

What is MOMS?

The MOMS Partnership® is a program that has successfully reduced depressive symptoms among overburdened, under-resourced pregnant women, moms, and other adult female caregivers in a family (hereafter, “mothers”). Launched in New Haven in 2011 out of Yale, MOMS brings mental health within reach of these women, literally meeting them where they are. Elevate is a policy lab at Yale that is scaling MOMS to and with new communities in concert ultimately with government partners.

What is the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment?

The Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment is a survey that the MOMS Partnership co-creates for mothers in a community to share **what they want, what they need, and what goals they have for themselves and their family**. The Bridgeport MOMS Goals and Needs Assessment was distributed locally in the Spring of 2019 to local mothers via community partners, and the data collected from the survey was analyzed in the Summer of 2019. Elevate analyzed the data of **135 eligible responses**.

Who could Bridgeport MOMS serve?

Of the mothers who completed the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment:

- Many self-reported **low levels of social support**, with 53% reporting a poor level of social support.
- Many were screened as **at risk for depression**, with 38.1% of respondents receiving a score on the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), a depressive symptom screener, of 16 or greater. CES-D score greater than or equal to 16 indicates that an individual is at risk for depression.
- Many reported experiencing **difficulties accessing treatment** for mental and emotional health, including not being able to get an appointment soon enough, not having transportation, and not having sufficient insurance coverage for the treatment.

(1) Non-Hispanic Black or African-American and (2) Hispanic White, Black, or African-American were the most commonly reported races and ethnicities. Respondents reported an average age of **37.8 years** and caring for an average of **1.9 children**.

What hopes and goals do Bridgeport mothers hold?

Mothers who completed the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment were asked what their **goals for the next month and for the next year** were. The most popular responses fell into the following themes:

- *Securing employment or finding a job*
- *Moving or changing housing situation*
- *Improving finances and paying bills or debts*
- *Taking a vacation*
- *Beginning, continuing, or graduating school*
- *Taking care of their health*
- *Improving their parenting*

What needs do Bridgeport mothers voice?

- **65.3%** screened positive for **food insecurity** and **60.7%** screened positive for **housing insecurity**.
- **55.7%** reported that there was a time in the last 12 months where they were **not able to pay mortgage or rent on time**.

- **57.0%** reported ever receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) benefits and **53.3%** reported ever receiving SNAP for Women, Infants, and Children (**WIC**) benefits.
- **57.1%** of those with children in diapers reported **diaper need**, the inability to provide a sufficient supply of diapers to change their child as often as they would like.
 - ▶ Mothers of children in diapers report **borrowing diapers or money** from family or friends and **stretching the diapers that they have** to meet their child’s diaper needs.
- **31.5%** of respondents reported ever wanting help with their emotional health but not receiving it.
 - ▶ **19.3%** of respondents reported experiencing **more than one barrier** to receiving treatment for their emotional health.
- **36.2%** of respondents reported that at least six months had passed since they did something for themselves that they enjoy, and **20%** of respondents did not remember the last time that they did something for themselves that they enjoy.

The needs of these mothers may impact other aspects of their lives, as suggested by statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) associations found between:

- Mother’s experience of **food insecurity** AND her **depressive symptoms**
- Mother’s experience of **diaper need** AND her **depressive symptoms**
- Mother’s experience of **any barrier to receiving health care** AND her status of being **at risk for depression** (CES-D score ≥ 16)
- Mother’s **participation in treatment** for stress, sadness, depression, anxiety, or any other emotional or mental health conditions AND her **employment** status

What are the next steps for the Bridgeport MOMS PartnershipSM?

- Through the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment and through conversations with community partners, Elevate at Yale sees an **opportunity for MOMS’ services in Bridgeport** to assist mothers in receiving the support and resources that they need. **70.5% of mothers who completed the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment responded that they would be interested in receiving more information about Bridgeport MOMS services in the future.**
- The findings of the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment will strongly inform the delivery of the intervention. Elevate will use the findings—as well as feedback from community partners and stakeholders—to tailor **a forthcoming pilot of MOMS services in Bridgeport planned for 2020.**
 - ▶ For example, mothers named **their church, their home, the community organization ABCD, the grocery store, and work** as places where they feel **safe and supported.**
- A pilot of MOMS services in Bridgeport can ultimately serve as **proof of concept** for a government partner to help sustain the intervention in the community so many mothers can access these supports to help reach their full potential.

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