

Qualitative Assessment of Barriers to Meeting Infant Motor Development Milestones

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INTRODUCTION

Safe sleep and awake positioning have been studied extensively resulting in the “Back to Sleep Campaign” and “Tummy Time” guidelines, which has decreased incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Despite overall improvement, studies continue to show disparities for low socioeconomic classes and lack of education about healthy child development. In addition, concerns that overuse of infant carrying devices can inhibit normal motor development has sparked new research on this topic.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to assess new parents’ understanding of child motor development and to uncover areas of confusion which may be inhibiting normal development.

METHODS

The project was conducted at the Brown County Library Storytime sessions. Pre-presentation surveys and informational letters were distributed to participants.

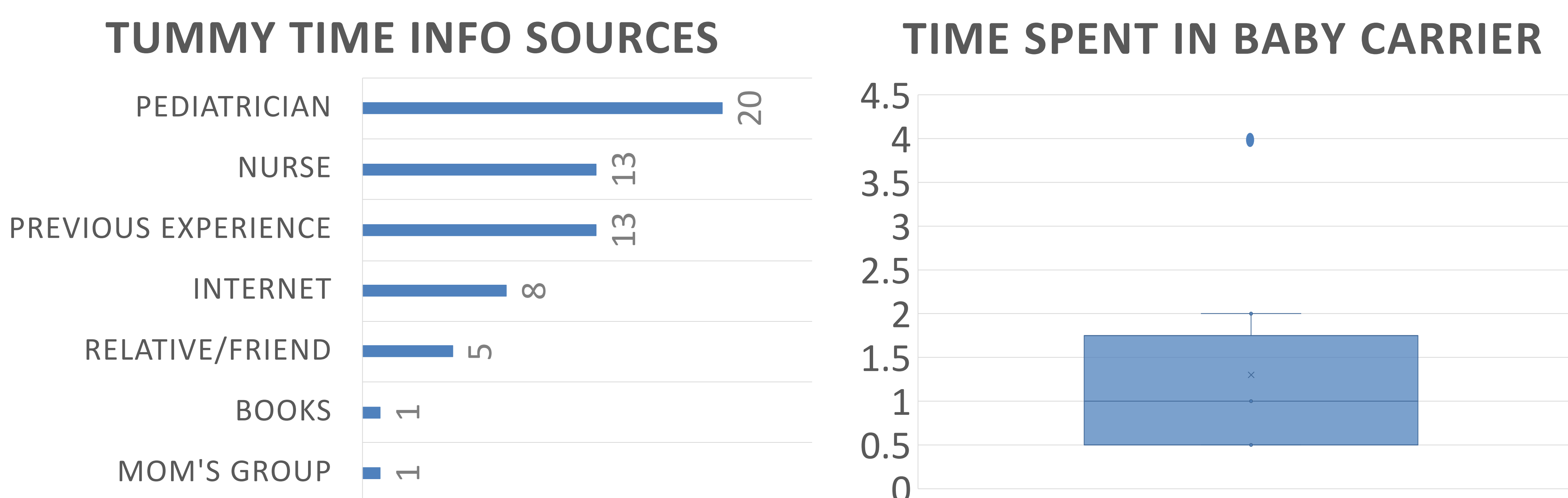
The participants were informed of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations and about the risk of delayed motor development with overuse of baby carriers.

A handout was given to demonstrate the typical developmental milestones.

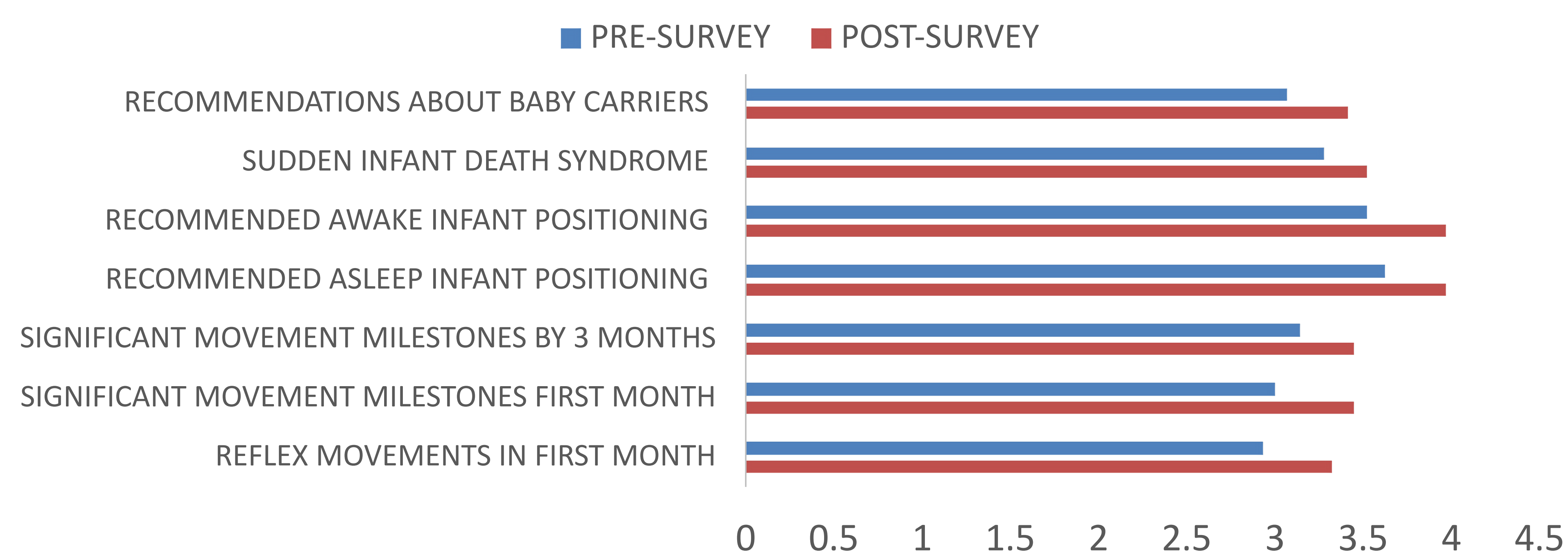
After the presentation, participants received a second survey. Results were collected and data was analyzed.

