

Back to Sleep Training for Nursery Room Nurses

Location: Missouri

Date Submitted: 2006, updated 5/2011

Category: **Promising Practice**

BACKGROUND

Hospital nurses working with healthy newborns are one of the first role models parents encounter. If nurses are advising parents on babies' sleeping position, they need to provide safe and accurate information. Many new parents report seeking advice from nurses on proper sleeping position for their infant. The value of parents observing consistency between public health messages and practices cannot be underestimated. In October 2000, the Missouri Department of Health contracted a study to determine the standard of care provided by Missouri hospitals in terms of policy and practice behaviors of hospital newborn nurses, regarding newborn sleep position. The study confirmed that of the 528 nurses surveyed, 96% were aware of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations regarding supine sleeping, but 52% of these respondents also thought that side sleeping was recommended by AAP. The survey also showed that 82% of these nurses recommend both supine and side sleeping positions to parents at the time of discharge. Notably, 45% of nurses felt that placing the infant on its back increased the infant's risk of choking if the baby were to vomit. Only 28% of the nurses surveyed recommended the back sleeping position exclusively.

Taken together, these study results demonstrated the need for developing and implementing strategies designed to change knowledge, attitude, and behavior of hospital newborn nursery room nurses on how they place healthy newborns for sleep. Therefore, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services developed a training intervention (Back to Sleep training for Nursery Room Nurses) that would expose hospital staff to a curriculum based on scientific support of the AAP recommendations. The Back to Sleep Training for Nursery Room Nurses is a training which aims to improve the knowledge, skills and beliefs of hospital nursing staff regarding the proper positioning of infant during sleep.

TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED
#5: Percent of infants placed to sleep on their backs

The training is based on scientific research on the prevention of SIDS through the "Back to Sleep" intervention.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this program include:

- Recognizing the roles that nurses play in modeling the proper sleep position for infants
- Identifying the need for consistency between public health messages and hospital practice
- Recognizing the need for the development and implementation of strategies specifically designed to change the knowledge, attitude and behavior of hospital newborn nursery room nurses in relation to how they place healthy newborns to sleep
- Applying the theory from the Back to Sleep for Nursery Room Nurses Training program as a tool to promote parent compliance with Back to Sleep recommendations through modeling behaviors observed in the hospital and provided as part of the discharge instructions

TARGET POPULATION SERVED

This program is targeted to nurses (and others providing direct care to infants) working in hospital Nurseries or Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU).

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Two versions of the Back to Sleep training curriculum were developed for nurses. In each version the content was the same and focused on SIDS education and environmental risk factors, nurses as role models for parents, the importance of having consistent public health messages and explaining the AAP recommendations. The curriculum also addressed nurses' concern that back sleeping may lead to choking.

One version of the course was provided in a train the trainer format. A portion of the hospital nursing staff was trained and then encouraged to go on to train other staff members. The second version of the curriculum was computer based which allowed staff members to complete a self study or guided walk through using a CD-Rom containing the course content. Nurses, as well as other professionals providing direct care to infants, were eligible for training.

Of the 71 eligible hospitals in Missouri, 58 hospitals allowed staff to participate in the training. All participants completed a pre/post survey immediately after the training and a follow up survey three to four months later was given to all statewide nurses regardless of their participation in the training. This statewide post survey was intended to replicate the original survey which led to this intervention and to provide a means of comparison.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA

Overall, both training formats received positive feedback with ~99% of train the trainer participants and ~97% of computer trained participants reporting that the experience was “good” or “excellent”. Results between the two formats did not vary greatly.

Immediately after the training, the pre/post test results (N=515) from the train the trainer version of the curriculum showed that:

- The participant’s intention towards placing the infant on its back increased from 59% (pre) to 98% (post).
- The participant’s intention to place the infant on its stomach decreased from 4% (pre) to 1% (post).
- Knowledge about SIDS, and comfort conveying SIDS information increased 1 point on the Likert scale (from ~3 to ~4).

The statewide survey that was conducted three to four months after the initial training (N=295) showed that:

- ~50% of participants reported using back only sleeping positions compared to the initial Sinclair study in 2000 in which 28% reported using this position exclusively.
- ~99% of participants reported that they were aware of AAP recommendations regarding safe sleeping for infants compared to 67% in the original Sinclair study.

PROGRAM COST

The program cost was \$57,050, which was used for the development and implementation of the program along with presentations to birthing hospitals in Missouri. SIDS Resources, which is based in St. Louis, was contracted the work on this project. This program was funded by Title V MCH Block Grant funding.

ASSETS & CHALLENGES

Assets

The Sinclair School of Nursing conducted a statewide survey which highlighted a major disconnect between public health safe sleeping messages and hospital practice, and therefore demonstrated the need for this training.

Challenges

Since the participation in this program was not mandatory, some hospitals chose not to participate for unknown reasons and are still placing infants on their abdomen to sleep, thus providing inaccurate modeling to parents.

Overcoming Challenges

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) continues to reach out to those hospitals that did not participate in the initial round of trainings.

LESSONS LEARNED

- It cannot be assumed that all professionals are aware of research or recommendations in specified areas of practice, and if one is aware, it cannot be assumed that the recommendations are being followed.
- It is important to first assess the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of a certain population prior to developing and implementing a training/intervention and then to customize these tools accordingly.

FUTURE STEPS

SIDS Resources continues to follow-up with hospitals that have participated in the training to provide updates to safe sleep practices. The sites contact DHSS to receive educational materials on safe sleep including “This side up” t-shirts to put on the infants for discharge. Hospitals that did not participate in the training are contacted on a regular basis to continue to offer the training in various formats.

Missouri’s State Child Fatality Review Panel is also interested in the issue and began using the national electronic database for reporting in January 2011. Staff is planning to develop a state safe cribs program in collaboration with the Children’s Trust Fund. Also, many new contracts are written to include language stating that all pregnant women need to be assessed for the availability of a safe crib and mandating education on safe sleep.



COLLABORATIONS

The Missouri DHSS collaborated with the Sinclair School of Nursing in the completion of the original survey in 2000. In 2004, a contract was established with SIDS Resources to develop and implement the training. DHSS continues to collaborate with SIDS Resources, Inc. to provide additional training and to provide updates along with educational material to the hospitals that participated in the training and to engage those hospitals that chose not to participate in the original training offerings.

PEER REVIEW & REPLICATION

Price SK, Hillman L, Gardner P, Schenk K, Warren C.
Changing hospital newborn nursery practice: results from a statewide "Back to Sleep" nurses training program.
Published in the on-line Maternal and Child Health Journal on June 15, 2007 and in the print version in May 2008, Vol.12, Number 3.

It is unknown whether this program has been replicated outside of Missouri.

RESOURCES PROVIDED

Training manuals with training in the CD format, as well as Safe Sleep brochures are available upon request.

DHSS is working with the Children's Trust Fund to release a DVD that will be made available to healthcare and social services providers, including hospitals, with chapters on Safe Sleep and Shaken Baby Syndrome in summer 2011. The purpose of the DVD is to view and discuss its content with new parents. The DVD will be free of charge to Missouri providers.

More information can be found here:

<http://www.dhss.mo.gov/SafeSleep/index.html>

Key words: Infant Mortality, SIDS, Workforce Development

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