



TOTS Brief

The Oklahoma Toddler Survey

What is TOTS?

TOTS stands for The Oklahoma Toddler Survey and is a two year follow-back survey to the Oklahoma PRAMS (Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System) survey. TOTS was developed in 1994 to provide a glimpse into the health of Oklahoma's toddler population on key topics such as insurance, childcare, safety, illness and injury as

well as family structure and demographics.

Mothers with live infants who respond to the PRAMS survey are sent a TOTS survey the month their child turns two years of age. Like PRAMS, TOTS is a mixed-mode surveillance system. Two mail surveys are sent in an effort to gain participation followed by telephone

surveillance for non-respondents. The response rate for 2004-2007 was 71.6%. Data were weighted to represent the two-year-olds' birth cohort.

Please contact Alicia Lincoln, PRAMS/TOTS Projects Manager, for more information about TOTS at 405-271-6761 or alicial@health.ok.gov

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In Oklahoma:

- 53% of two-year-olds had some type of child care 10 hours or more per week.
- Grandparents were the primary child care provider for 1/3 of Oklahoma's toddlers in care.
- Approximately 58% of two-year-olds in care were attending child care regularly by six months of age.
- Issues with child care caused employment problems for 12.1% of Oklahoma families with two-year-olds in care.

Child Care for Oklahoma's Toddlers

For many Oklahoma families with a two-year-old, child care arrangements are a fact of life. The benefits of quality child care are well documented, as are the stressors that accompany a family's need to place a child in regular child care.¹

TOTS defines child care as "any kind of arrangement where someone other than yourself [the mother], husband or partner, legal guardian

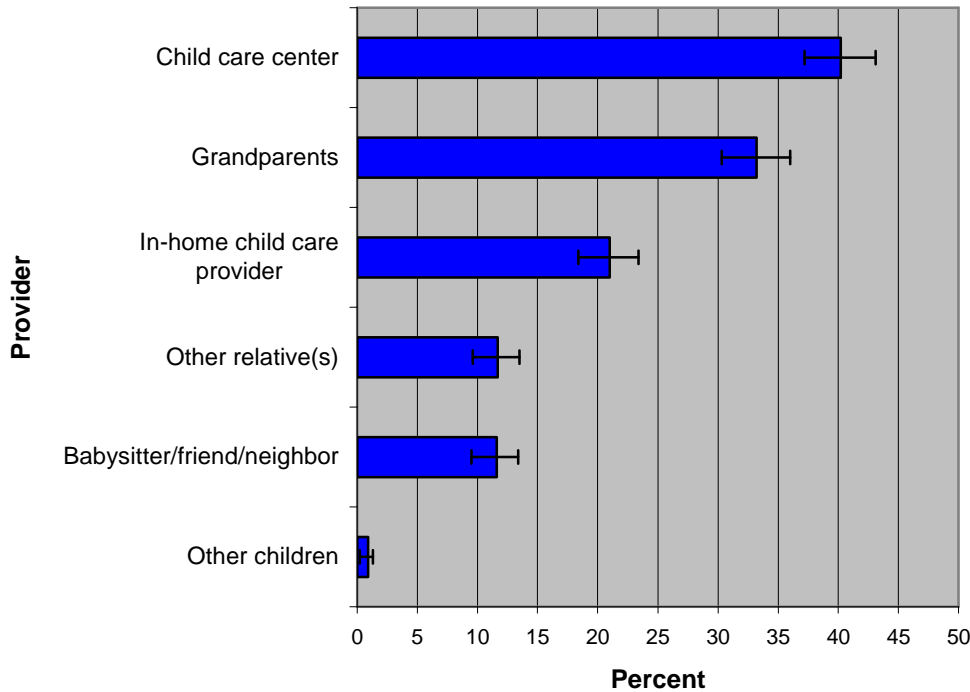
or stepparent takes care of [the] child for 10 hours or more per week on a regular basis."

Fifty-three percent of two-year-olds in Oklahoma were in some type of child care. The majority of Oklahoma's toddlers were either in a child care center (40.2%) or received care from one or more grandparent (33.2%; See Figure 1). Of those in care, over 60% of children spent 30 hours or more per week

(61.9%) in child care while 20.9% were in child care for 10-19 hours per week. Twenty-five percent of families paid \$400 or more per month for child care for their toddler.

Most toddlers began child care at or before six months of age (58.4%; See Figure 2). Three-fourths of Oklahoma's two year olds in child care were enrolled at least part time by the time they were 12 months old.

Figure 1: Percent of Two-year-olds in Child Care, By Provider Type, TOTS 2004-2007



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Secretary of Health and Commissioner of Health

Edd D. Rhoades, M.D., M.P.H.
Deputy Commissioner, Family Health Services
Oklahoma State Department of Health

Suzanna Dooley, M.S., A.R.N.P.
Chief, Maternal and Child Health Service
Oklahoma State Department of Health

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More than one in ten families with toddlers in care could not find child care when care was needed for one week or longer.

Child Care, Continued...

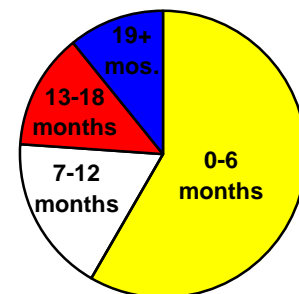
Some mothers of toddlers in child care indicated that they had problems finding child care when they needed it for a week or longer (11.4%). The two most common barriers to finding care when needed were affordability (18.7%) and availability of open slots (17.5%).

quit a job, not take a job or greatly change their job due to problems with child care. Women who were non-Hispanic, unmarried, or had less than a high school education were almost twice as likely to experience this compared to their counterparts.

Employment decisions for some may have depended on the availability of child care or its out-of-pocket cost. For 12.1% of Oklahoma families with a toddler in care someone had to

In spite of issues and barriers, satisfaction with child care arrangements was high: 79% of mothers were very satisfied with their child's care at the time of the TOTS survey.

Figure 2: Age When Toddler First Began Child Care, TOTS 2004-2007



Reference

- Oklahoma Child Care Resource & Referral Association. 2005 Oklahoma Child Care & Early Education Portfolio. Accessed September 30, 2008. Available at www.oklahomachildcare.org/system/files/2005port_0.pdf