

Sleep-Related Infant Deaths in Michigan (2010-2018)

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.¹ 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) has made the following recommendations:



BACK TO SLEEP

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



SAFETY-APPROVED CRIB

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



SEPARATE SLEEP SURFACE

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



BREASTFEEDING

Infants should be exclusively breastfed or fed with expressed breastmilk.



SMOKE-FREE

Smoke exposure should be avoided during pregnancy and in the infant's environment after birth.

A safe sleep environment can reduce the risk of sleep-related infant deaths. In Michigan...

52%

of infants found unresponsive were not on their backs

When a baby is on his or her back, the air tube (trachea) is on top of the food tube (esophagus). If a baby spits up while on his or her back, the food or fluid runs back into the stomach and not to the lungs. When a baby is on his or her stomach, the esophagus is on top of the trachea and any food or 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](http://www.healthymichigan.com) (URL: www.healthymichigan.com).

76%

of sleep-related deaths occurred in an unsafe sleep place

Unsafe sleep places include adult beds, couches or chairs, and places other than a safety-approved crib, bassinet or portable crib. 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 when 14% of the infants who died of sleep-related causes became unresponsive.

For additional resources, [find your local health department](https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73970_5461_74040---,00.html) (URL: https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73970_5461_74040---,00.html).

58%

of sleep-related deaths involved an infant sharing a sleep surface

Of the 749 infants who were sharing a sleep surface with people or animals at the time of the incident, over two-thirds (68%) were sharing a sleep surface with one or more adults. An additional 21% were sharing a sleep surface with one or more adults and one or more other children. Objects, such as blankets, pillows, comforters, and stuffed animals, were present in the sleep environment in 69% of all sleep-related deaths.

For more information on safe sleep, tips for soothing a crying baby, and products recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, please visit the [MDHHS Infant Safe Sleep website](http://www.michigan.gov/safesleep) (URL: www.michigan.gov/safesleep).

45%

of infants who died of sleep-related causes had never been breastfed

Breastfeeding is protective against sleep-related infant death. Infants born to a mother who did not initiate breastfeeding were 3.4 times more likely to die in a sleep environment than infants who were born to a mother who planned to or initiated breastfeeding.² 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 the [MDHHS WIC website](http://www.michigan.gov/wic) (URL: www.michigan.gov/wic) [click on 'Breastfeeding'] and at the [Office on Women's Health Breastfeeding website](http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding) (URL: www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding).

47%

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

Infants born to a mother who smoked during pregnancy were 4.4 times more likely to die in a sleep environment than infants who were born to a mother who did not smoke during pregnancy.² Sleep surface 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.³

