



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 health insurance, child care, safety, tobacco exposure, nutrition, illness and activity limitations, injury,

family structure, and maternal and paternal demographics.

Mothers with live infants who respond to the PRAMS survey are sent a TOTS survey the month their child turns 2 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 2006-2008 data was 71.8%. Data were weighted to represent the 2-year-old's birth cohort.

Please contact the TOTS Project Manager at the Oklahoma State Department of Health for more information about TOTS at 405-271-6761 or alicial@health.ok.gov

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In Oklahoma:

- On average Oklahoma 2-year-olds watched 1.75 hours of television daily.
- Only 5% of 2-year-olds did not watch any television on a daily basis.
- 1 in 10 toddlers watched four hours or more per day.
- Women who were African American, had less than a high school education or had incomes at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (approximately \$39,220 annual income for a family of four) were more likely to have toddlers who watched television for two or more hours per day.

Television Time and Two-Year-Olds

The more time a child spends in front of a screen watching television (TV) or videos the less time they have to engage in the creative, social, and physical activities necessary for development. A study by Dennison et al. (2002) found that for every hour of TV viewed by a 1-to 4-year-old, the risk for being overweight (Body Mass Index (BMI) > 85th percentile) increased by 6%.¹ Research also shows that children who watch violent or non-violent entertainment TV before age 3 are less likely to perform well

in school and are more likely to develop attention disorders later in childhood.²

In Oklahoma, 2-year-olds watched an average of 1.75 hours of TV or videos per day. The Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly discourages TV viewing for children ages 2 or younger. For older children, AAP advises no more than one to two hours per day of educational, nonviolent programs watched while supervised.

Certain maternal demographics were associated

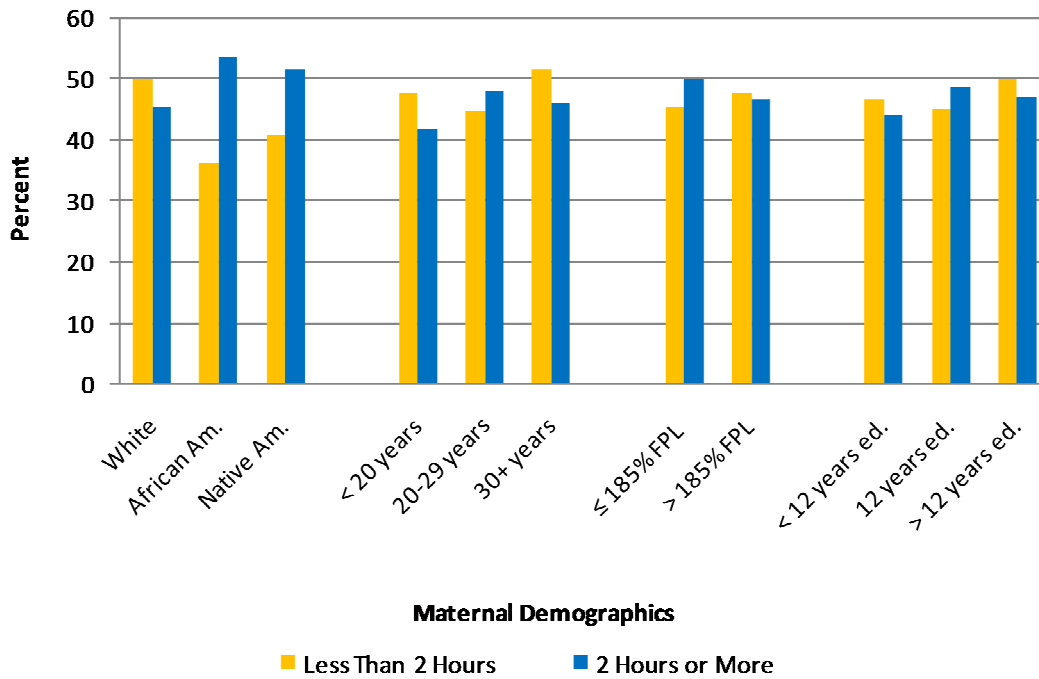
with a toddler's TV viewing. Toddlers who watched less than two hours of TV per day were more likely to have mothers who were white, had some college education, had family incomes greater than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and/or were older (30 years of age or more), see Figure 1. Marital status and maternal ethnicity were not significantly related to TV viewing.

One in 20 toddlers watched TV for five or more hours per day, see Figure 2.



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Figure 1: Toddlers' Television Viewing Time by Maternal Demographics, TOTS 2006-2008



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Approximately 23% of Oklahoma's toddlers watched television for more than two hours every day.

Television Viewing, Continued...

The amount of TV watched was not associated with the frequency a child was read to on a weekly basis. Maternal and paternal education was a statistically significant factor in reading frequency; the more education attained the more likely the child was read to on a daily basis (data not shown).

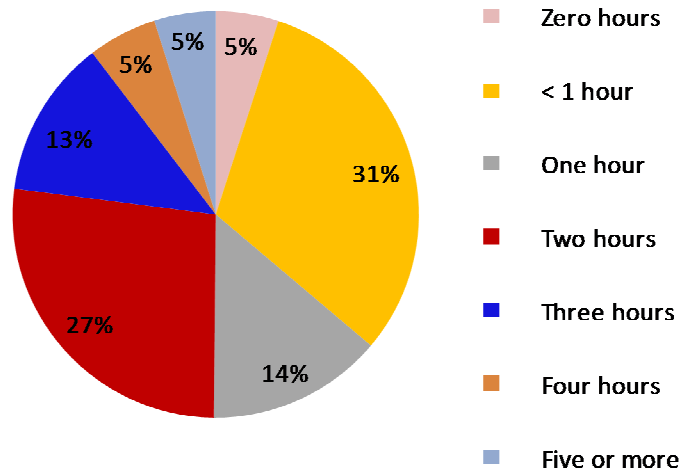
Maternal work status was associated with TV viewing. For women who were stay-at-home mothers for 12 months or worked outside the home for 12 months, toddler TV viewing was similar. However, women who worked outside of the home only part of the year (1-11 months) had toddlers who were more likely to watch TV two or more hours per day (46.5% and 43.9% vs. 53.1%, respectively; data not shown).

TOTS did not ask about the number of hours the TV is on in the home or the content viewed by the child.

References

1. Dennison BA, Erb TA, Jenkins PL: Television viewing and television in bed room associated with overweight risk among low-income preschool children. *Pediatrics* 2002, 109:1028-1035.
2. Frederick J. Zimmerman and Dimitri A. Christakis. Associations Between Content Types of Early Media Exposure and Subsequent Attentional Problems. *Pediatrics* 2007, 120:986 - 992.

Figure 2: Television Time Per Day Among Oklahoma's Toddlers*, TOTS 2006-2008



* Approximately 6% of toddlers had unknown television time