



WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGES HEALTH ASSESSMENT 2021



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary provides an overview of health-related data for women of childbearing ages (18-44 years) who participated in an assessment survey during Spring 2021. The findings are based on self-administered surveys using a structured questionnaire. The questions were modeled after the survey instrument used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for their National and State Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) developed by the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. The Erie County Health Department collected the data, guided the health assessment process and integrated sources of primary and secondary data into the final report.

Primary Data Collection Methods

DESIGN

This assessment was cross-sectional in nature and included an online survey of women of childbearing age in Erie County. From the beginning, community leaders were actively engaged in the planning process and helped define the content, scope, and sequence of the study. Active engagement of community members throughout the planning process is regarded as an important step in completing a valid assessment.

INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

One survey instrument for women of childbearing age was designed for this study. The Project Coordinator from the Erie County Health Department conducted a series of meetings with the Healthy Sprouts - Maternal Child Health Coalition. During the meetings, potential survey questions from a previous assessment conducted in 2016 were reviewed and discussed. Based on input from the coalition, the Project Coordinator composed a draft survey containing 61 items. The draft was reviewed and approved by public health consultants at the Ohio Department of Health.

SAMPLING | Women's Survey

Women ages 18 to 44 years old living in Erie County were used as a sampling frame for the adult survey. There were 11,585 women of childbearing age (ages 18-44 years old) living in the county. The Project Coordinator conducted an analysis to determine what sample size was needed to ensure a 95% confidence interval with a corresponding margin of error of 5% (i.e., we can be 95% sure that the "true" population responses are within a 5% margin of error of the survey findings.) A sample size of at least 300 women of childbearing age was needed to ensure this level of confidence.

PROCEDURE | Women's Survey

The survey was available online and could be accessed through the use of a provided link. The link directed participants to the Google Form that hosted the 2021 Women of Childbearing Ages Health

Assessment. A series of methods were utilized to distribute the link throughout the community. 1) The link was made available on the Erie County Health Department Facebook page, 2) The link was distributed to Erie County WIC clients, 3) The WIC Certifying Health Professional verbally notified clients during their follow-up calls to reiterate the purpose of the survey and encourage participation by those whom may not have completed it upon receiving the initial survey, 4) Members of the Healthy Sprouts Maternal Child Health Coalition shared the survey with clients and employees within their realms.

The survey remained open for a period of 12 weeks and allowed for one response per participant. Upon completion of the survey, each participant had the option to be entered to win one of three \$50 incentives.

SAMPLING | Stakeholder Interview

Stakeholders that are members of Healthy Sprouts Maternal Child Health Coalition were asked to participate in an interview to better understand their knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes regarding preconception health and inter-conception health services offered to women ages 18-44. Approximately 26 clinical partners and social service providers were asked to participate across Erie County. Twelve completed an interview.

PROCEDURE | Stakeholder Interview

The opportunity to be interviewed was presented at the monthly Healthy Sprouts Maternal Child Health Coalition meeting and further communicated through the meeting minutes. All stakeholders were given the opportunity to be interviewed themselves or delegate other members of their organization. Interview timeslots were designated to be 30 minutes in length and conducted via Zoom. Participants registered through a Doodle poll and were sent a reminder two days prior to the scheduled interview. All data collected was qualitative in nature and recorded with permission of both parties. All interviews were conducted by the Project Coordinator of the MP22 grant, a Certified Health Education Specialist.

DATA ANALYSIS

Individual responses were anonymous and confidential. Only group data is available. All data was analyzed by Public Health Educators at the Erie County Health Department.

LIMITATIONS

As with all assessments, it is important to consider the findings in light of all possible limitations. If any important differences existed between the respondents and the non-respondents regarding the questions asked, this would represent a challenge to the external validity of the results (the generalizability of the results or the region). If there were little to no difference between respondents and non-respondents, then this would not be a limitation.

HEALTHY SPROUTS

The Healthy Sprouts: Maternal Child Health Coalition is an organized, multi-sector community initiative, led by the Erie County Health Department, to eliminate health disparities, improve birth outcomes and improve the health status of women, infants and children in Erie County.

OUR VISION

A community free of infant mortality.

OUR MISSION

Promote infant vitality and decrease infant mortality by improving the accessibility and quality of health services for mothers and infants in Erie County.

PROJECT AREAS



Cribs for Kids

Educating the community on safe sleep practices and providing cribs for those in need.



Preconception Health

Assessing health and social services in Erie County and increasing accessibility, quality, and availability.



Peer Support

Increasing screenings for substance use and providing resources and support for those in need.

GET INVOLVED

for more information on how to get involved in the Healthy Sprouts: Maternal Child Health Coalition, visit RootsofPrevention.com/maternal-child-health.

REPRESENTATION

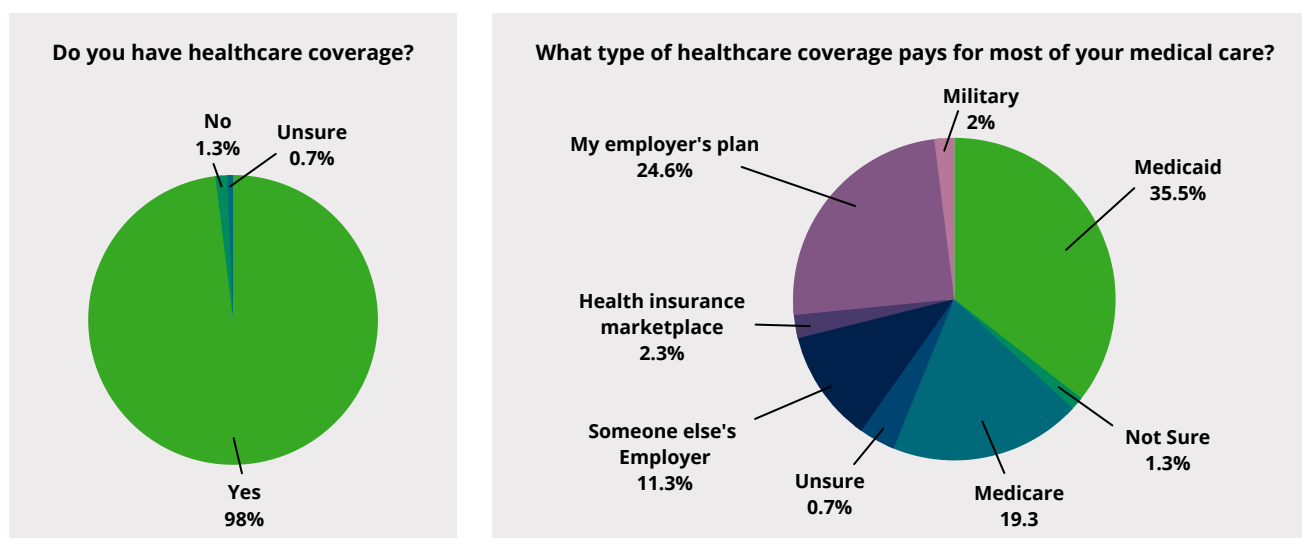
Erie County Health Department
Erie County Community Health Center
Erie County Job and Family Services
WIC of Erie and Huron County
La Leche League
Firelands Center for Women & Newborns
Firelands School of Nursing
The LCADA Way
Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services
Road to Hope
Help Me Grow
Erie Shore Network
Family Health Services
Sandusky Artisans Recovery Community Ctr.
Community Action Commission
Roots of Prevention Subcommittees:
Regional Recovery Consortium
Tobacco Action Coalition
Drug Free Communities
CHIP Steering Committee



HEALTHCARE ACCESS & UTILIZATION

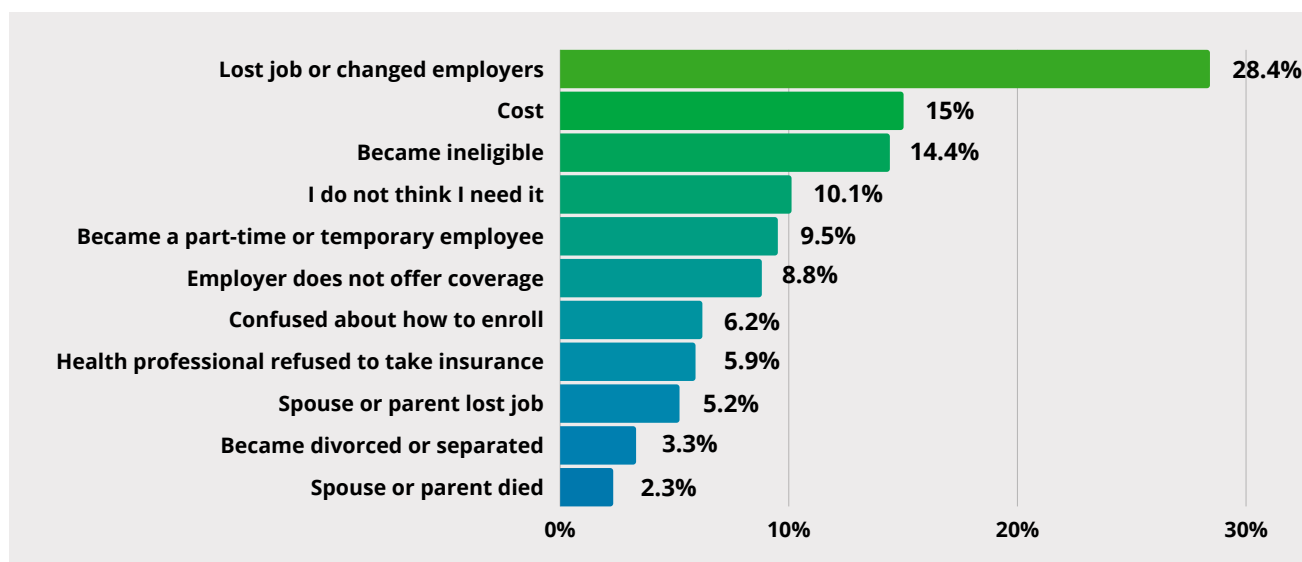
Sources of Coverage

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of women who completed the survey have some kind of health care coverage which pays for most of their medical care. Thirty-five percent (35% or n=4,055) of Erie County women with health insurance are covered by Medicaid.



