



Fetal movements & Mindfetalness

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To give birth to a stillborn baby

Not being with the baby as long as wished after birth

RR 2.4, CI 1.1-5.3; $p=0.04$

No tokens of remembrances from the baby

RR 3.1, CI 1.6-6.0; $P=0.002$



23% *Very strong feeling* that the child could be dead

Doctoral degree, 1998, Karolinska Institutet. Thesis: *To give birth to a stillborn baby.*

Premonition

A feeling that something was not right before they were told that their baby had died in utero. Feelings of worry and of premonition were difficult to convey to other including health care professionals.



Trulsson O, Rådestad I. The silent child - mother's experiences before, during and after stillbirth. *Birth* 2004;31:189-195.

The staircase of insight



Not feeling any contact with the baby

Worry

Something is wrong

Not understanding the unbelievable

Wanting to be told



Malm M-C, Lindgren H, Rådestad I. Losing contact with one's unborn baby – mothers' experiences prior to receiving news that their baby has died in utero.

Omega 2010-2011;62:353-367.

Less often - felt weaker

614 mothers with stillbirths
392 (64%) had premonition

70% Contacted health care
22% Waited until next antenatal check-up
8% Were advised to wait



Erlandsson K, Lindgren H, Davidsson-Bremborg A, Rådestad I.
Womens' premonitions prior to the death of their baby in utero and
how they deal with the feeling that their baby may be unwell.
Acta Obstetricia et Gynecologica Scandinavica 2012;91:28-33.

Why did you suspect?

“My child clearly moved less last week, but the midwife said that it is because the fetus collects power before birth. She told me I would try to be mom and not always think like someone working in the healthcare.”

(mother to stillborn baby 39 wk)

“I felt reduced fetal movements a few days earlier and the day before, I felt nothing. Contacted the mother-in-law but she said it was normal?!? Had a planned appointment to the midwife the next day and she said I could wait.”

(mother to stillborn baby 37 wk)

The Swedish textbook for midwives

“Many women react to a pattern of fetal movement at the end of pregnancy. Normally fetal movement decreases from week 32 onward due to the decrease in space available in the uterus. **Women should be informed about this.**”

Kaplan A et.al. (red.) Textbook for midwives . Studentlitteratur, Lund, 1993-2011.

Must know – a litteratur review

No evidence for saying that the frequency of fetal movements decreases in the third trimester. Further, giving misleading information about decreased frequencies of fetal movements poses a threat to the unborn baby's life.

Rådestad I. Fetal movements in the third trimester -
Important information about wellbeing of the fetus.
Sexual & Reproductive HealthCare 2010;1:119-121.

Guidelines Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologist

“Clinicians should be aware (and should advise women) that although fetal movements tend to plateau at 32 weeks of gestation, there is no reduction in the frequency of fetal movements in the third trimester. Women should be advised of the need to be aware of fetal movements up to and including onset of labour and should report any decrease or cessation of fetal movements to their maternity unit. Fetal movements should be assessed by subjective maternal perception of fetal movements.”

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologist,
Green-top Guideline 57, Reduce fetal Movements, February. 2011.

Pregnant women need to know!



Rådestad I. En tredjedel av alla dödfödda barn kan räddas till livet. *DN* debatt 16 juli 2011.

Information to pregnant women

“At this time **it will be a bit calmer** in your stomach. It is not only crowded, the child is sleeping more when it takes on the forces to grow and develop. In addition, **the child collects energy for future birth.**”

(Liberio, Pregnancy Calender, 2011)

“The child is about 36 cm from head to tail and weight about 3.2 kg. The child's weight increases rapidly. **The child is moving less now.**”

(Babygroup online, 2011)

Television has the power to change



Truth & Consequence
Broadcasted 7/10, 2011

Total change

Textbook for midwives - a correction to all universities with a midwifery program.

Commercial companies apologized for their misleading information.

Midwives encourage women to seek care if they experience a decrease in their unborn baby's movements pattern.

