

**Fact Sheet**

**Ideals vs. Reality in U.S. Births**

	<b>WHO Recommendations</b>	<b>CIMS Suggestions</b>	<b>2003 U.S. Stats (4.09 million births)</b>
<b>Birth Attendants</b>	Midwives for normal pregnancy and birth	Access to professional midwifery care	Midwives 8% (328,000)
<b>Place of Birth</b>	Out-of-Hospital preferred	Where mother prefers	Hospitals 99.1% (4.05 million)
<b>Electronic Fetal Monitoring</b>	Not routine	Not routine	85.1% (3.3 million)
<b>Drugs in Labor</b>	Not routine	Only for complications	80%*
<b>Induction of Labor</b>	10% or less	10% or less	20.5% (840,000)
<b>Stimulation of Labor</b>	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	15.8% (645,000)
<b>Episiotomies (Vaginal Births)</b>	Systematic use not justified	Goal of 5%	26.9%** (780,000)
<b>Cesarean Rate</b>	10-15%	10-15%	27.5% (1.1 million)
<b>Breastfeeding After Birth</b>	Immediately	WHO-UNICEF BFHI Guidelines	67%***

- *WHO Recommendations* – taken from a report on the *Appropriate Technology for Birth*, published by the World Health Organization in April, 1985.
- *CIMS Suggestions* – taken from *The Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative* from the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS), 1996, www.motherfriendly.org. BFHI = Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative.
- *2003 US Stats* – most taken from *Births: Final Data for 2003*, National Vital Statistics Report Vol. 54, No. 2, September 8, 2005 [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr54/nvsr51\\_02.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr54/nvsr51_02.pdf).

\* *Listening to Mothers Report*, October 2002, p. 18

\*\* "National Hospital Discharge Survey 2002: Annual Summary with detailed diagnosis and procedure data," *Vital Health Statistics* 13, No. 158, March 2005.

\*\*\* *Mothering Magazine*, No. 112, May/June 2002