Rates of Uninsurance

The 2021 Women of Childbearing Ages Health Assessment indicates that 1.3% (n=151) of women currently do not have healthcare coverage, a decrease from 2016 when 9% of women reported being uninsured. Erie County women who have been without healthcare coverage at any point in their lifetime indicated one or more of the following reasons for not having healthcare coverage:



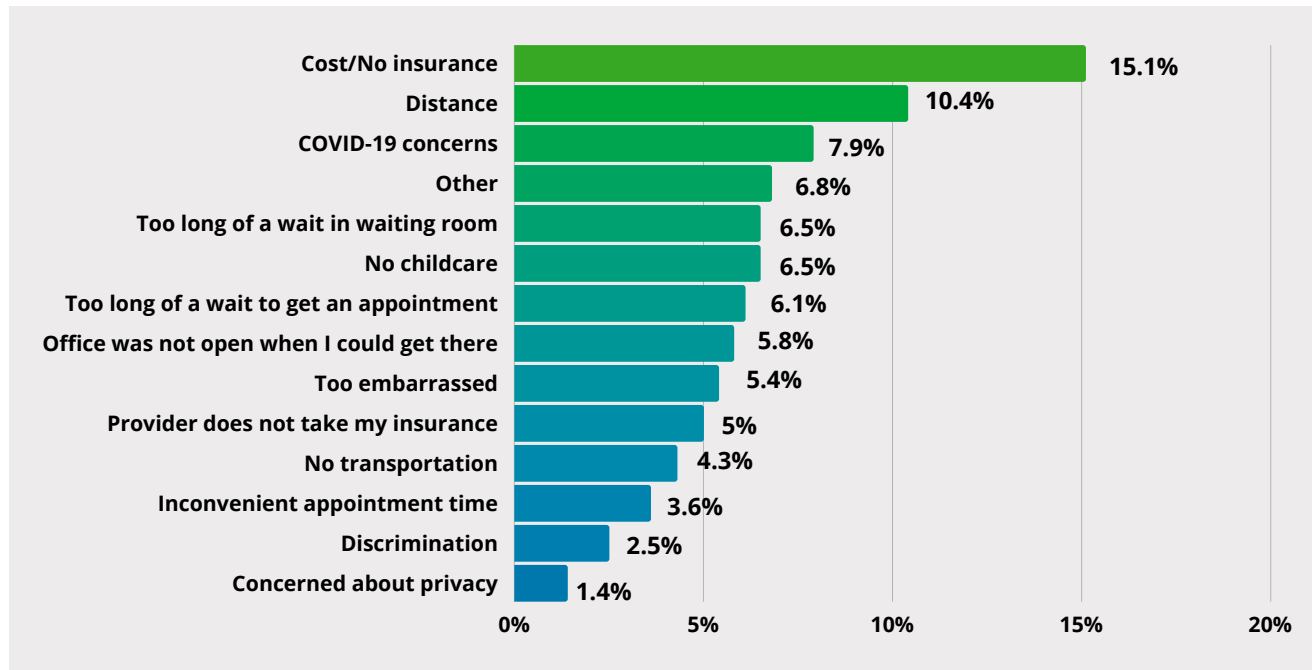
Barriers to Service

Forty-six percent (46% or n=5,329) of women of childbearing ages experienced one or more barrier(s) to receiving medical care within the past 12 months. Women who needed medical care in the past 12 months reported one or more of the following barriers:



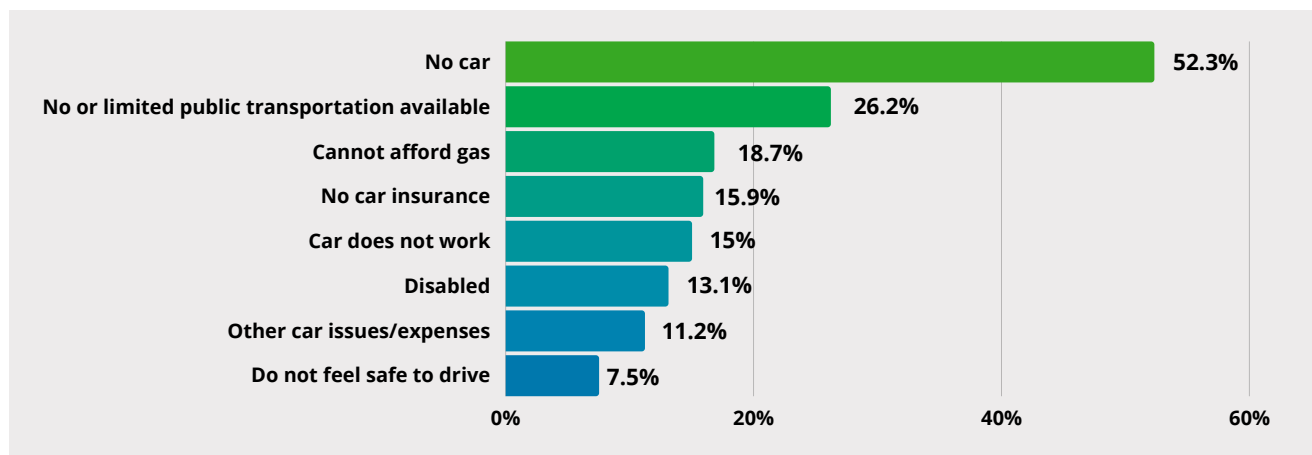
DID YOU KNOW?

The percentage of uninsured women has decreased from 9% in 2016 to just 1.3% in 2021¹.



Transportation Barriers

Thirty-five percent (35% or n=4,055) of women experienced transportation barriers in Erie County. Women who experienced transportation barriers reported the following transportation barriers:



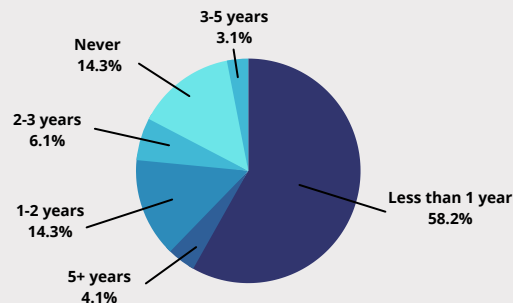
WOMEN'S HEALTH

Women's Health Screenings

Eighty-four percent (84%) of women have had a clinical breast exam at some point in their lifetime, and 57% had this screening within the past year. Fourteen percent (14% or n=1,621) of women do not know if or when they last had a clinical breast exam.

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of Erie County women have had a Pap smear within their lifetime, and 62% reported that they have had one in the past year.

How long has it been since your last clinical breast exam?



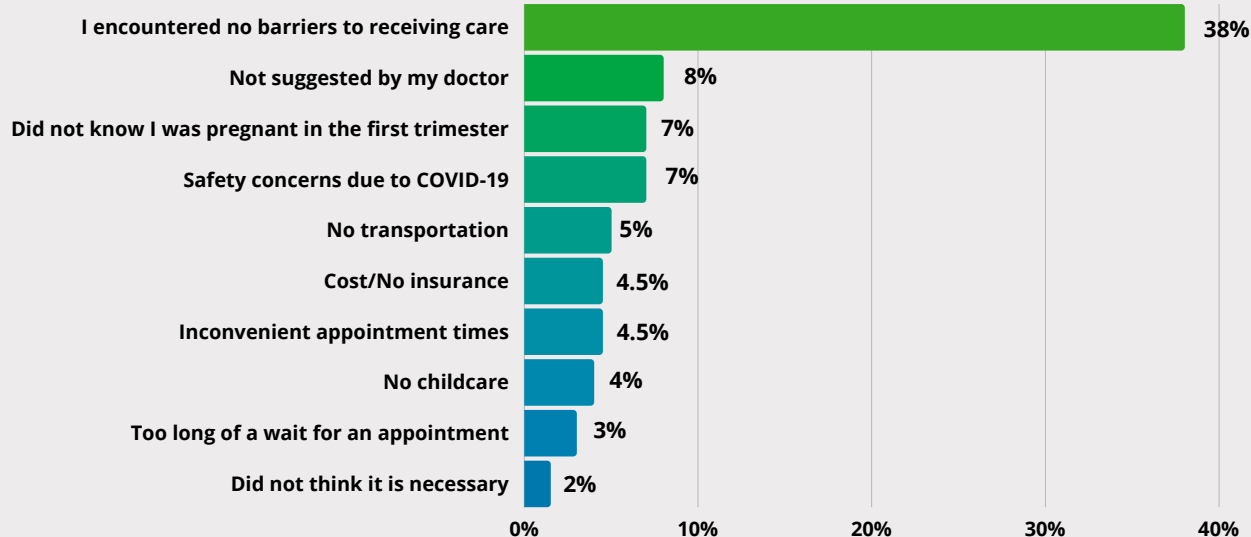
DID YOU KNOW?

First trimester prenatal care should occur between 6-12 weeks of pregnancy, and sets the stage for a healthy pregnancy and birth for both Mom and baby.

Prenatal care

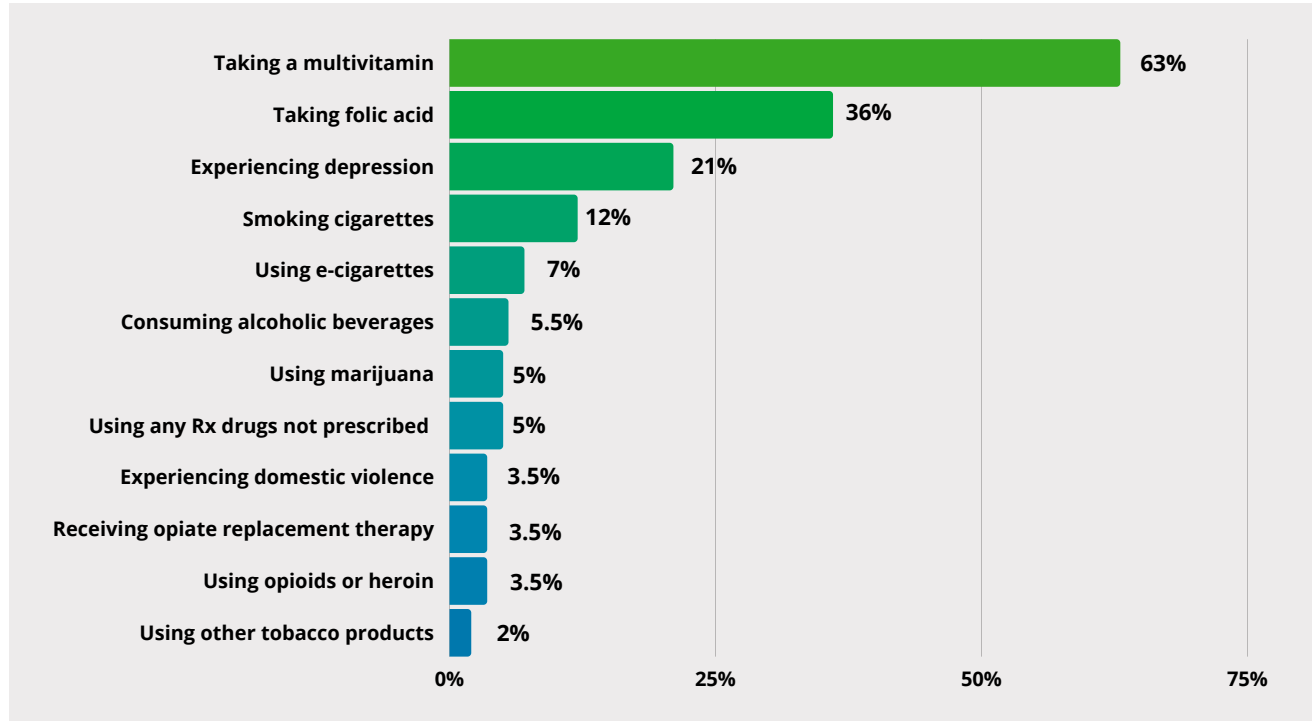
Thirty-two percent (32%) of the 307 women surveyed were currently pregnant. Ninety-five percent (95%) of women who were currently pregnant had received first trimester prenatal care, and ninety-one percent (91%) planned to breastfeed their baby.

