

Vermont PRAMS Data Brief

Domestic Abuse – part 2 Outcomes, Behaviors & Mental Health

This is a report on the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), a survey conducted on a sample of Vermont women with live births since 2001. This report includes data from 2004-2008.

Included in the survey are questions about domestic abuse before, during and after pregnancy. Mothers were asked if they were physically hurt by a husband, partner, ex-husband or ex-partner before, during and after pregnancy. Additionally, for the time periods during and after the most recent pregnancy, there are questions asking about other threats to personal safety. This report examines the responses to these domestic abuse questions across a variety of maternal and child health indicators. The exact wording for the questions is included at the end of this report. These questions were not asked of women under 20 years of age.

Pregnancy Intention and Prenatal Care Entry

- Women who reported being physically hurt by a husband, ex-husband, partner or ex-partner before or during their most recent pregnancy were more than twice as likely to report their pregnancy as unintended.
- Women reporting abuse were significantly less likely to begin prenatal care in the first trimester and receive an adequate number of prenatal care visits.
- Women who report domestic threats to their personal safety during pregnancy were also significantly more likely to report their pregnancy was unintended and not receive timely or adequate prenatal care.

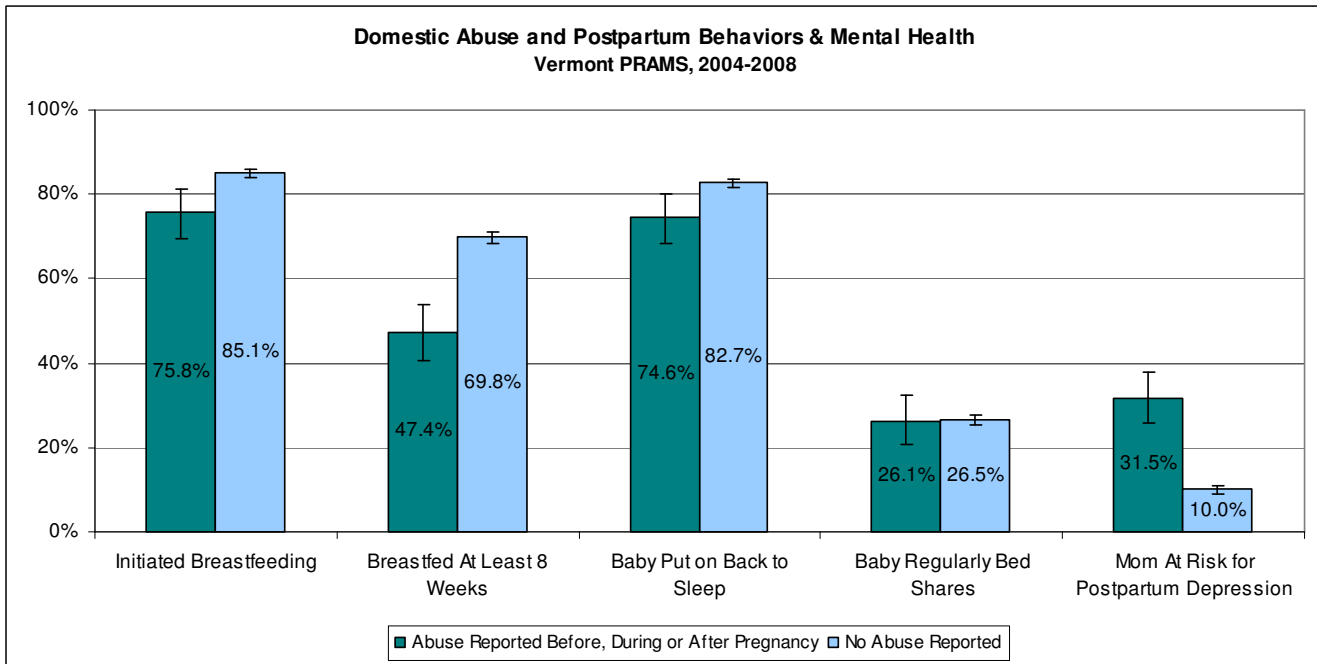
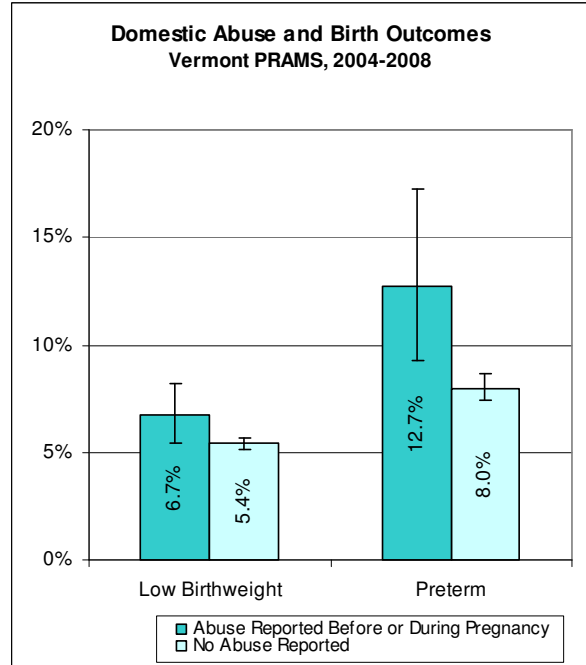
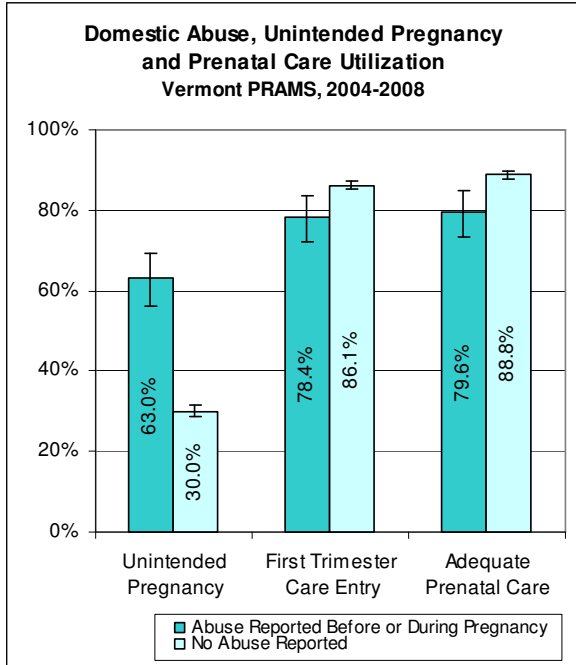
Domestic Abuse and Birth Outcomes

