

Substance Use During Pregnancy

DESCRIPTION

Tobacco smoking during pregnancy has long been associated with premature birth and low birth weight in babies. It is also linked to birth defects and infant death, as well as miscarriage or fertility problems in women.¹ Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a range of effects that can occur in someone whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. The prevalence of FASD is as high as 2-4 percent in some populations. FASD is considered the most commonly identifiable cause of developmental delays and intellectual disabilities in children- and the most underrecognized. About half of all childbearing age women in the U.S. report consuming alcohol within the past month, and nearly eight percent of women said they continued to consume alcohol during pregnancy. A recent study found increased risk of infant growth delay even when a pregnant woman had only one alcoholic drink per day.²

Drug use during pregnancy can cause premature birth, heart defects, infections including hepatitis or HIV, low birth weight or Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) in newborns. About one in 20 women nationally report using street drugs such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana, or prescription drugs recreationally during their pregnancy. Babies born to women who use drugs may have problems later in life, including learning and behavior problems, slower-than-normal growth, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).³ Babies delivered with NAS stay in hospitals for 2-3 weeks longer than other babies.⁴

HOW WE ARE DOING

During 2011-2015, 11 percent of Ramsey County women reported tobacco use during or just before pregnancy. The percentage during 2008-2011 was lower at 8.3 percent.⁵

BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020: Increase abstinence from cigarette smoking among pregnant women.

U.S. Target: 98.6 percent⁶

DISPARITIES

There are disparities in tobacco use among pregnant women in Ramsey County. American Indian women used tobacco most often (39 percent) followed by 14 percent of African-American women. Five percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, eight percent of Hispanic, and 13 percent of white women reported cigarette use during pregnancy.⁵

RISK FACTORS

Disparities among women who smoke cigarettes suggests that tobacco industry marketing campaigns have historically targeted racial minorities and women.⁷

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Information to note

- During 2011-2015, 39% American Indian, 14% African-American, 13% of white women, 8% Hispanic, and 5% Asian/Pacific Islander women used tobacco during pregnancy.
- Ramsey County is not meeting the Healthy People 2020 target for tobacco use during pregnancy.

¹ Tobacco Use and Pregnancy. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/tobaccousepregnancy/index.htm>. Accessed December 2, 2017.

² AAP Says No Amount of Alcohol Should be Considered Safe During Pregnancy. American Academy of Pediatrics. <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/AAP-Says-No-Amount-of-Alcohol-Should-be-Considered-Safe-During-Pregnancy.aspx>. Published October 19, 2015. Accessed December 2, 2017.

³ Street Drugs During Pregnancy. March of Dimes. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/street-drugs-and-pregnancy.aspx>. Accessed December 2, 2017.

⁴ Opioid Use Disorder in Pregnancy. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. <https://www.acog.org/About-ACOG/ACOG-Districts/District-II/Opioid-Use-Disorder-in-Pregnancy> Accessed December 2, 2017.

⁵ Minnesota Department of Health. (2017). Vital Records. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/osr/>.

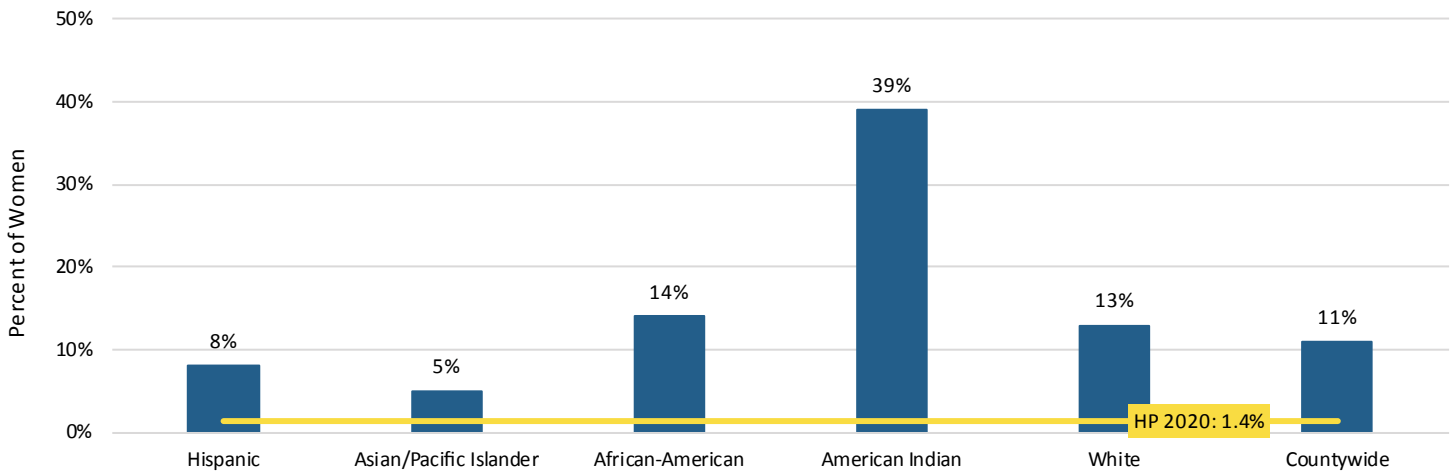
⁶ Maternal, Infant, and Child Health. Healthy People 2020. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/maternal-infant-and-child-health/objectives>. Accessed February 9, 2017.