One-hundred percent (100%) of the women who had not received prenatal care during their first trimester of pregnancy reported that they had experienced barriers to receiving care. Additionally, seventy-two percent (72%) of women who received pre-natal care, still experienced one or more barriers to care. Women reported the following barriers to receiving prenatal care during the first trimester:



Pregnancy Health Behaviors

Sixty-three percent (63%) of women who had been pregnant within the past five years had taken a multivitamin during their pregnancy, and 59% of women surveyed know that folic acid lowers their chance of having a low birth weight baby. Women who are currently pregnant reported one or more of the following health behaviors during their current pregnancy:



Pregnancy Outcomes

Thirty-four percent (34%) of women who had been pregnant in the past five years delivered their baby preterm (defined as before 37 weeks), and twenty-six percent (26%) delivered a low birthweight baby (less than 5lbs. 8oz).

DID YOU KNOW?

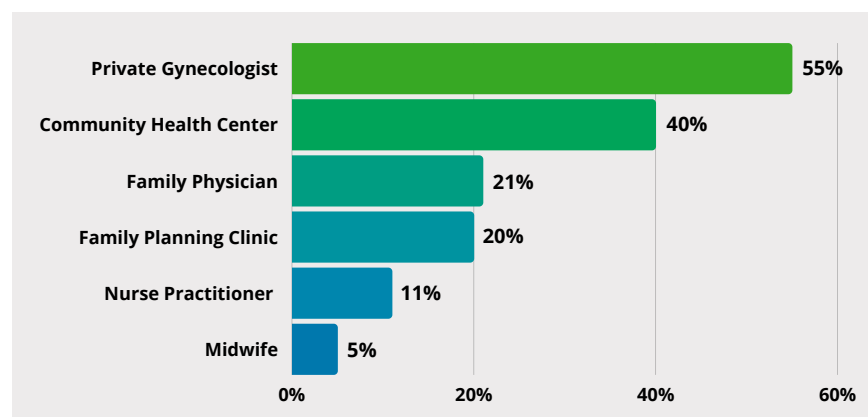


The Erie County
Community Health
Center offers
Women's Health services

**Call to schedule
an appointment
567-867-5174**

Healthcare Providers

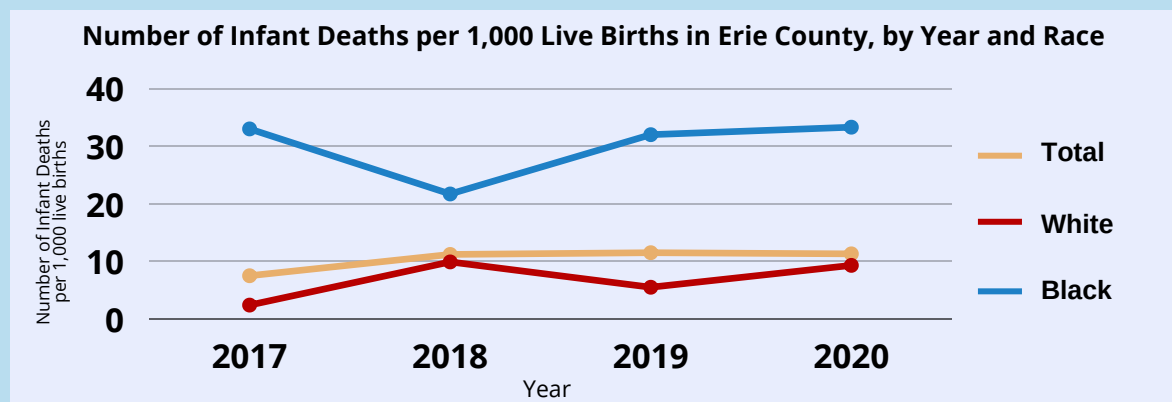
More than half (55%) of women reported receiving women's health services from a private gynecologist. Women reported receiving care from one or more of the following types of providers:



ERIE COUNTY INFANT MORTALITY REVIEW

The Erie County Health Department facilitates a Child Fatality Review Board under Ohio Revised Code, section 307.621, with the purpose of decreasing the incidence of preventable child deaths³. The *Erie County Child Fatality Review Board* reviews the deaths of all children under eighteen years of age who were residents of Erie County at the time of their death.

From 2017-2020, the *Erie County Child Fatality Review Board* investigated a total of 21 infant (age <12 months) deaths⁴. More than half (52%) of all Erie County infant deaths from 2017-2020 occurred in black infants⁴.



According to data from the *Ohio Public Health Information Warehouse*, the four-year (2017-2020) overall infant mortality rate in Erie County was 10.3 per 1,000 live births; however, black babies (27.6 per 1,000 live births) were more than four times as likely not to reach their first birthday as white babies (6.7 per 1,000 live births)⁵.

This trend is consistent with statewide data from the *2019 Ohio Infant Mortality Report* which found that racial and ethnic disparities in rates of preterm birth and infant mortality continue to increase throughout the State of Ohio⁶.

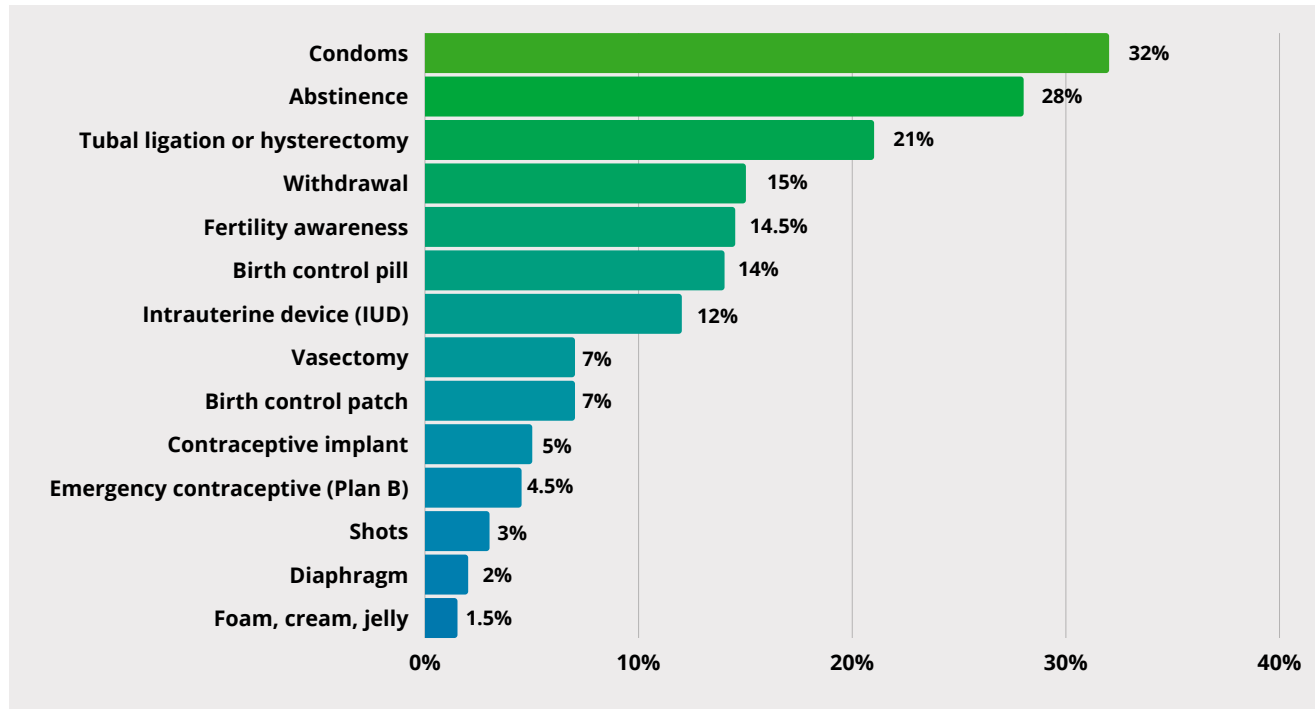
The Erie County Health Department has designated maternal and infant health a priority area of focus in the *2020-2022 Erie County Community Health Improvement Plan*. Priority objectives include: reducing pre-term births and reducing infant mortality, with a priority on black women and babies⁷.

Strategies to achieve improved health outcomes for women and infants include improving care coordination and access to well-woman care through a Community Health Worker utilizing the Certified Pathways Community HUB model, tobacco cessation programs tailored for pregnant women, improving cultural competency of the workforce in underserved communities, and expanding outreach and advocacy to maintain or increase enrollment in federal food assistance programs⁷.