National guidelines

In gestational week 25, information to all women about fetal movements and tell them to seek care if the movements decreases or become weaker.

All women seeking care due to decrease in fetal movements and after a check-up can go home, should always be informed of to seek care again if they experiences decrease or weaker movements.

The National Board of Health and Welfare, 2016 - guidelines about how to give information about fetal movements.

Today's question

What can we do to strengthening women's ability to be aware of fetal movements?

Further, should we support structured observation of fetal movements?



Describe how your baby has moved this week



40 women

Gestational week 37+

Strong and powerful (39/40)

Large (20/40)

Slow, Stretching (18/40)

From side to side (17/40)

Rådestad I, Lindgren H. Women's perceptions of fetal movements in full-term pregnancy. *Sexual & Reproductive HealthCare* 2012;3:113-116.

Methaphor, images, similarity



Like when you are swimming in the pool and kick someone next to you in the ribs. It is quite a **hard kick or punch.**

(Woman wk 38)

Methaphor, images, similarity

It feels like a seal **rolling and rocking** around and setting itself. It is a big body and I feel the strength in the movements. When he turns, his whole body presses against the sides and becomes like a big marble or ball that sticks straight out.

(Woman wk 40)



Strong but not less!

I have read that when there's less space there is less activity as it gets cramped, but I don't think so – **there is a lot of activity. It's just that the movements are a bit more prolonged and strong but not less. I don't think so – almost the reverse in fact.**

(Woman wk 39)