- Women who reported that they were physically hurt by a partner or ex-partner before or during their most recent pregnancy were significantly more likely to have a low birthweight or preterm delivery.
- Similar differences were seen for women who reported domestic threats to their personal safety during their most recent pregnancy.

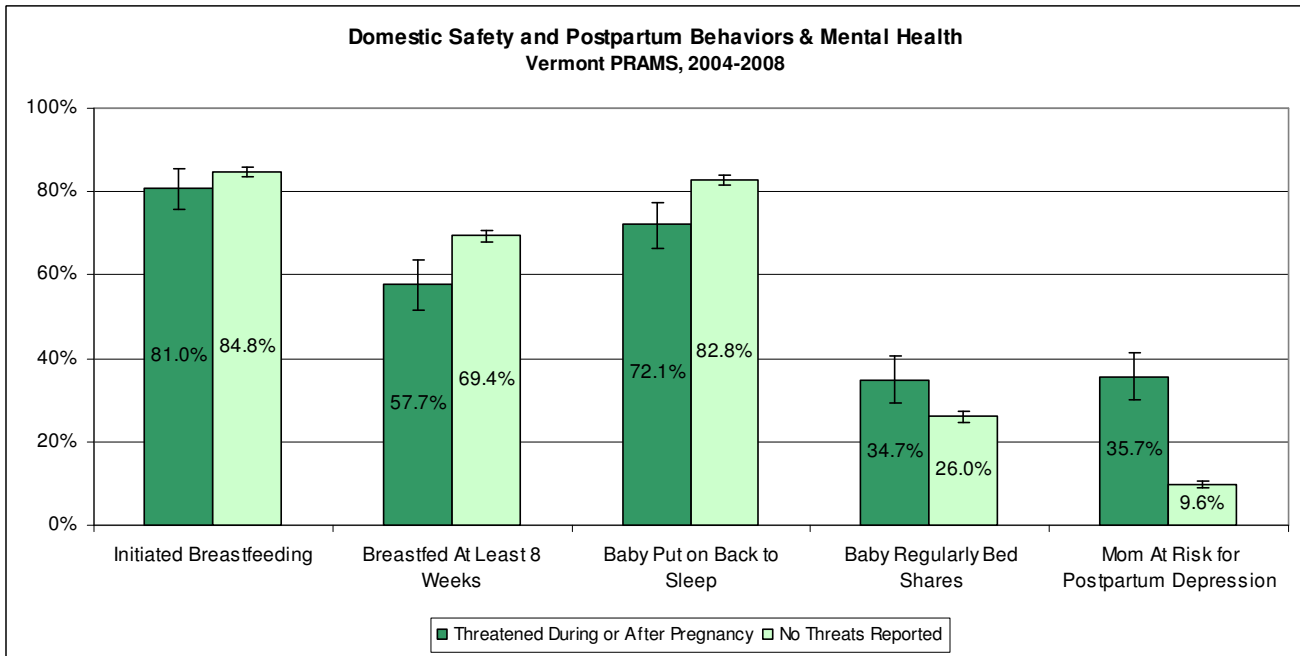
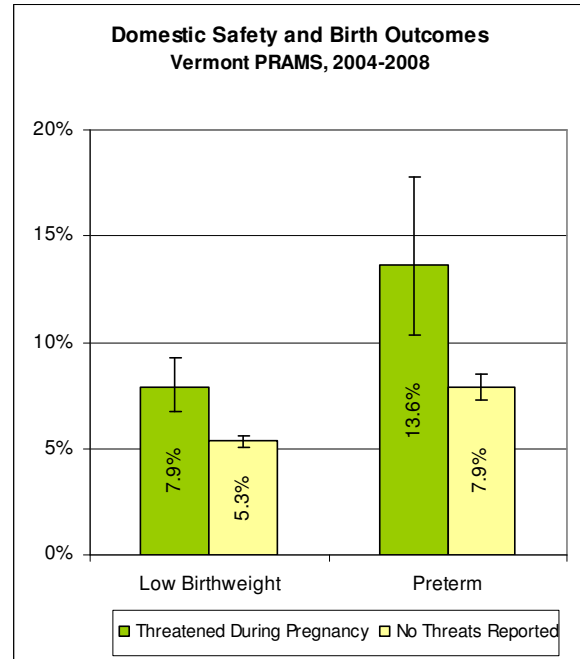
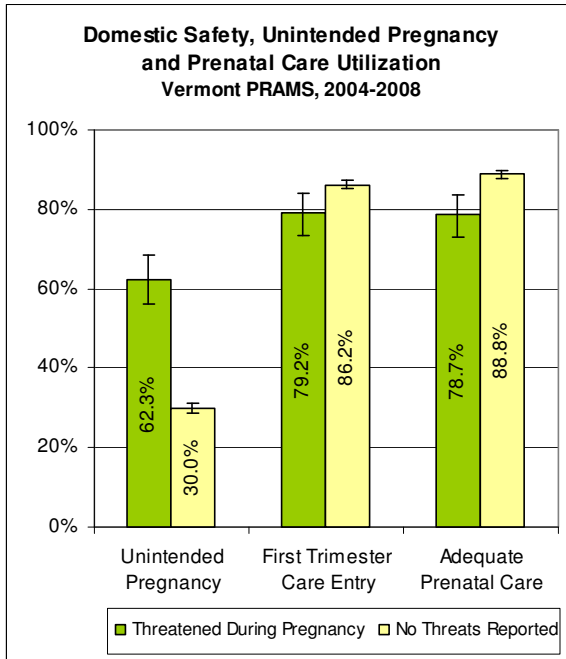
Postpartum Behaviors and Mental Health

- Women reporting abuse before, during or after pregnancy were significantly less likely to breastfeed their babies.
- Women reporting abuse were much less likely to breastfeed for at least 8 weeks. This is also true of women who report they were threatened during or after their pregnancy.
- Infants were significantly less likely to be put to sleep on their backs if their mothers reported abuse or threats. There was increased bed-sharing when women reported domestic threats during or after pregnancy, although there was no increase in bed sharing prevalence among women reporting abuse.
- Mothers reporting domestic abuse or threats were more than three times as likely to report postpartum depression risk.

