

## What is MOMS?

The MOMS Partnership<sup>®</sup> 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 NYC MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment?

The 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 NYC MOMS Goals and Needs Assessment was distributed in the Summer of 2019 to local mothers in Brownsville in Brooklyn, NYC, and the data collected from the survey were analyzed in the Summer of 2019. Elevate analyzed data from **163 eligible responses**.

## Who can NYC MOMS serve?

Of the eligible mothers who completed the NYC MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment:

- Many reported **low levels of social support**, with 32.9% reporting a low level of social support.
- Many were screened as **at risk for clinical depression**, with 55.7% of respondents receiving a score on the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), a depressive symptom screener, of 16 or greater. A CES-D score of 16 or greater indicates that an individual is at risk for clinical depression.
- Many reported experiencing **difficulties accessing treatment** for mental and emotional health, including the clinic wasn't open when could get there, not being able to get an appointment soon enough, experiencing long wait times in offices, and not having insurance coverage for services.
- Many, **48.5%**, identified as Black of African. Respondents reported an average age of **32.2 years** and caring for an average of **1.8 children**.

## What hopes and goals do Brownsville mothers hold?

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

- *Secure or improve employment*
- *Find a better living situation*
- *Facilitate their children's learning*
- *Become more financially stable*
- *Find reliable and affordable childcare*
- *Enter/finish school*
- *Spend more time with their children*
- *Adopt healthier habits*

## What needs do Brownsville mothers voice?

- **66.2%** screened positive for **food insecurity**, and **35.6%** screened positive for **housing insecurity**.
- **35.7%** reported that there was a time in the last 12 months where they were **not able to pay their mortgage or rent on time**.

- **52.8%** reported ever receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) benefits. **30.1%** reported ever receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (**TANF**) benefits.
- **61.9%** 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.
- **28.8%** of respondents reported ever wanting help with their emotional health but not receiving it.
  - ▶ **59.6%** of respondents who wanted help with mental health but did not receive it experienced **more than one barrier** to receiving treatment.
- **17.4%** of those with children aged 5 and under reported that they read with their children every day, and **55.5%** of respondents with children aged 5 and under reported that they would be very likely to read to their children if free books were made more available to them.

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 status of being **at risk for depression** (CES-D score  $\geq 16$ )
- Mother’s experience of **any transportation barrier** **AND** her status of being **at risk for depression** (CES-D score  $\geq 16$ )
- Mother’s **participation in treatment** for stress, sadness, depression, anxiety, or any other emotional or mental health conditions **AND** her **hours worked**

### What are the next steps for the NYC MOMS Partnership<sup>SM</sup>?

- Through the NYC MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment and through conversations with community partners, Elevate at Yale sees an **opportunity for MOMS’ services in Brownsville** to assist mothers in receiving the support and resources that they need. **One of every two respondents indicated that they would be interested in receiving more information about NYC MOMS Partnership in the future.**
- The findings of the NYC 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 Brownsville planned for 2020.**
  - ▶ For example, mothers named **their church, their grocery store, Family Dollar, Dollar Tree, their beauty salon, their library, and their laundromat** as places where they feel **safe and supported.**
- A pilot of MOMS services in Brownsville 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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