Seeking care due to decreased fetal movements

All women gestational week 28+

Questionnaire



Data collection 1/1 – 31/12, 2014

All 7 birth clinics in Stockholm



Prevalence

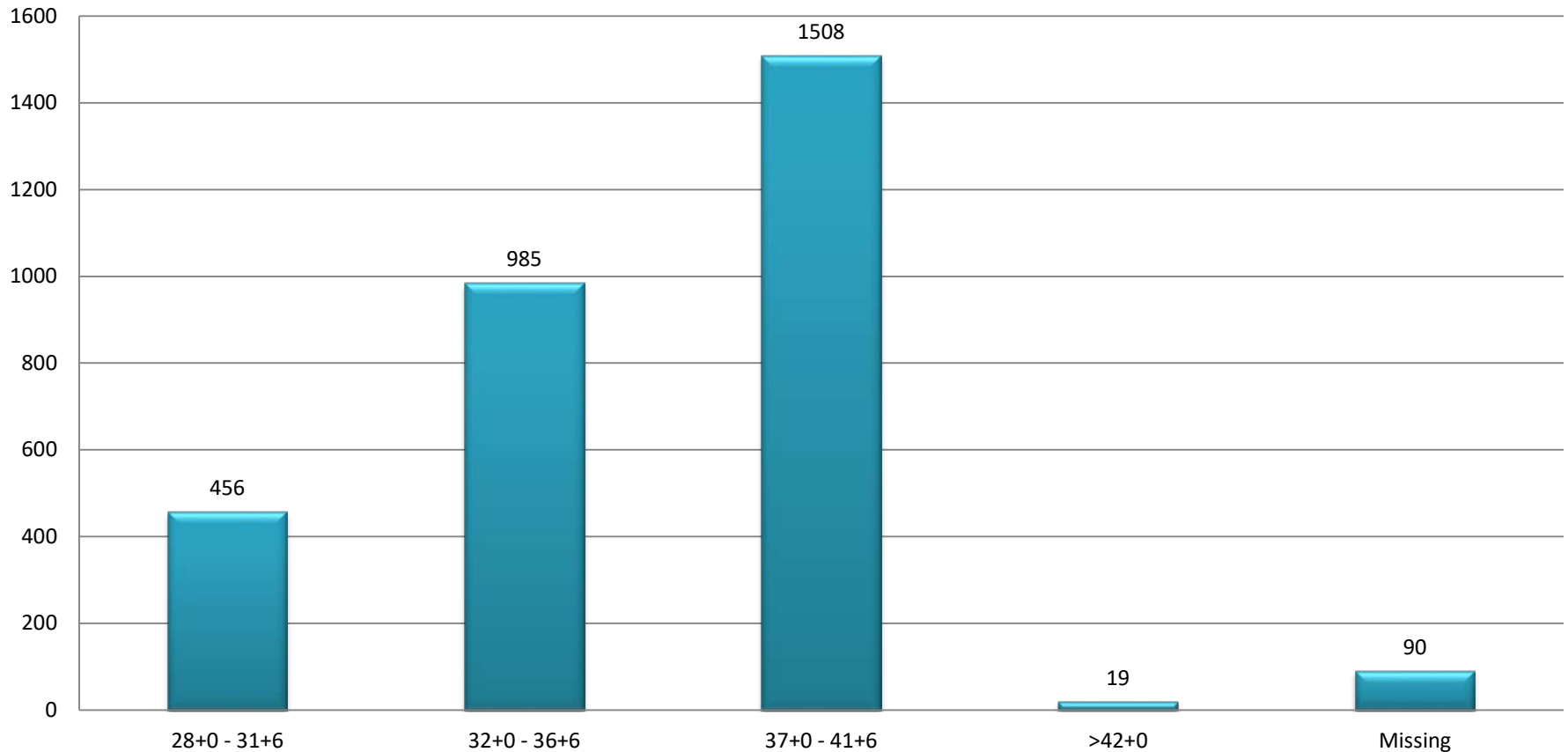
Total 3058 questionnaires

Around 10% of all women giving birth in Stockholm in 2014

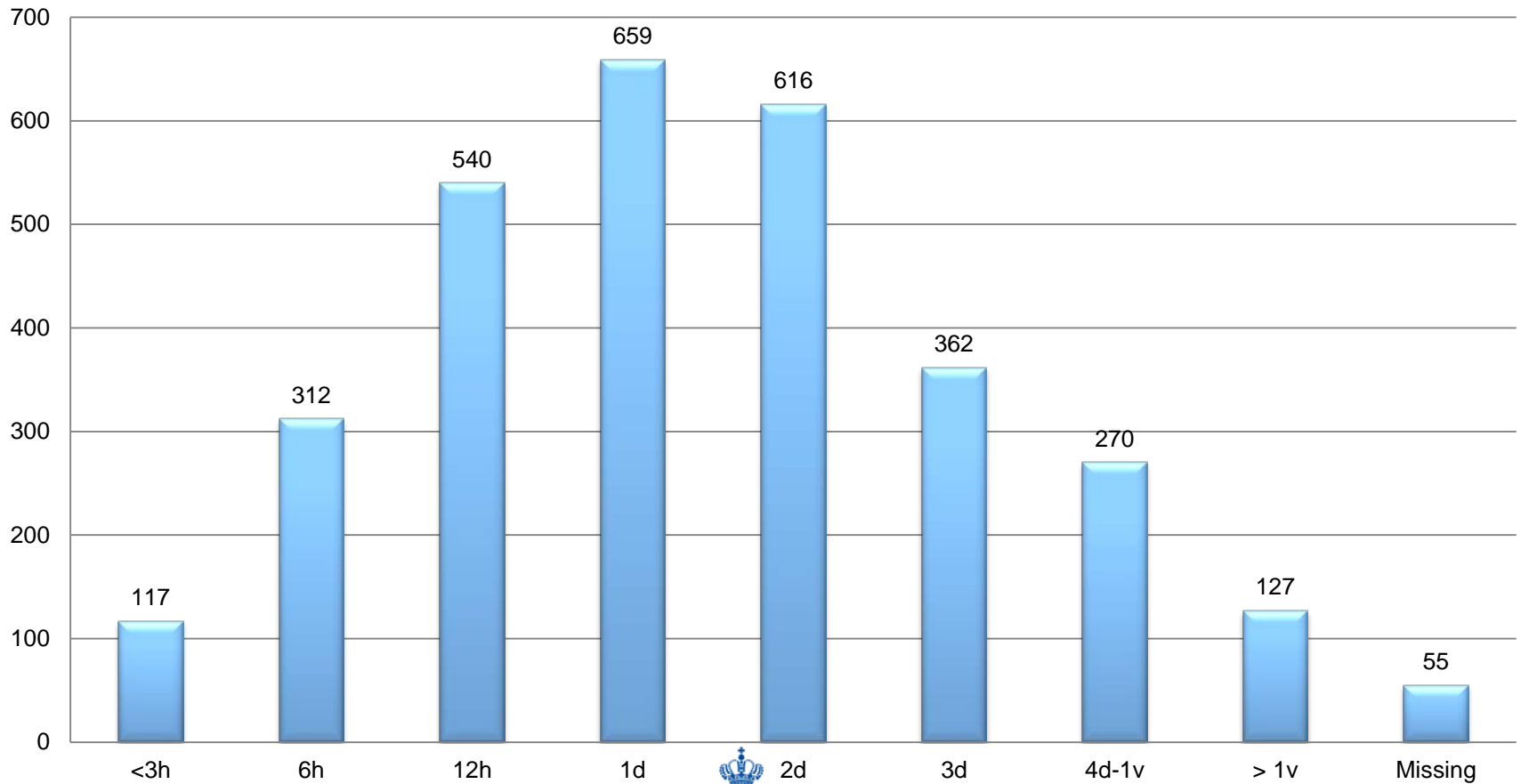
In this study we only included women with no signs of a compromised fetus.