⁷ Giovino GA, et al. Differential trends in cigarette smoking in the USA: Is menthol slowing progress? *Tob Control*. 2015;24:28-37. <https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/24/1/28>. Accessed August 2018.

WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

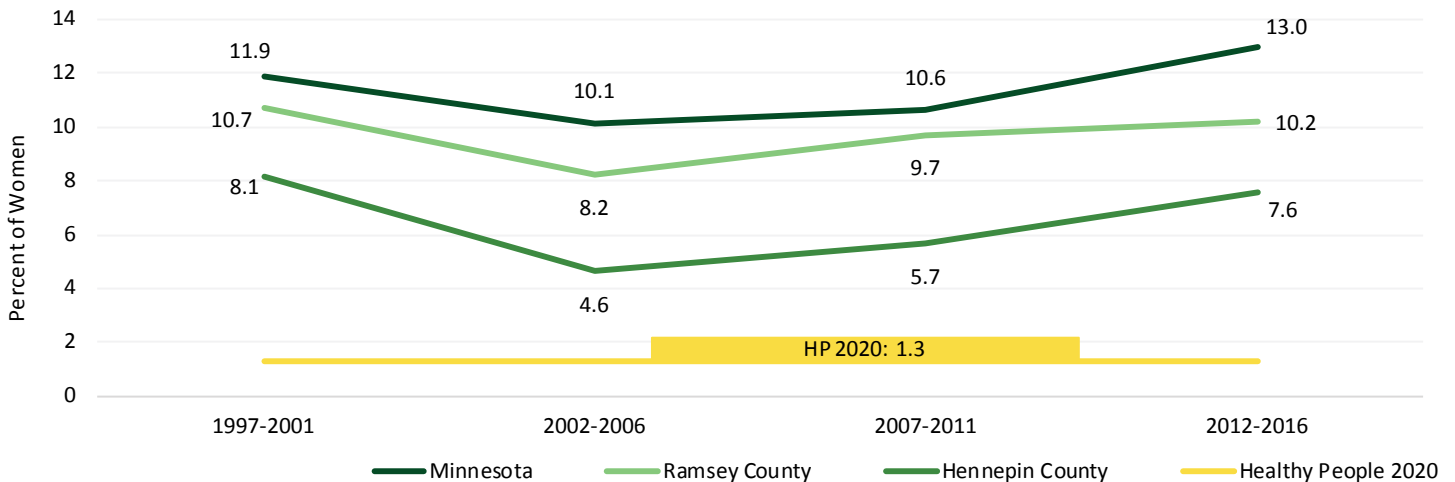
Reports of pregnant women using drugs or alcohol are taken by Ramsey County Children’s Intake screeners. The reports are all referred to the Ramsey County Mother’s First Program. Mother’s First is an intervention and recovery program staffed by an interdisciplinary team of public health nurses, social workers and Licensed alcohol and drug counselors for women who are pregnant and are using drugs or alcohol. Additionally, the nurse family home visiting delivered by Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health discusses tobacco, alcohol and substance use with pregnant and parenting women, offering them support for quitting, health and motivational resources.

Tobacco Use During Pregnancy, Ramsey County, 2011-2015



Source: Minnesota Department of Health Vital Records.⁸

Tobacco Use During Pregnancy Over Time



Source: Minnesota Department of Health.⁹

⁸ Minnesota Department of Health Vital Records.

⁹ Source: Minnesota Department of Health. Minnesota State, County, and Community Health Board Vital Statistics Trend Report, 1997-2016. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/trends/index.html>. Accessed February 22, 2018.