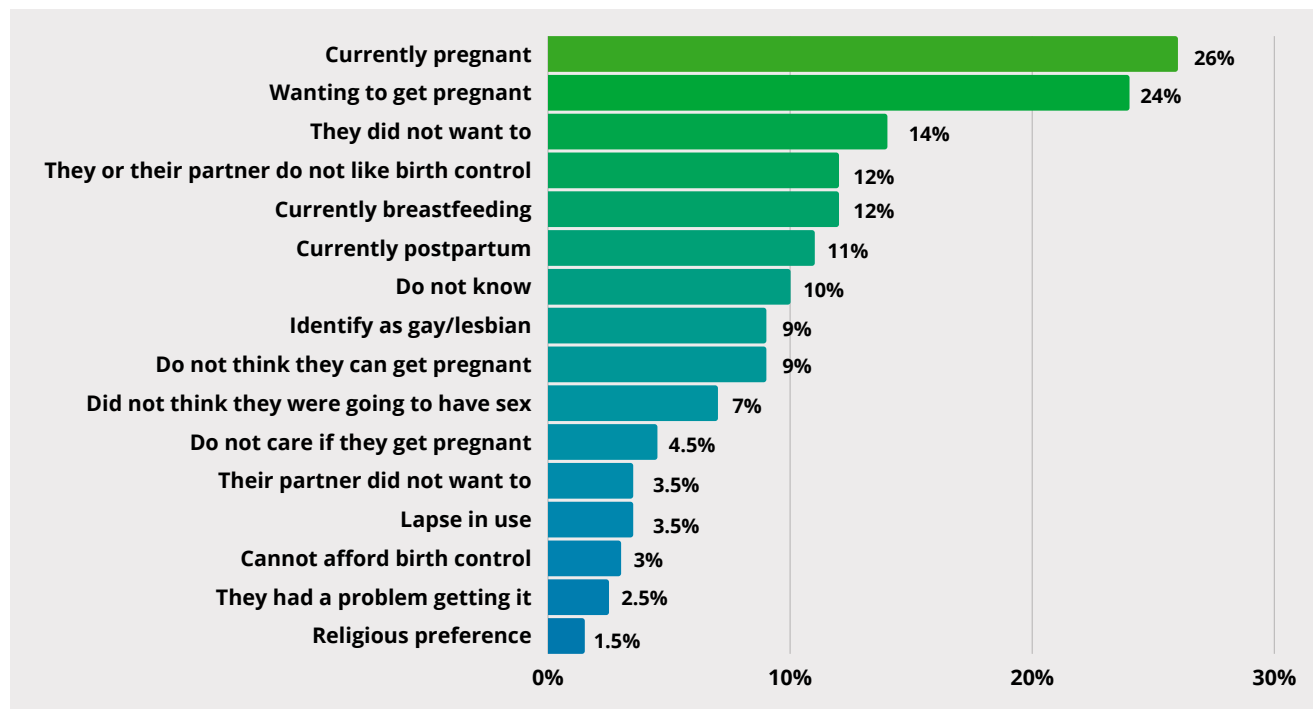
Visit the [Roots of Prevention website](#) to learn more about the *2020-2022 Erie County Community Health Improvement Plan*, and find out how you can get involved.

Pregnancy Prevention

Women using birth control reported using one or more of the following methods of birth control:



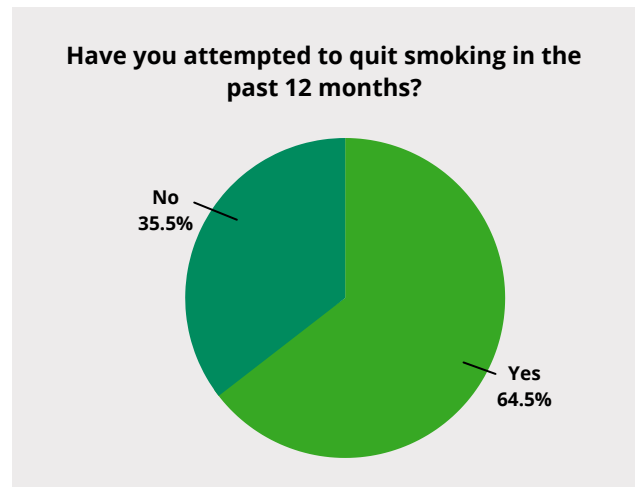
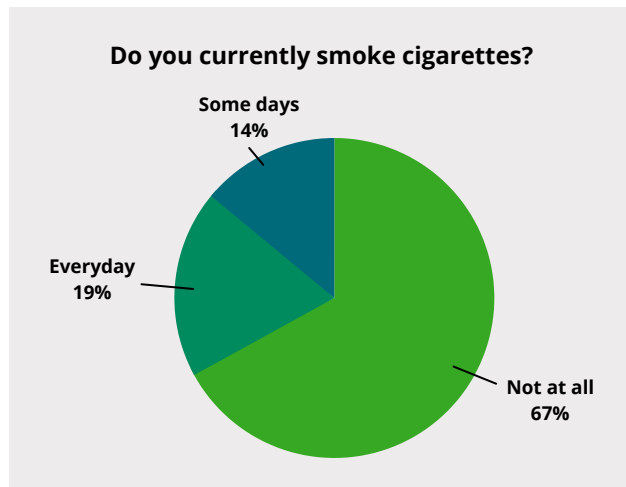
Erie County women of childbearing ages who are not currently using birth control reported one or more of the following reasons:



SUBSTANCE USE

Tobacco Use and Exposure

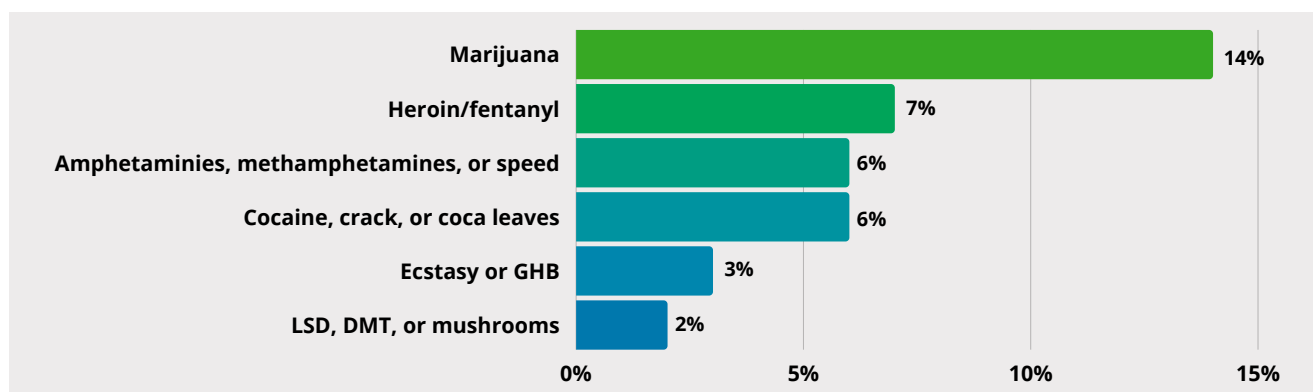
Half (50% or n=5,793) of women reported smoking at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime and one-third (33% or n=3,823) currently smoke some days (14%) or everyday (19%). Of those women who are current smokers, 64.5% had attempted to quit smoking in the past 12 months.



Sixty-four percent (64%) of women report that smoking is not allowed anywhere inside their home, and 9% report that smoking is not allowed with their children around. Ten percent (10%) of women report that there are no rules about smoking in their home or smoking is allowed anywhere inside their home.

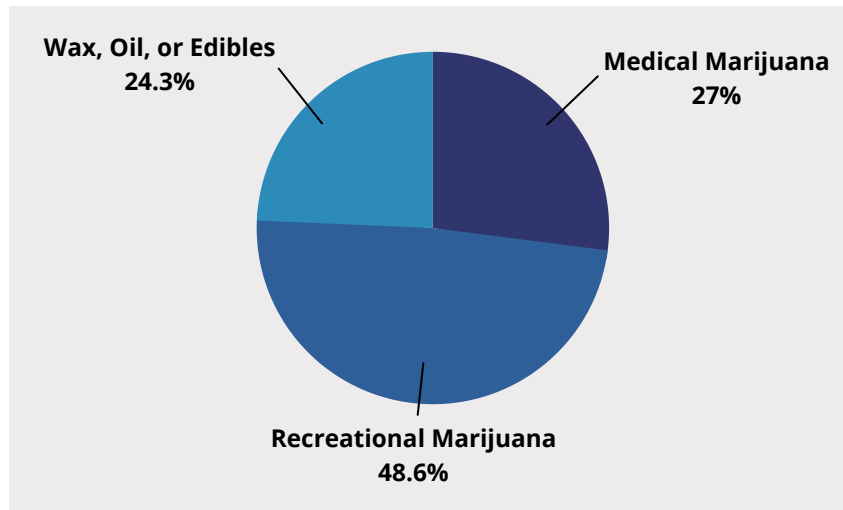
Drug Use

Within the past six months, women reported use of the following substances:




Marijuana

Women who use marijuana, reported using it in the following ways:



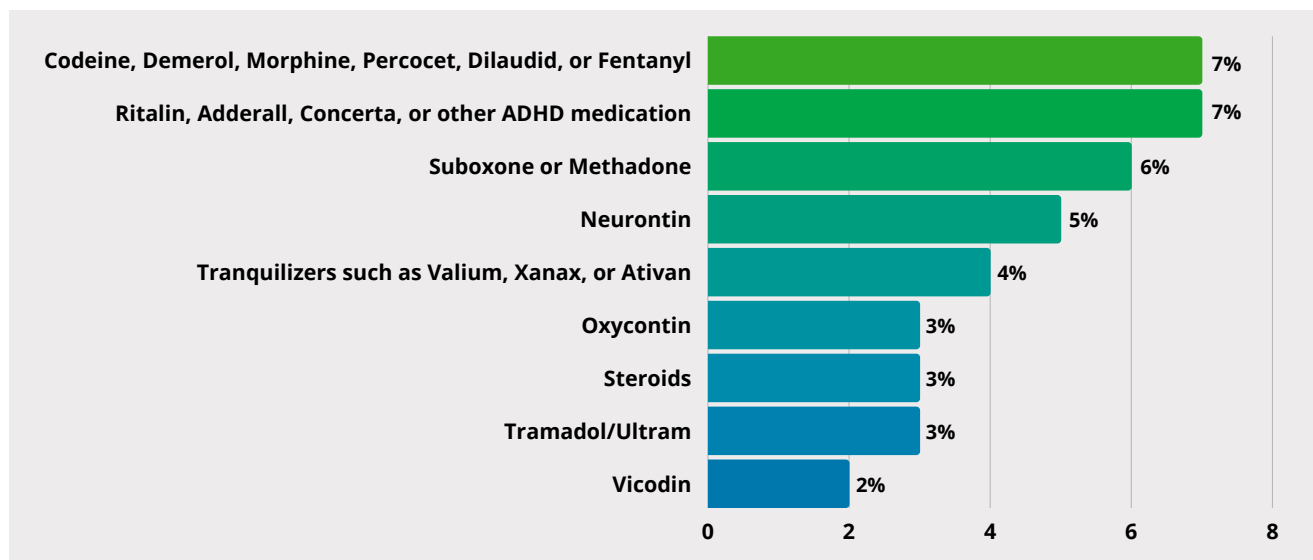
DID YOU KNOW?



