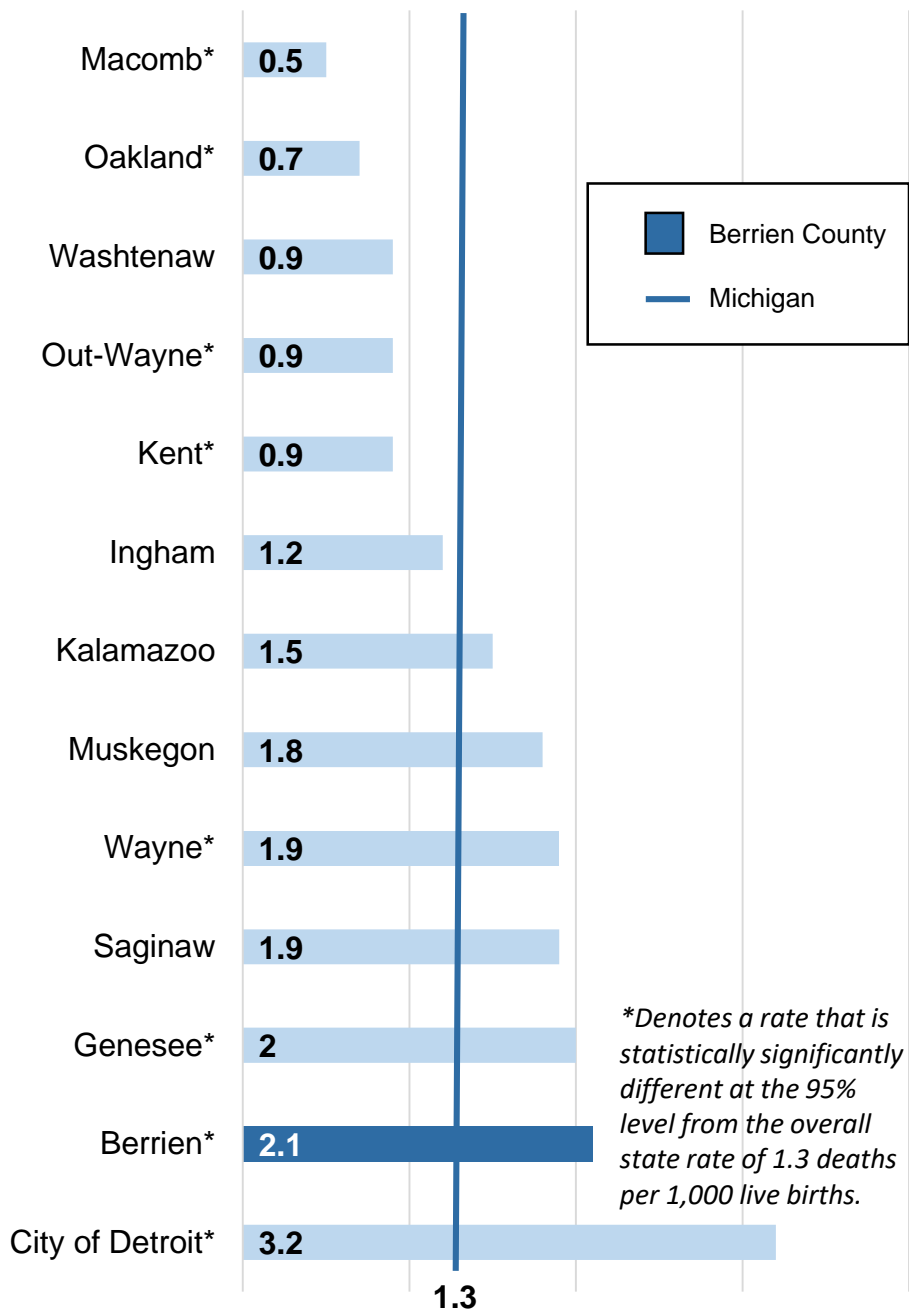
***29% of infants who died of sleep-related causes had a mother who smoked during pregnancy***



