Why is Research on Infant Carrying Important?

- Increase of infants in the post-industrialized west diagnosed with conditions such as plagiocephaly or torticollis
- Postural deformities and delays can be corrected with positioning and interaction
- Few studies have explored infant carrying practices
- First comprehensive cross-cultural literature review
- Connection between infant transport/restraint & motor development
- To aid parents in the cultural west in the understanding how infant transport and securing devices can exacerbate postural deformities
- Altering infant restraint, transport or sleeping positions can mitigate some of the symptoms of such conditions

Method

- Data from the online database for eHRAF World Cultures
- Infant carrying cross referenced with motor milestones
- Includes 31 culture groups
- Patterns emerged between carrying practice and motor development.

Results

- Few instances of significant delays
- Precocious development of motor activities in several non-western cultures
- Strong association between infant posture and restraint type
- Other possible factors:
  - sibling involvement
  - parental responsiveness
  - infant stimulation

Average Walking Age

- In spite of very diverse parenting practices the majority of infants begin walking at very near the same age.
- This makes the delays in development associated with Container Baby Syndrome that much more alarming.
- Levels of parental involvement vary greatly even within cultures
- Positioning and restraint are consistent even across wider regional groups which include multiple cultures

Why are siblings a factor?

- Natural tendency of infants mimic and observe other children
- More opportunity for observation and interaction with siblings outside cultural west
- Development trajectory changes with more stimulation

Future Directions

- More research to identify the behaviors with greatest influence on development is needed.
- Good practices for recording milestones are lacking as all standard are based on infants of the cultural west and activities that do not map well onto all cultures.
- Individualized standards for each culture group based on activities of daily living are needed.