The Ohio Tobacco Quit Line offers free nicotine replacement patches or gum for up to 8 weeks.
Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW

Prescription Drug Misuse

Twenty-two percent (22% or n=2,549) of women had used medication not prescribed for them or they took more than prescribed to feel good, high and/or more active or alert during the past six months. Of all women surveyed, the following misuse was reported:



Alcohol Consumption

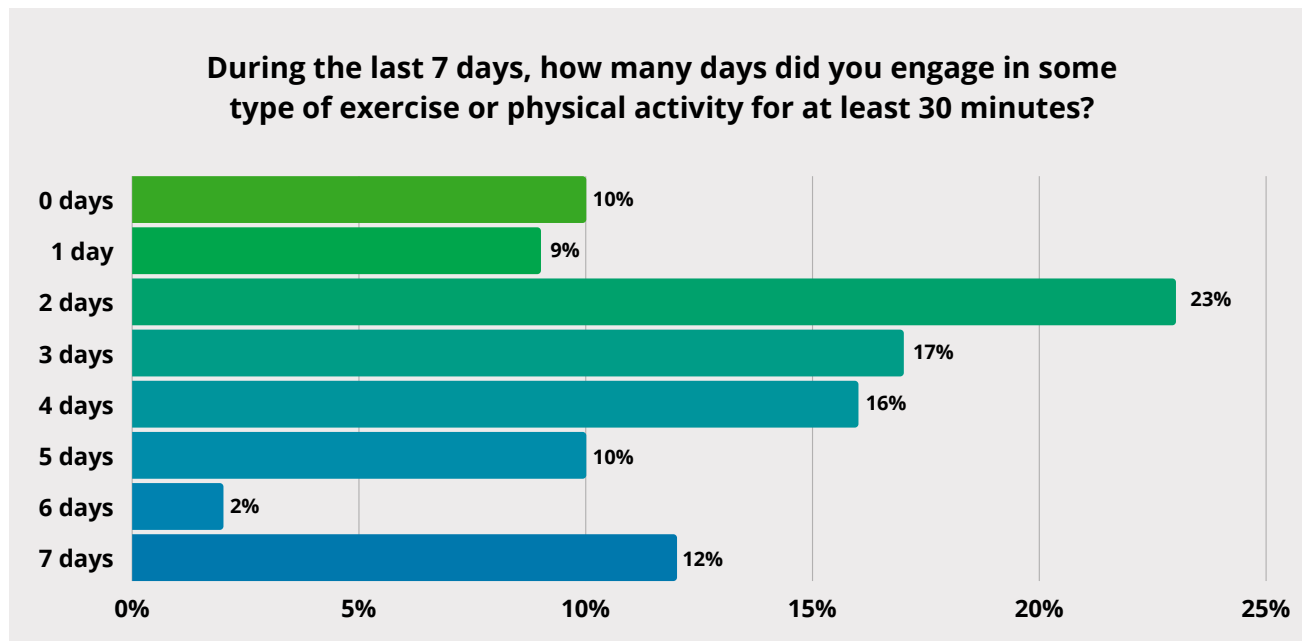
Nearly half (48%) of Erie County women had at least one alcoholic drink in the past month. On average, women drank on 2.5 of the last 30 days. More than one-quarter (26% or n=3,012) of women reported that they binge drank in the past month, which is defined as having four or more drinks on an occasion⁸.



NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

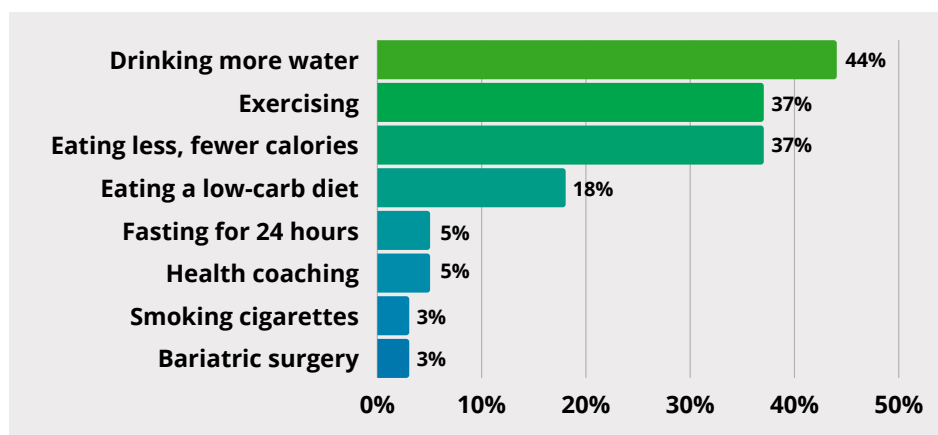
Physical Activity

Twenty-six percent (26%) of women are getting the recommended 150 minutes per week of physical activity per week, and 55% of women are exercising for at least 30 minutes three times per week.



Weight Loss

Sixty-one percent (61%) of women were taking measures to lose or keep from gaining weight. Erie County women reported using one or more of the following strategies to lose weight over the past 30 days:



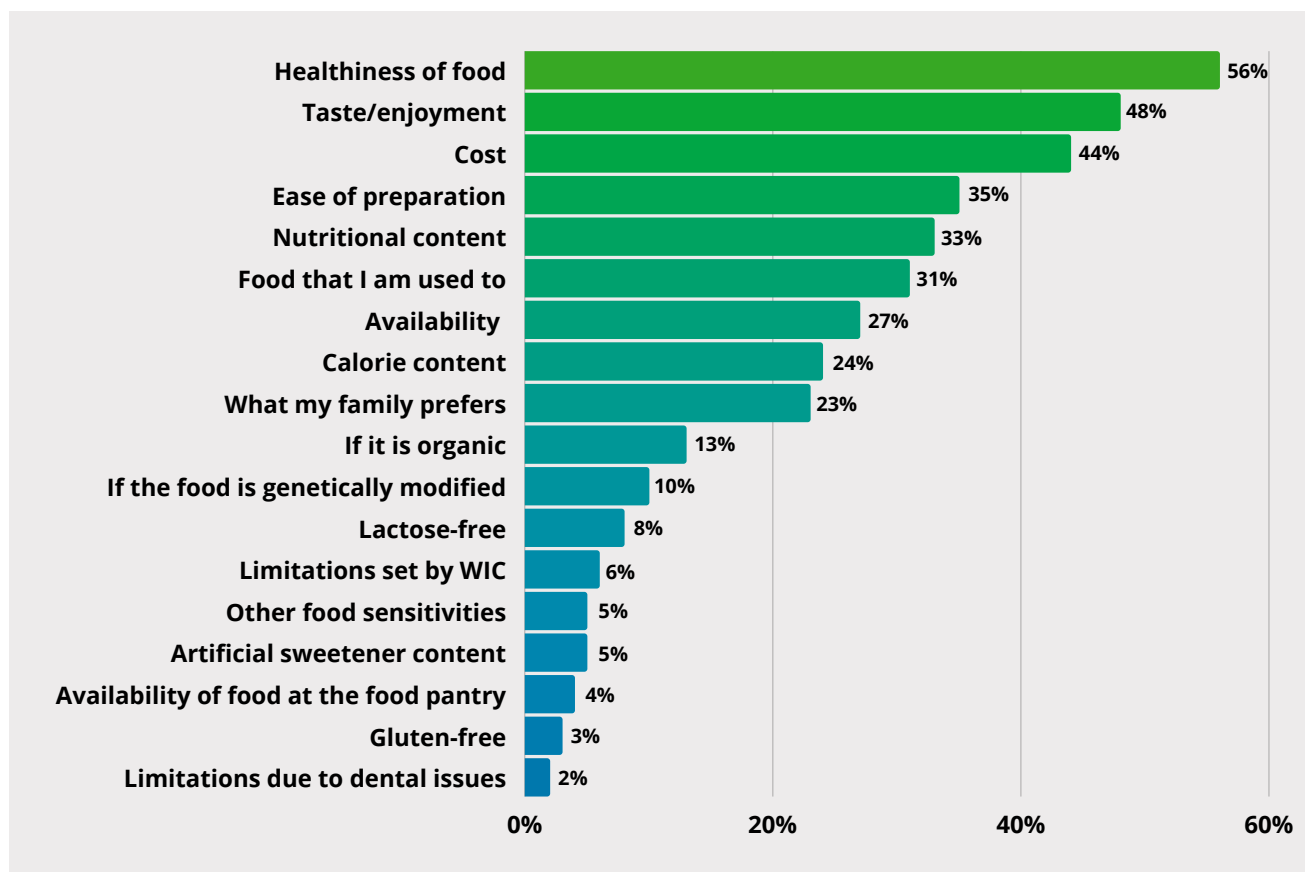
DID YOU KNOW?



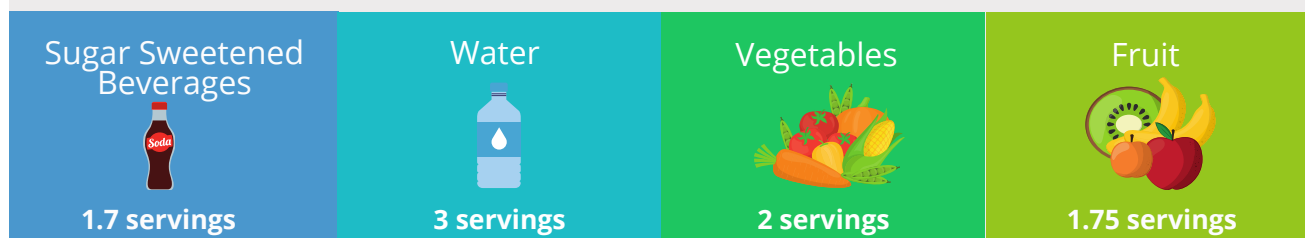
For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 to 300 minutes each week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity⁹.

Nutrition

Half (50% or n=5,793) of women reported consuming 0-1 servings of fruit per day, and 40% reported consuming 0-1 servings of vegetables per day. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of women consume at least one serving of sugar-sweetened beverages per day. The perceived healthiness of food was the highest determining factor (56%) for consumption. Women reported that the types of food they eat are determined by one or more of the following factors:



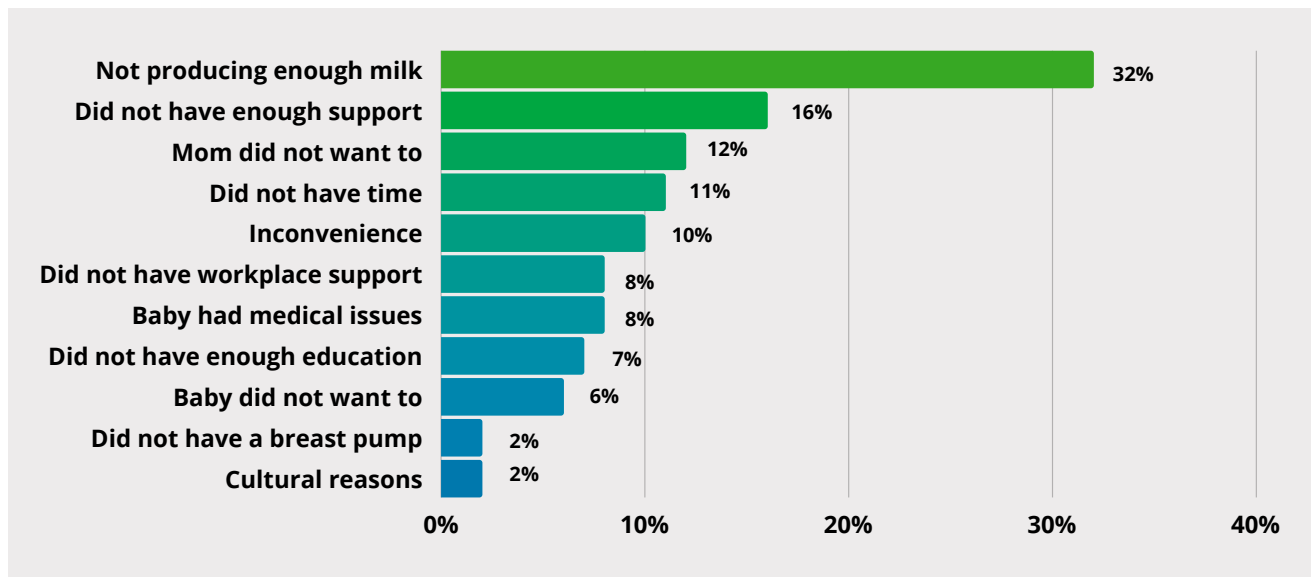
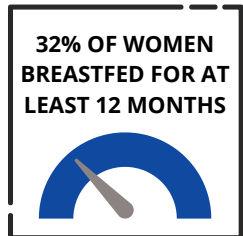
The average Erie County woman consumes the following number of servings each day:



