

Research Report

Be Sweet to Babies: Partnering with parents to improve use of pain treatments during painful procedures in sick and new-born infants

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Thank you from the University of Melbourne and Miracle Babies Foundation research team for your participation in our study about family-led strategies for babies' pain treatment.

Your contributions to this research have helped us to learn about

- Parents' and caregivers' knowledge and use of pain treatments for their babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Special Care Nursery (SCN) and High Dependency Unit (HDU).
- The effectiveness of the Be Sweet to Babies video for sharing information with parents about ways to reduce their babies' pain during procedures

Our survey ran from November 2020 to February 2021, collecting responses from 162 parents and caregivers of sick and/or premature babies in the NICU, SCN and HDU.

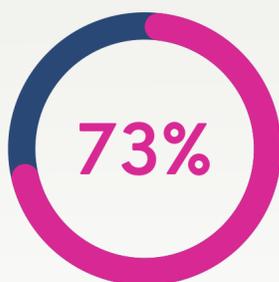
Survey participants were invited to watch the [Be Sweet to Babies video](#) showing breastfeeding, holding babies skin-to-skin, and using sugar water during blood collection. They then answered a survey about their previous knowledge and use of the pain treatments shown in the video.

To view the Be Sweet to Babies video, follow [this link](#), or scan the QR code:

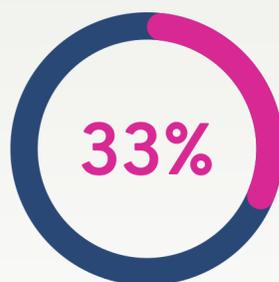


What our survey found:

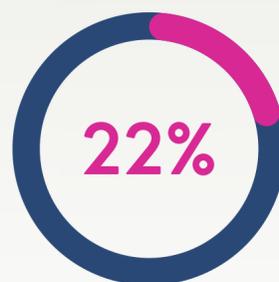
- More than half of parents were aware sucrose was used for pain reduction, while fewer parents had previously used skin-to-skin care or breastfeeding



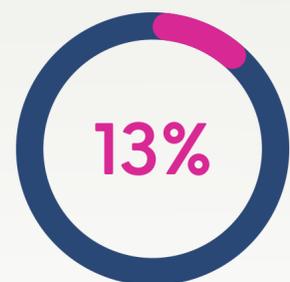
Were aware sucrose was used during painful procedures



Had previously used skin-to-skin care

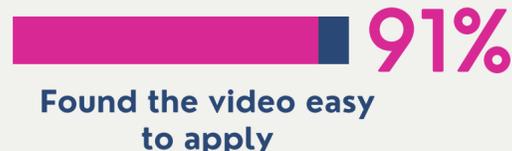


Had previously used breastfeeding



Had previously used all three treatments

- Most participants had not previously seen the video, however, most rated it favourable after watching. Most comments on the video provided positive feedback, and many suggested ways it could be improved



- After viewing the video, most parents intended to recommend it to others, and to advocate for one or more of the pain treatments



- Many participants provided comments about their experience using pain treatments. Major themes identified in these comments are:

- Painful procedures are emotionally distressing for parents
- Parents want and need more information to be able to participate in managing their infant's pain
- Hospital policies and practices prevent parent involvement in their babies' pain treatment
- Parent led pain treatment is impractical for some infants
- Support and education provided by nurses leads to positive experiences for parents

How will we use these findings?

- To help us plan future research, exploring if the Be Sweet to Babies video changes not only parents' intentions, but also increases actual use of treatments during their babies' painful procedures.
- Future research will also explore how to overcome the barriers to parents being present and involved during painful procedures in hospital settings.

We thank you again for participating in our study!

If you have any comments or questions, please contact the Principal Investigator, Denise Harrison, RN, Ph.D.

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