Gestational week when seeking care



Experiences of decreased fetal movements before examination



Not wanted to burden the health care unnecessarily

Worry about the baby is the crucial reason to consult care as well as the time which have passed since they first experienced decreased fetal movements.

Not wanted to burden the health care unnecessarily was a reason for prehospital delay.

Linde A, Rådestad I, Pettersson K, Hagelberg L, Georgsson S. Better safe than sorry- Women's reasons and obstacles for consult health care due to decreased fetal movements. *Woman and Birth* 2017;30(5):376-381.

To be taken seriously!

To be taken seriously
Rapid and adequate care
Focus on the baby's health



Better and more uniform information regarding reduced fetal movements.

Georgsson S, Linde A, Pettersson K, Nilsson R, Rådestad I.
To be taken seriously and receive rapid and adequate care –
women's requests when they consult health care for reduced fetal movements,
Midwifery, 2016;40:102–108.

Pay attention to fetal movements

Contact health care for check-up
Pay attention to fetal movements
Consult care once too often rather than
one time too few.

Georgsson S, Linde A, Pettersson K, Nilsson R, Rådestad I.
To be taken seriously and receive rapid and adequate care –
women's requests when they consult health care for reduced fetal movements.
Midwifery, 2016;40:102–108.



Today's question

What can we do to strengthening women's ability to be aware of fetal movements?

Further, should we support structured observation of fetal movements?



Mindfetalness

Daily 15 minutes

Baby awake

Left side

Focus:


Strength

Character

Frequency (not counting)

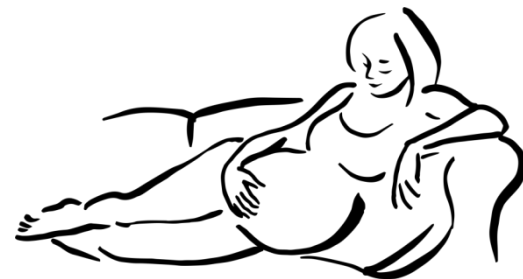


Rådestad I. Strengthening mindfetalness.
Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare, 2012;3:59-60.

 Empowering women to shorten pre-hospital delay after decreased fetal movements and simultaneously lower the frequency of unwarranted visits – a randomized study

To examine if the percentage of babies stillborn or born with signs of hypoxia can be reduced by leading pregnant women to practice *Mindfetalness* and be advised to seek health care if the fetal movements decreases.