PARENTING

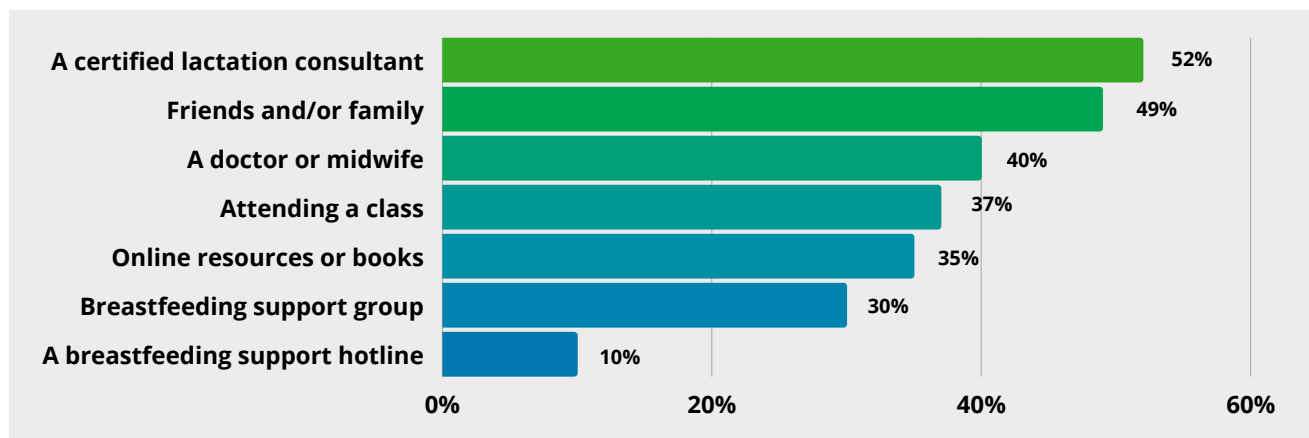
Breastfeeding

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies are breastfed for at least 12 months¹⁰. Fifty-three percent (53%) of women have children under the age of five in their home. Nearly one-third (32%) of women breastfed their child for at least one year. Mothers who breastfed for less time reported one or more of the following reasons why:



Breastfeeding Education

Of mothers with children under the age of 5, only 13% never sought education related to breastfeeding. Women who sought education or resources for breastfeeding support reported using one or more of the following resources:



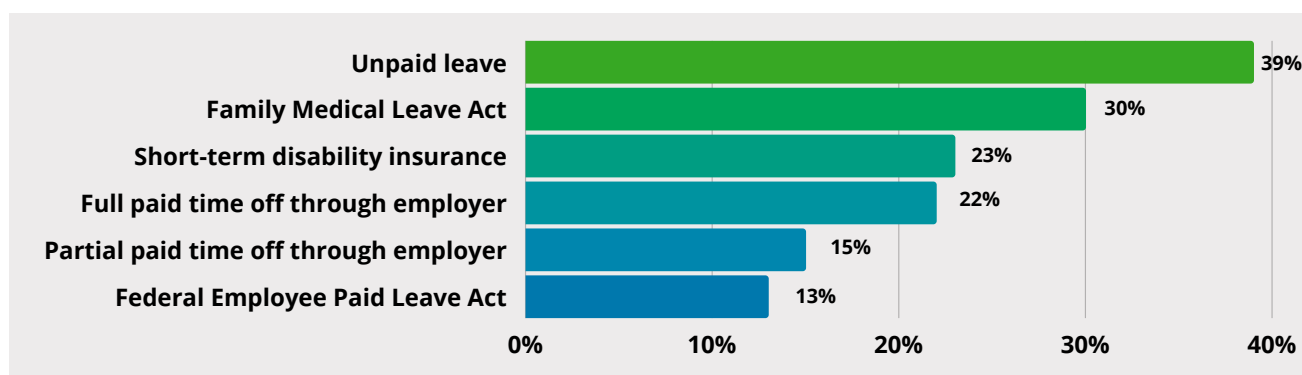
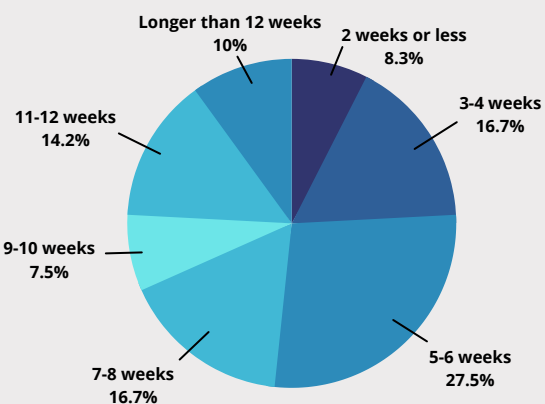
Maternity Leave

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 6 to 8 weeks, at a minimum, of parental leave after the infant's birth¹¹.

Fourteen percent (14%) of women were not employed before or after the birth of their child and 13% did not return to work after giving birth. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of Erie County moms reported taking leave for eight weeks or less following the birth of their child.

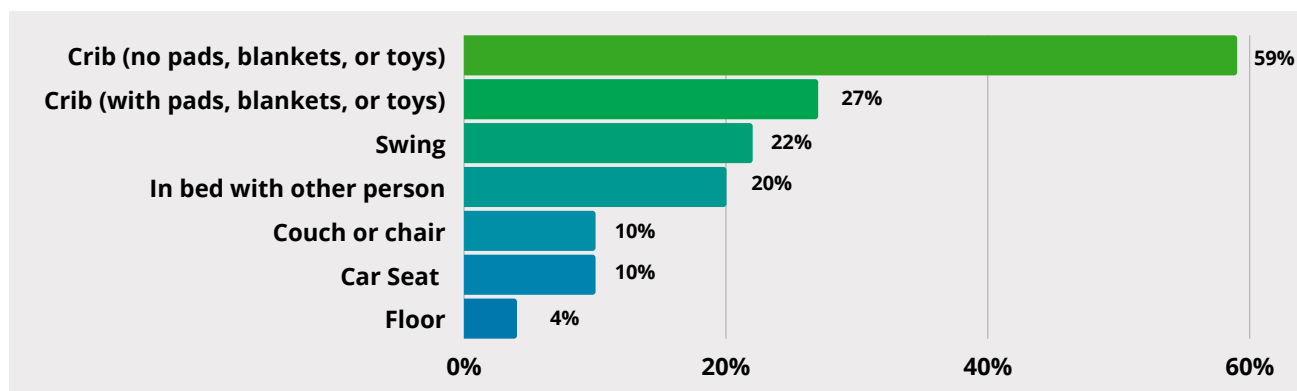
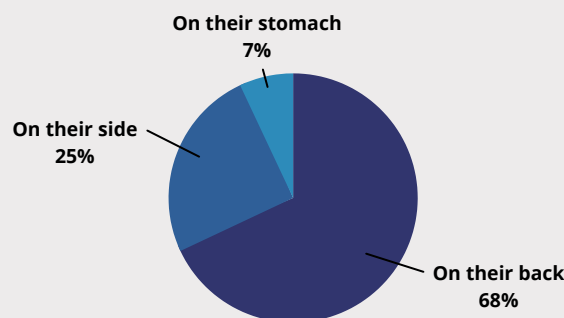
Working moms were eligible for one or more of the following types of maternity leave:

Number of weeks of maternity leave taken



Safe Sleep

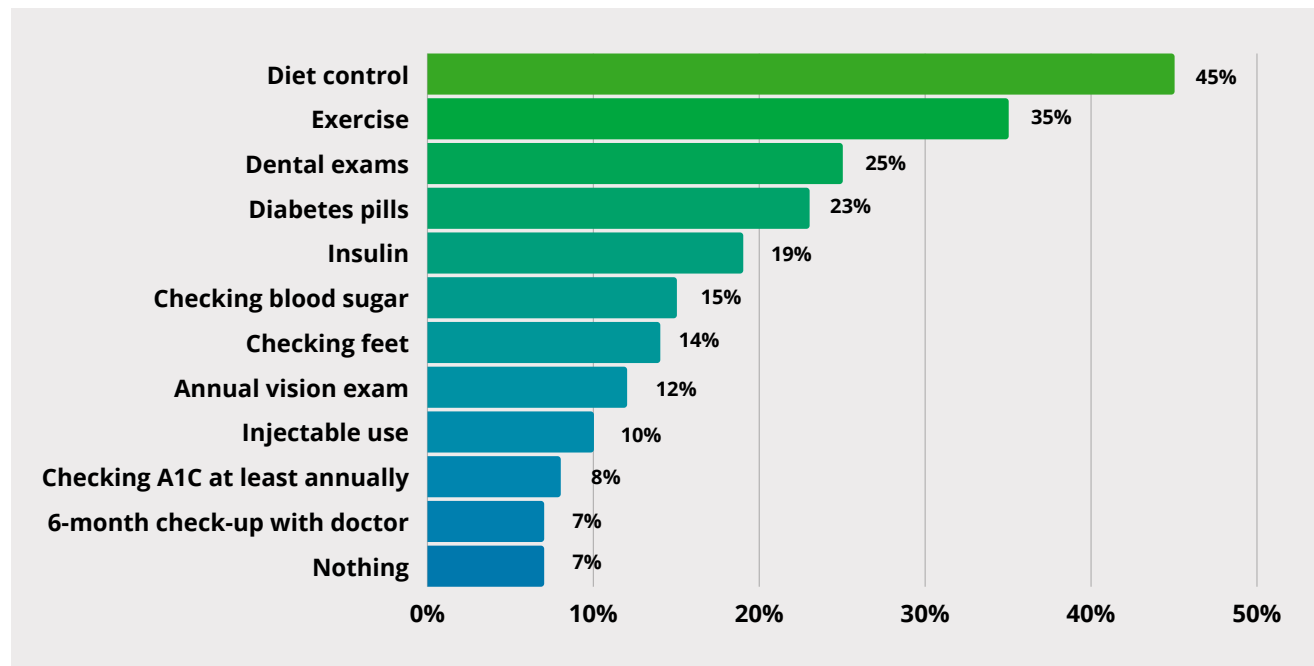
According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, infants should always sleep alone, on their back, and in a crib¹². Of those with children under the age of five, 68% put their infant to sleep on their back. The majority of women, 68%, reported placing their child(ren) to sleep on their back as an infant, followed by 25% on their side, and 7% on their stomach. Women reported their babies were placed to sleep in the following locations:



CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

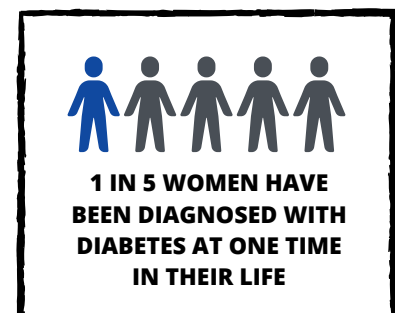
Diabetes

Approximately one-fifth (20% or n=2,317) of women have been told they had diabetes at some point in their lifetime and another 5% were borderline. Borderline or prediabetes is defined as having a higher than normal blood sugar level but which does not meet the diagnostic criteria for a diagnosis of diabetes¹³. Women who were diagnosed with diabetes reported using one or more of the following to treat their diabetes:



High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

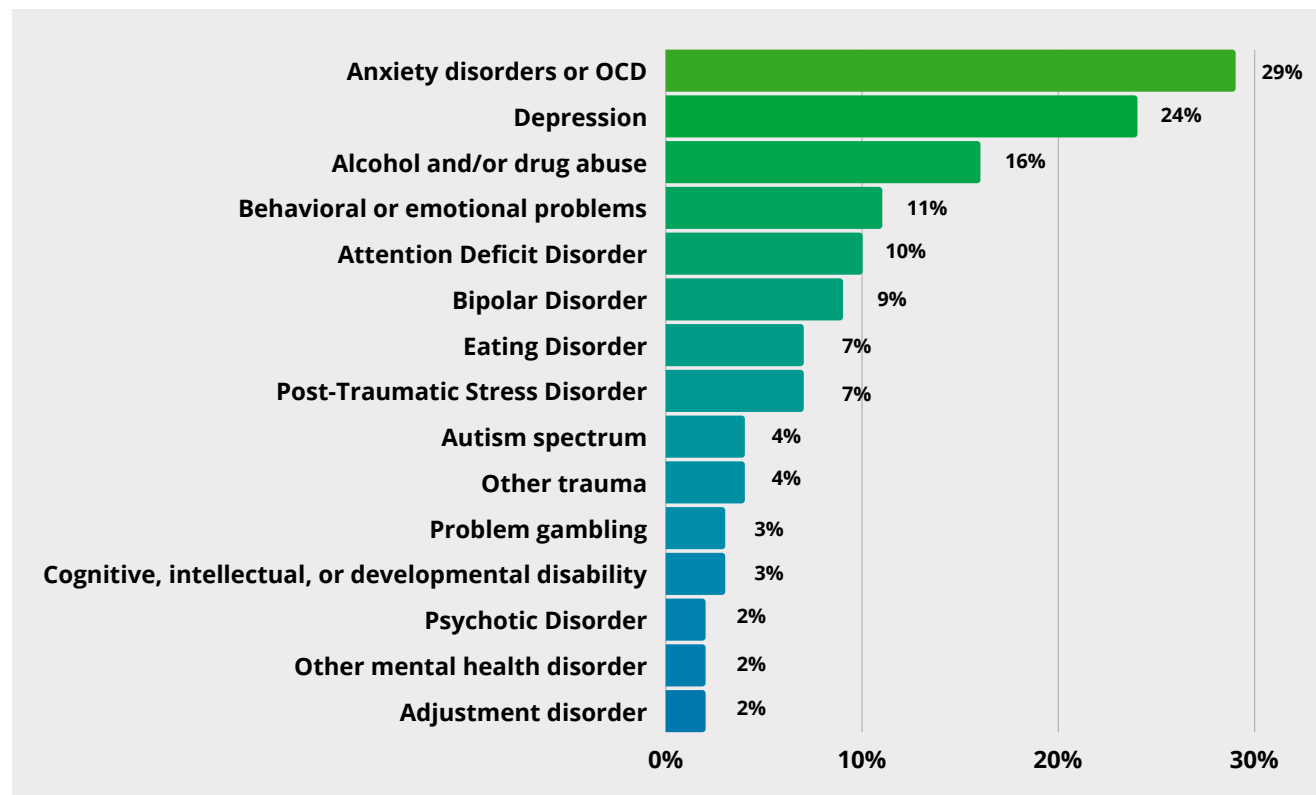
Nearly one-quarter (23.2% or n=2,688) of women had been diagnosed with high blood pressure at some point in their life. Approximately half of those diagnosed were during pregnancy. An additional 5.2% were told they were pre-hypertensive or bordering on meeting the diagnostic criteria for hypertension.



MENTAL HEALTH

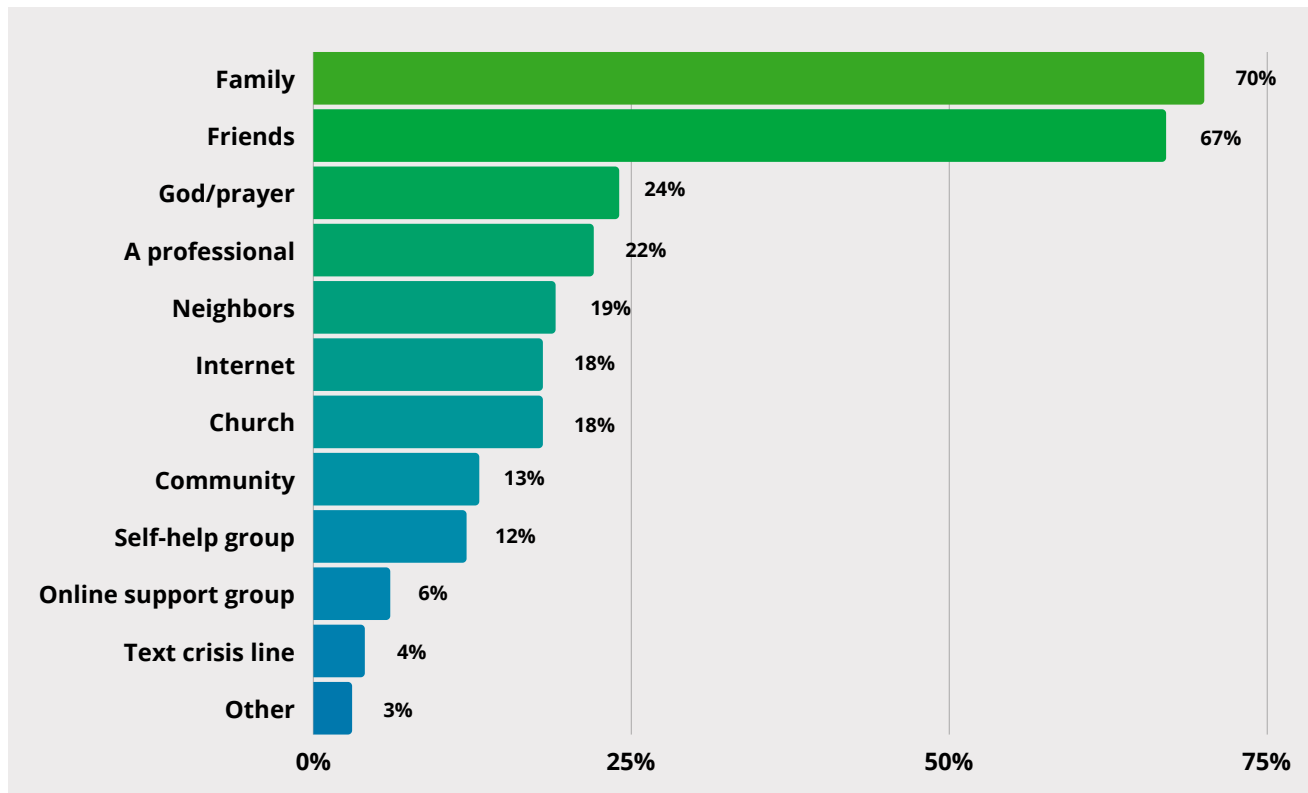
Diagnosis

Almost half (47% or n=5,445) of women in Erie County have been diagnosed with or were being treated for a mental health or substance use disorder in the past year. Anxiety disorders and depression were the two most common conditions reported. Women experiencing a mental health condition in the past year reported being diagnosed or treated for one or more of the following conditions:



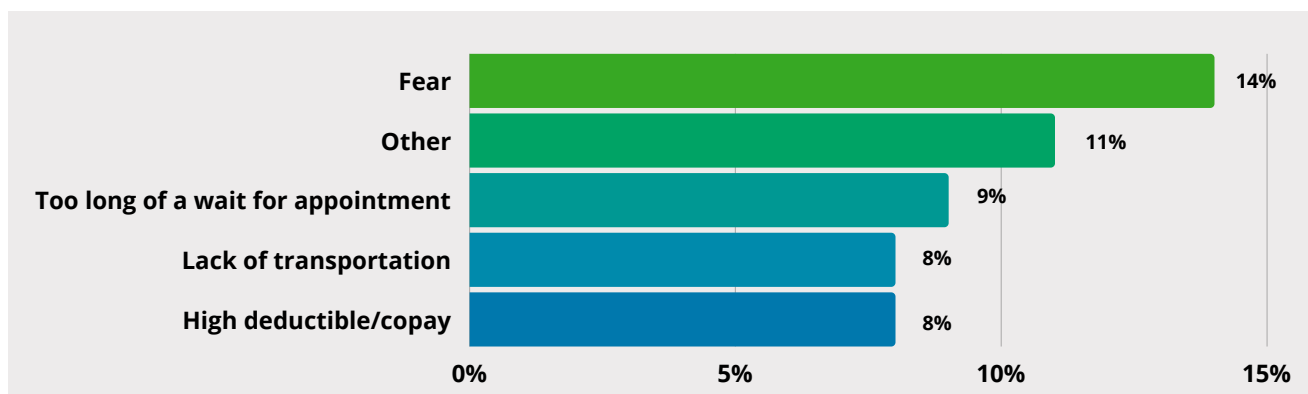
Support

Approximately three-quarters (77%) of women receive the social and emotional support they need. The remaining either do not get the social and emotional support they need (6%) or report not needing support and they can handle it on their own (17%). Women who were surveyed reported using one or more of the following sources for social or emotional support:



