



# TOTS Brief

The Oklahoma Toddler Survey

## Secondhand Smoke Exposure in Homes and Vehicles

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Approximately 8% of children in the U.S. (5.5 million children less than 18 years old) live in households where someone smoked inside the home, resulting in secondhand smoke exposure.<sup>1</sup> Smoking just one cigarette in a vehicle can increase smoke levels higher than those found in bars or restaurants where smoking occurs.<sup>2</sup> Infants and children exposed to secondhand smoke exposure have an

increased risk for acute respiratory infections, asthma attacks, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).<sup>1</sup>

The Oklahoma Toddler Survey (TOTS) asked mothers of two-year-olds about the smoking rules in their households and in the vehicles where the toddlers rode most of the time. Overall,

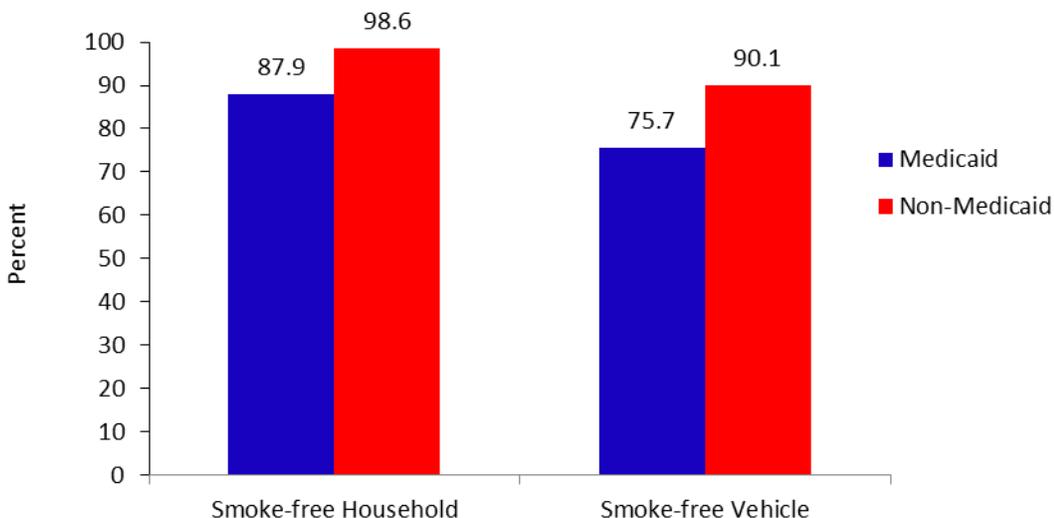
92.4% of two-year-olds born in Oklahoma lived in homes with smoke-free household rules in 2011-2012. For 80.8% of two-year-olds, the vehicle they rode in most of the time was smoke-free.

Smoke-free status varied by Medicaid status: 12.1% of toddlers with Medicaid did not have smoke-free homes compared to 1.4% of toddlers without Medicaid (Figure 1). The contrast

### In Oklahoma:

- 7.6% of toddlers lived in households that were not smoke-free.
- 19.2% of toddlers rode in vehicles that were not smoke-free.
- 23.8% of toddlers had mothers who smoked.
- Among mothers who smoked:
  - 1 in 4 toddlers lived in homes where smoking was allowed some or all of the time.
  - 6 in 10 toddlers rode in vehicles where smoking was allowed some or all of the time.
- 1 in 4 toddlers with Medicaid rode in vehicles that were not smoke-free.

**Figure 1. Smoke-free Rules in the Household and Vehicle by Toddler's Medicaid Status, TOTS 2011-2012**



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was even more pronounced for smoke-free vehicles, as 1 in 4 toddlers with Medicaid rode in vehicles without smoke-free policies compared to 1 in 10 toddlers without Medicaid.

Almost a quarter (23.8%) of mothers in the state smoked at two-years post-partum. Of those, only 75.5% had smoke-free household rules and less than 4 in 10 had smoke-free vehicle rules (See Figure 2). Among non-smokers, 97.6% had smoke-free household rules and 93.6% had smoke-free vehicle rules.

Mothers who smoked were less likely to have smoke-free households if their toddlers had Medicaid compared to those without Medicaid (71.3% vs. 89.0%). Although a slightly higher percentage of smokers with toddlers using Medicaid had smoke-free vehicles (41.4%), the difference was not statistically significant compared to the non-Medicaid population (37.9%).

Among mothers who smoked, married women were significantly more likely to report having a smoke-free home compared to unmarried mothers (85.6% vs.

69.3%). The difference in smoke-free vehicles was not statistically significant between these two groups of smokers (42.9% of married mothers and 37.1% of unmarried mothers had smoke-free vehicles). There were no statistically significant differences by maternal race, education, age, or ethnicity for household or vehicle rules.

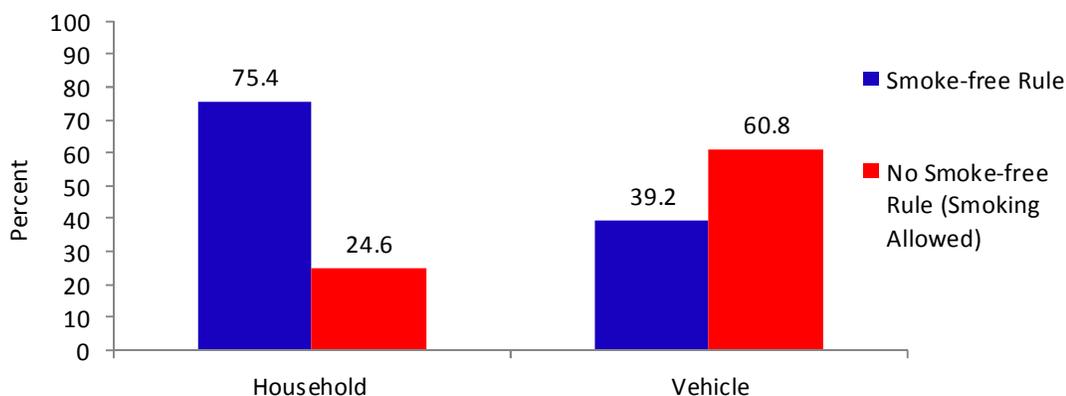
Risk for secondhand smoke exposure was highest for toddlers of smokers and toddlers with Medicaid, particularly in the vehicle where they rode most of the time. Families with small children need encouragement to create smoke-free policies for their homes and vehicles. Refer families to the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline if anyone in the household uses tobacco products.



**References:**

1. Singh G., Siahpush, M., Kogan, MD. 2010. Disparities in children's exposure to environmental tobacco smoke in the United States, 2007. *Pediatrics* Nov 2010; 126 (5): 1052.
2. Sendzik, T, et al., "An experimental investigation of tobacco smoke pollution in cars," *Toronto, ON: Ontario Tobacco Research Unit*, March 2008.

**Figure 2. Rules in the Household and Vehicle among Maternal Smokers, TOTS 2011-2012**



The Oklahoma Toddler Survey (TOTS) is a two-year follow-back survey to the Oklahoma Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) survey. Mothers with live infants who respond to the PRAMS survey are sent a TOTS survey the month their children turn two-years-old. 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 unweighted response rate for 2011-2012 data was 70.3% (n=2,663; excluding women ineligible to complete TOTS). Data were weighted to represent the two-year-old's birth cohort for those years. Prevalence rates were calculated using the Cochran-Mantel-Haenszel Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Test.

Special assistance for this Brief was provided by: Shannon Gormley; Binitha Kunnel, MS; Alicia M. Lincoln, MSW, MSPH

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