To examine if practicing *Mindfetalness* increases or decreases the number of women who unnecessarily (from a medical perspective) seek health care due to decreased fetal movements.



Study design, material and methods

40 000 women, gestational week 25+, randomly allocated to guidance in practicing *Mindfetalness* by a midwife or to routine care.

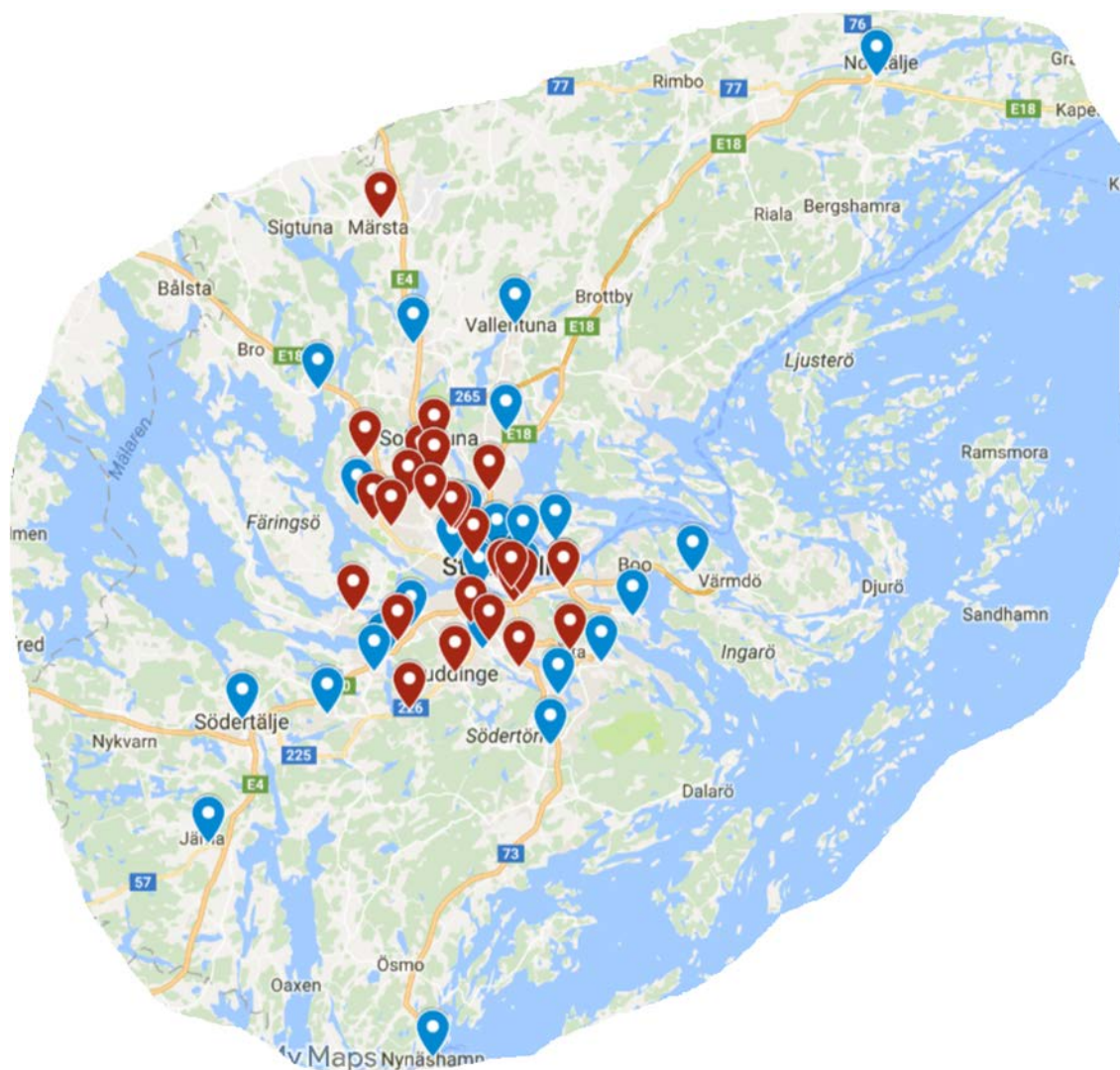
Prevalence of the women with an unscheduled visit to an obstetric clinic for worry about fetal movements. Apgar score <7 at five minutes.