Barriers

Approximately one-quarter (24% or n=2,780) of women reported using a program or service to help with anxiety, depression, or other emotional problems, and 37% reported that such services or programs are not needed or necessary. Fear was the highest reported reason (14%) for not seeking supportive services. Women reported one or more of the following as reasons they did not utilize a program or service to help with anxiety, depression, or other emotional problems:



SOCIAL CONTEXT & SAFETY

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Sixty-one percent (61% or n=7,067) of women reported experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and perpetration, lifelong health, and access to opportunities¹⁴. Women reported experiencing one or more of the following Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- Lived with someone who was depressed, mentally ill or suicidal (21.1%)
- Lived with someone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic (28.5%)
- Lived with someone who used illegal street drugs, or who abused prescription medications (22.2%)
- Lived with someone who served time or was sentenced to serve time in a prison, jail, or other correctional facility (14%)
- Their parents became separated or were divorced (27.4%)
- Their parents were not married (11%)
- Their parents or adults in the home slapped, hit, kicked, punched or beat each other up (13.2%)
- A parent or adult in their home hit, beat, kicked, or physically hurt them (10.7%)
- A parent or adult in the home swore at them, insulted them, or put them down (20.3%)
- Someone at least 5 years older than them, or an adult, touched them sexually (11.8%)
- Someone at least 5 years older than her, or an adult, tried to make her touch them sexually (7.9%)
- Someone at least 5 years older than her, or an adult, forced her to have sex (3.6%)

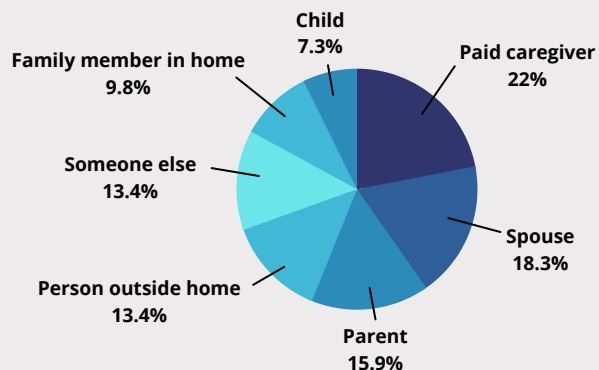


1 in 5 women experienced abuse in the past year

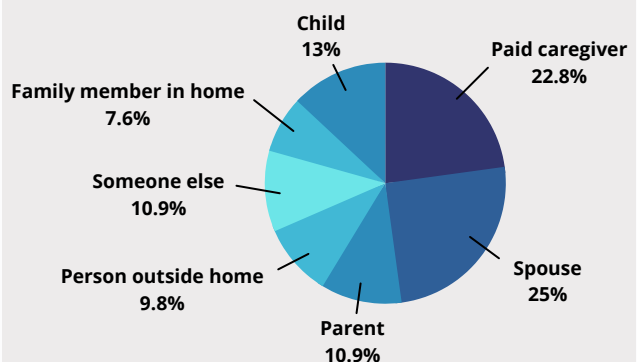
Abuse

Nineteen percent (19% or n=2,201) of women have been threatened and been victims of abuse in the past 12 months. Women reported that a paid caregiver was most likely to threaten abuse (22%) and a spouse was most likely to abuse them (25%).

Women were threatened by:



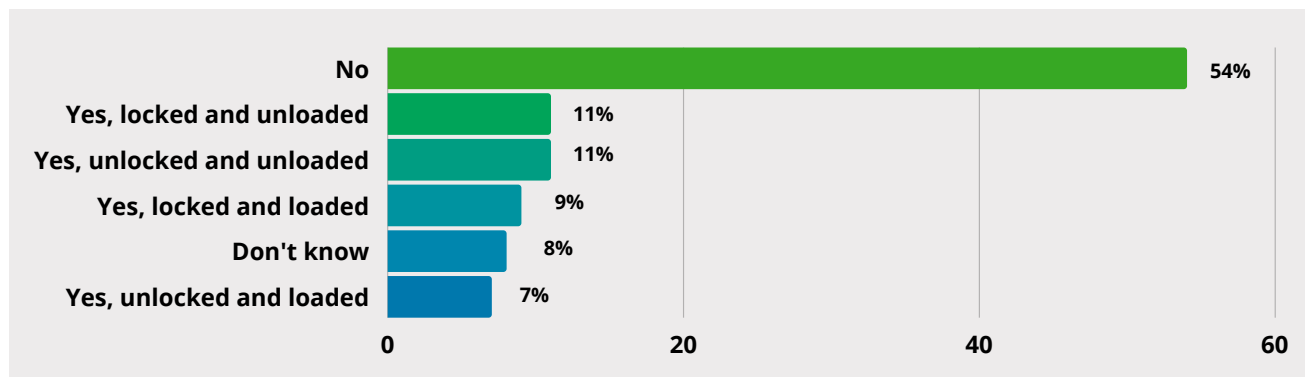
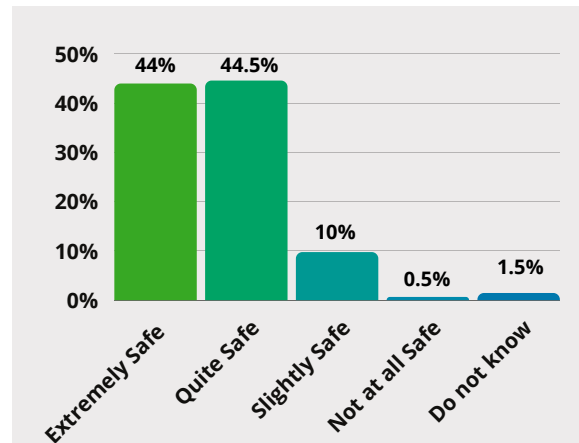
Women were abused by:



Neighborhood Safety

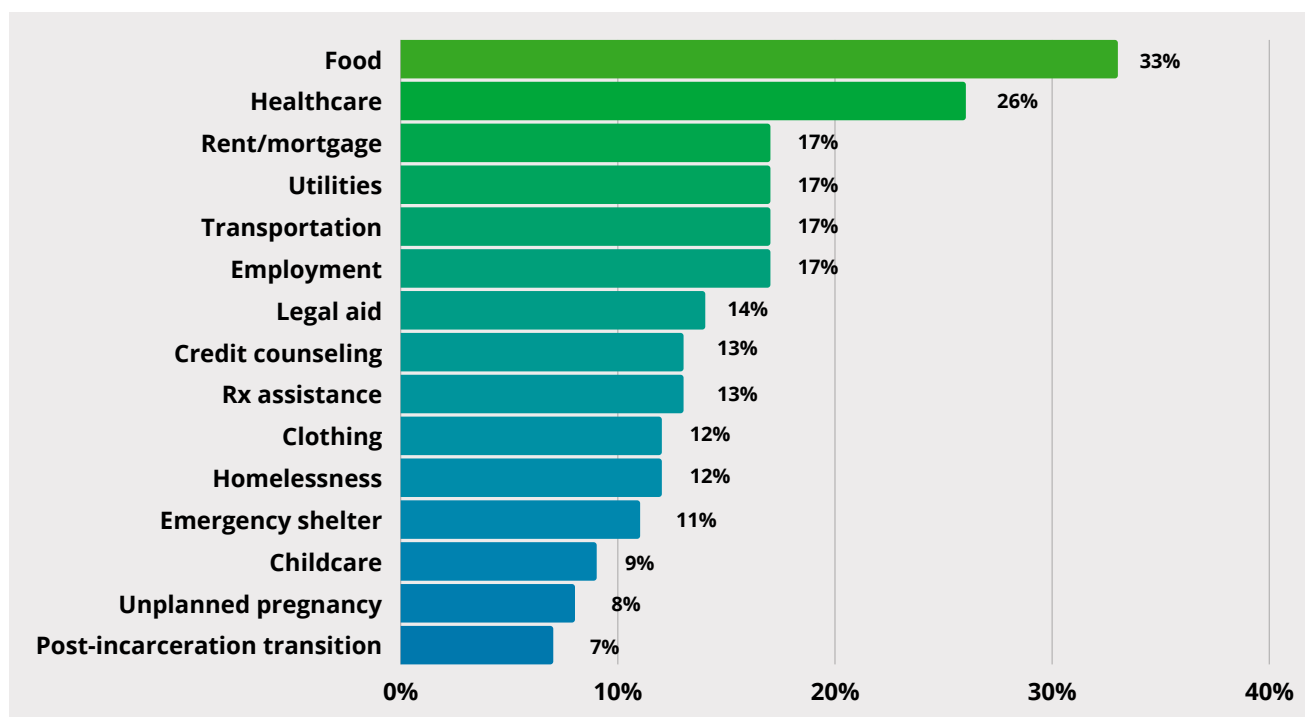
Eighty-eight percent (88%) of women feel extremely or quite safe from crime in their neighborhood.

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of women have firearms in their home, 7% are unsure. When asked if any firearms are kept in or around the home including the garage, outdoor storage areas, or in cars, trucks or other motorized vehicles, women reported the following:



Public Assistance

Erie County women reported seeking and receiving assistance for the following:



PERCEPTIONS

Preconception Health

Preconception health or inter-conception health refers to the health of women during their reproductive years, between the ages of approximately 18-44, before or in-between pregnancies¹⁵.

Helping women address their social, physical, and psychological needs before they get pregnant or in between pregnancies is the best way to increase their overall health and ensure the safe delivery of a healthy baby¹⁵.

Approximately half (51%) of women have heard the phrase "preconception health." When women were asked what it means to be healthy before becoming pregnant, they used the following words to explain what it means to them:



WHEN ASKED...
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE HEALTHY BEFORE YOU GET PREGNANT?
WOMEN SAID:



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Zip Code	
44870 Sandusky	36.81%
44839 Huron	12.70%
44870 Bay View	10.42%
44089 Vermilion	10.42%
44824 Castalia	6.51%
44846 Milan	5.21%
44814 Berlin Heights	3.91%
43448 Kelleys Island	2.61%

Marital Status	
Married	49.84%
Never married	28.01%
A member of an unmar	9.12%
Divorced	6.19%
Separated	3.58%
Widowed	2.93%

Age	
18-24	14.33%
25-34	59.61%
35-44	23.78%

Race	
White	81.76%
Black or African Americ	7.17%
American Indian/Alaska	4.56%
Biracial	2.28%
Asian	1.63%
Native Hawaiian/other	1.63%
South American	0.33%
Mexican American	0.33%

Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic or Latino	77.52%
Hispanic or Latino	21.17%

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