RESULTS

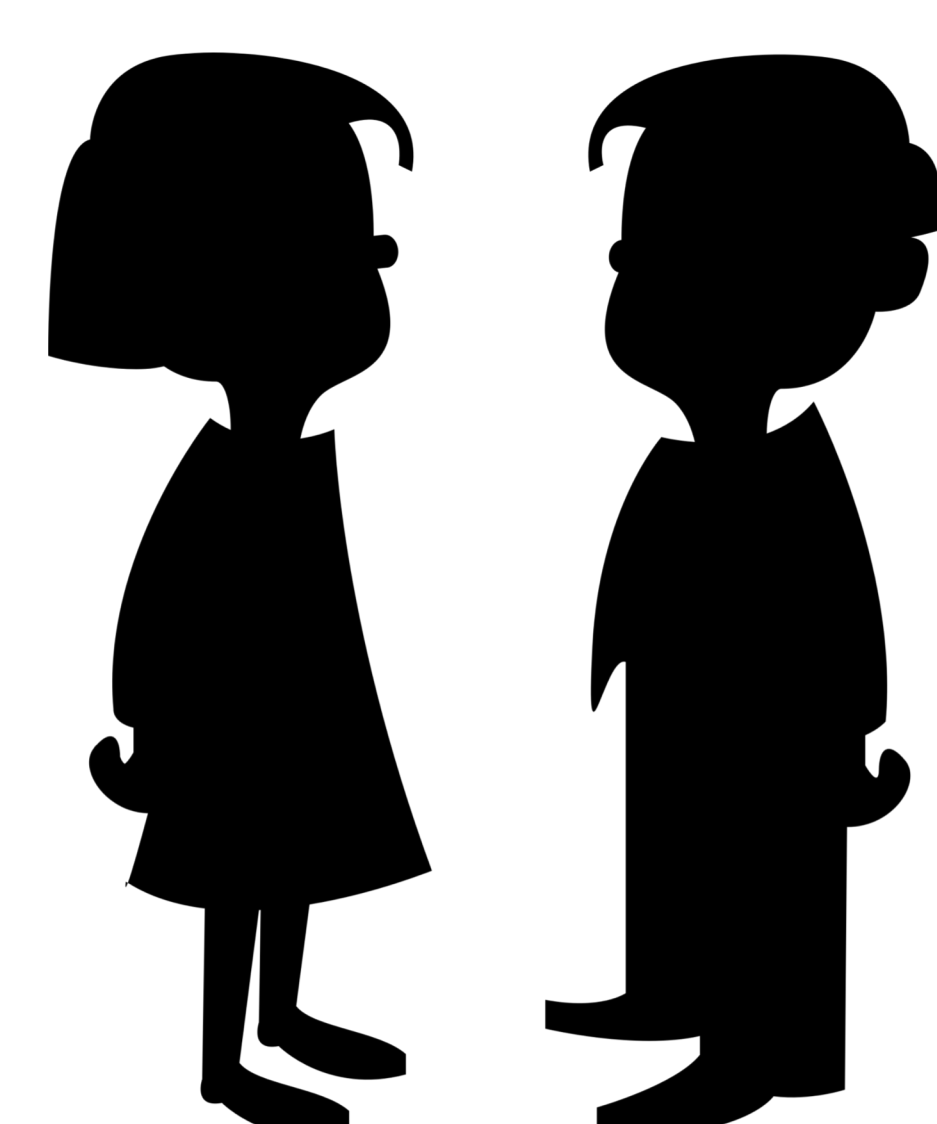
The results show that the De Pere community has a strong understanding of developmental milestones and safe infant positioning. Most participants were following the current guidelines on tummy time, which they received from a variety of sources. The average time spent in a baby carrier was 1.3 hours per day.



PARTICIPANT SURVEY RESULTS



COMMENTS



“I’ve heard it can be dangerous to keep baby in their car seat after you get home if they fall asleep on the drive- but I feel like there are conflicting opinions and a lack of info on what that means and why.”

“Too many different recommendations given by medical professionals. Confusing to know which is accurate.”

“Grandparents were concerned about babies choking on spit up when placed on their backs to sleep- they were told to put them on their tummies when they were new parents, but they followed recommendations for grandchildren.”

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the studied population is well-educated on infant positioning and developmental milestones. The participants regularly interact with the De Pere Public Health Department and some work in the medical field. A future research opportunity would be repeating the project with a different demographic to assess the allocation of educational resources in Northeastern Wisconsin.

There is confusion about the appropriate length of time an infant should spend in a baby carrier. Research shows a correlation between equipment use and motor development, but recommendations have not been defined by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Future studies need to be conducted to determine if overuse of these devices negatively impacts infant development.

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