Swedish Medical Birth Register.

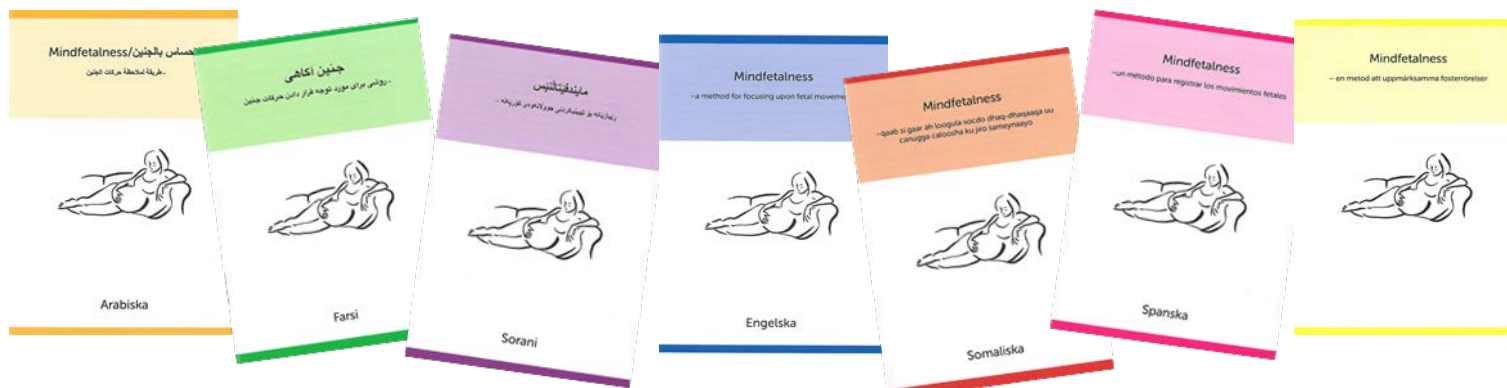
Rådestad I, Akselsson A, Georgsson S, Lindgren H, Pettersson K, Steineck G.
Empowering women to shorten pre-hospital delay after decreased fetal movements and simultaneously lower the frequency of unwarranted visits – a randomized study. *Sexual & Reproductive HealthCare* 2016;10:56-61.

RCT Stockholm county – antenatal clinics

”



www.mindfetalness.com



Swedish, English

Spanish, Arabic

Somali, Polish

Sorani, Farsi

www.mindfetalness.com



Pilot study

94 of 105 (90%) positive response

"I feel that I build a relation to my baby"

"I get to know my baby better"

"A good support and useful tool"

"I feel safe and are not so worried any more"

The compliance to the method was high



Axelsson A, Lindgren H, Pettersson K, Rådestad I.
Women's attitude, experiences and compliance to a method for
systematic observation on fetal movements – a pilot study.

BMC pregnancy & Childbirth, 2017;17(1):359.

Pilot study

11 of 105 (10%) negative response

- Lack of time (n=6),
- Has no need (n=3)
- Do not like structured methods (n=1)
- Create more concerns (n=1)



Axelsson A, Lindgren H, Pettersson K, Rådestad I.
Women's attitude, experiences and compliance to a method for
systematic observation on fetal movements – a pilot study.
BMC pregnancy & Childbirth, 2017;17(1):359.

Midwives positive to Mindfetalness

“The woman gets to know her unborn baby better.”

“It is a good method for stressed women so they take time on daily basis to their unborn baby.”

“I have become better to talk about fetal movements with the woman and in a more structured way now.”



Thank you!

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