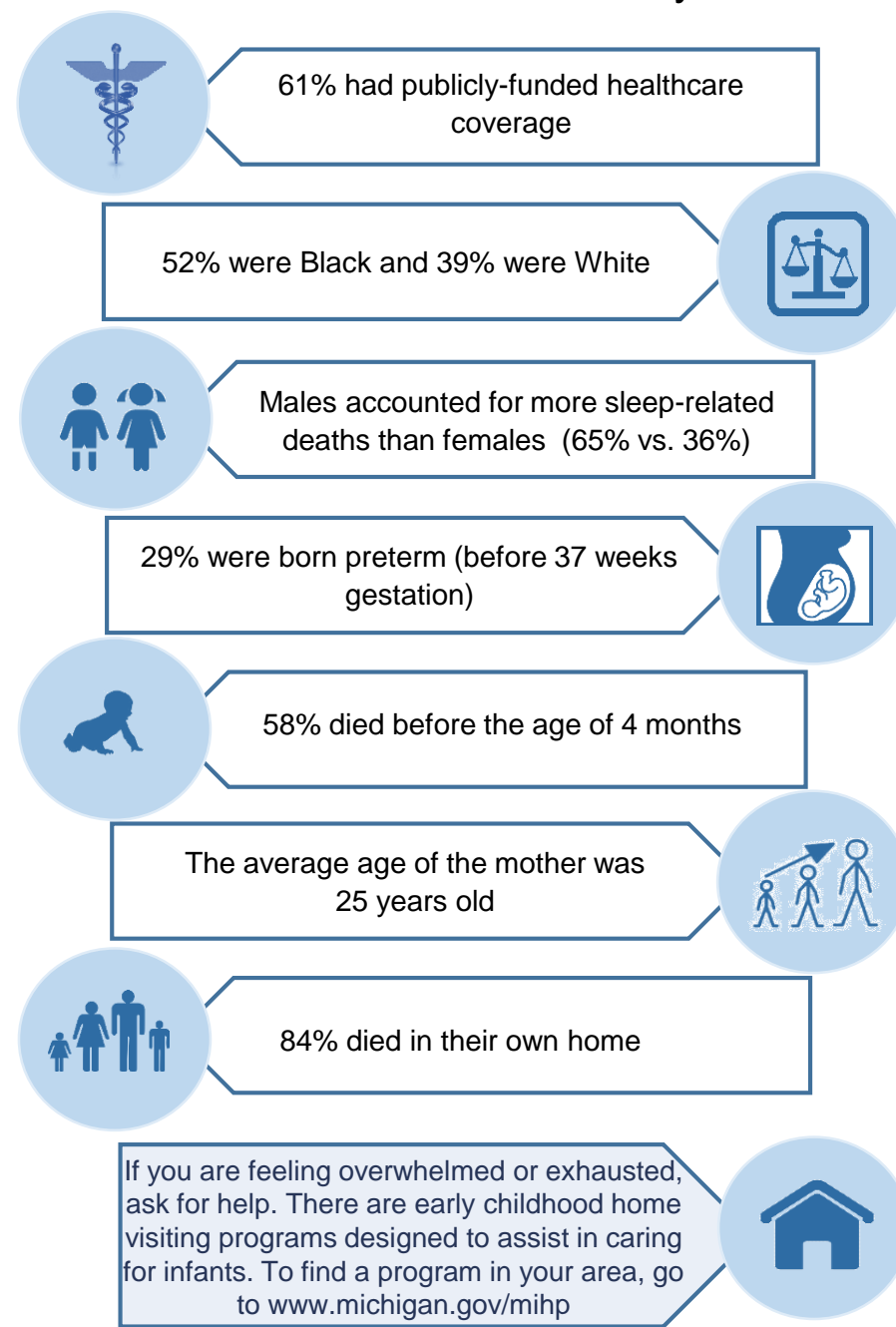
In comparison, 19% of all mothers in Berrien County smoked during pregnancy.<sup>2</sup> Bed sharing with a current smoker, or with a mother who smoked during pregnancy, has been shown to substantially increase the risk of death due to sleep-related causes.<sup>3</sup>

Free resources to help you quit smoking are available by calling the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (English) or 1-855-DEJELLO-YA (Spanish)

## Rate of Sleep-Related Infant Death per 1,000 Live Births by Geographic Location



## Of the infants who died of sleep-related causes in Berrien County...



<sup>1</sup>Sleep-related infant deaths are defined as deaths to Michigan resident 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 where 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, 2019. Birth data are from Michigan Resident Birth Files, Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, 2019.

<sup>2</sup>Michigan Resident Birth Files, Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics (2010-2017), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services; retrieved at <http://www.mdch.state.mi.us/osr/chi/births14/frameBxChar.html>

<sup>3</sup>Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. (2016). SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment. *Pediatrics*, 138(5). Retrieved from <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/5/e20162938>