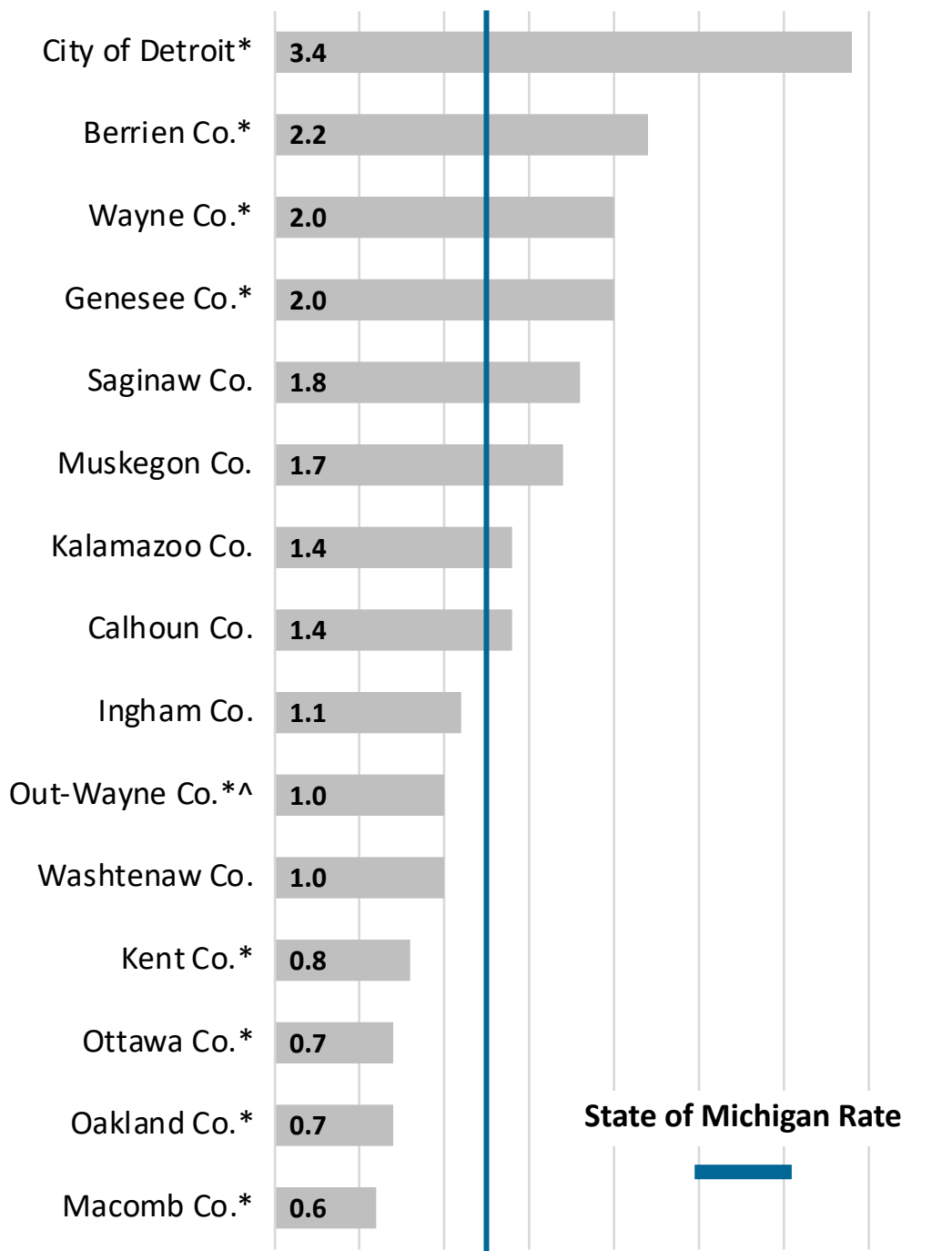
Free resources to help you quit smoking are available by calling the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW** (English) or **1-855-DEJELO-YA** (Spanish).



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



Disparities Exist in Sleep-Related Infant Deaths in Michigan



If you are feeling overwhelmed or exhausted, ask for help. There are early childhood home visiting programs designed to assist in caring for infants.

To find a program in your area, visit the [State of Michigan's Maternal Infant Health Program website](http://www.michigan.gov/mihp) (URL: www.michigan.gov/mihp).



Black infants were **3.5 times** more likely to die of sleep-related causes than White infants

Male infants were **1.4 times** more likely to die from sleep-related causes than female infants

Infants born prior to 37 weeks gestation were **2.5 times** more likely to die in a sleep environment than infants who were born at or greater than 37 weeks gestation

Infants born weighing less than 2,500 grams were **2.9 times** more likely to die in a sleep environment than infants who were born weighing greater than or equal to 2,500 grams

Infants who died of sleep-related causes were more likely to have publicly funded healthcare coverage than all infants born in Michigan (**77% vs. 44%**)

74% of infants who died due to sleep-related causes died before the age of 5 months

76% of infants who died due to sleep-related causes were found unresponsive in their own home

The average age of a mother who had an infant die due to sleep-related causes was **25 years old**

* Denotes a rate that was statistically significantly different at the 95% level from the overall state rate of **1.3 sleep-related deaths** per 1,000 live births.

^ Out-Wayne County excludes the City of Detroit.