Vermont PRAMS Data Brief



Vermont PRAMS Data Brief



Questions or comments about this report may be addressed to John Gauthier, Vermont PRAMS Coordinator, john.gauthier@ahs.state.vt.us, (802)863-7661 or to Mike Nyland-Funke, michael.nyland-funke@ahs.state.vt.us, (802)863-7261.

PRAMS Questions on Domestic Abuse & Threats to Personal Safety:

43a. During the 12 months before you got pregnant, did an ex-husband or ex-partner push, hit, slap, kick, choke, or physically hurt you in any other way?

- No
- Yes

43b. During the 12 months before you got pregnant, were you physically hurt in any way by your husband or partner?

- No
- Yes

The next questions are about the time during your most recent pregnancy.

44a. During your most recent pregnancy, did an ex-husband or ex-partner push, hit, slap, kick, choke, or physically hurt you in any other way?

- No
- Yes

44b. During your most recent pregnancy, were you physically hurt in any way by your husband or partner?

- No
- Yes

83. This question is about things that may have happened during your most recent pregnancy.

For each thing, circle **Y** (Yes) if it happened to you or circle **N** (No) if it did not.

**During your most recent pregnancy—
No Yes**

- a. Your husband or partner threatened you or made you feel unsafe in some way N Y
- b. You were frightened for the safety of yourself or your family because of the anger or threats of your husband or partner. N Y
- c. Your husband or partner tried to control your daily activities, for example, controlling who you could talk to or where you could go N Y
- d. Your husband or partner forced you to take part in any sexual activity when you did not want to (including touch that made you uncomfortable) N Y

84. This question is about things that may have happened since your most recent delivery.

For each thing, circle **Y** (Yes) if it happened to you or circle **N** (No) if it did not.

**Since your most recent delivery—
No Yes**

- a. Your ex-husband or ex-partner pushed, hit, slapped, kicked, choked, or physically hurt you in any other way . . . N Y
- b. Your husband or partner physically hurt you in any way N Y
- c. Your husband or partner threatened you or made you feel unsafe in some way N Y
- d. You were frightened for the safety of yourself or your family because of the anger or threats of your husband or partner. N Y
- e. Your husband or partner tried to control your daily activities, for example, controlling who you could talk to or where you could go N Y
- f. Your husband or partner forced you to take part in any sexual activity when you did not want to (including touch that made you uncomfortable) N Y

Yes to 43a or 43b = Abused Before Pregnancy.

Yes to 44a or 44b = Abused During Pregnancy.

Yes to 84a or 84b = Abused After Pregnancy.

Yes to any of 83a,b,c =
Threatened During Pregnancy.

Yes to any of 84c,d,e =
Threatened After Pregnancy.

Other Questions used in this Data Brief

31. During your most recent pregnancy, were you on WIC (the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)?

- No
- Yes

54. Did you ever breastfeed or pump breast milk to feed your new baby after delivery?

- No
- Yes → Go to Question 56

56. Are you still breastfeeding or feeding pumped milk to your new baby?

- No
- Yes → Go to Question 59

57. How many weeks or months did you breastfeed or pump milk to feed your baby?

- Weeks **OR** Months
- Less than 1 week

62. How do you *most often* lay your baby down to sleep now?

- On his or her side
- On his or her back
- On his or her stomach

63. How often does your new baby sleep in the same bed with you or anyone else?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

82a. Since your new baby was born, how often have you felt down, depressed, or hopeless?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

82b. Since your new baby was born, how often have you had little interest or little pleasure in doing things?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

A respondent is coded as “at risk for postpartum depression” if they answer “Always” or “Often” to either 82a or 82b.