

Vermont PRAMS Data Brief

Domestic Abuse – part 4 Domestic Abuse and Other Stressors During Pregnancy

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 period during the most recent pregnancy, there are questions asking about stressful events which the mother may have encountered. This report examines the responses to domestic abuse questions in relationship to stressful pregnancy events. The exact wording for the questions is included at the end of this report. The abuse questions were not asked of women under 20 years of age.

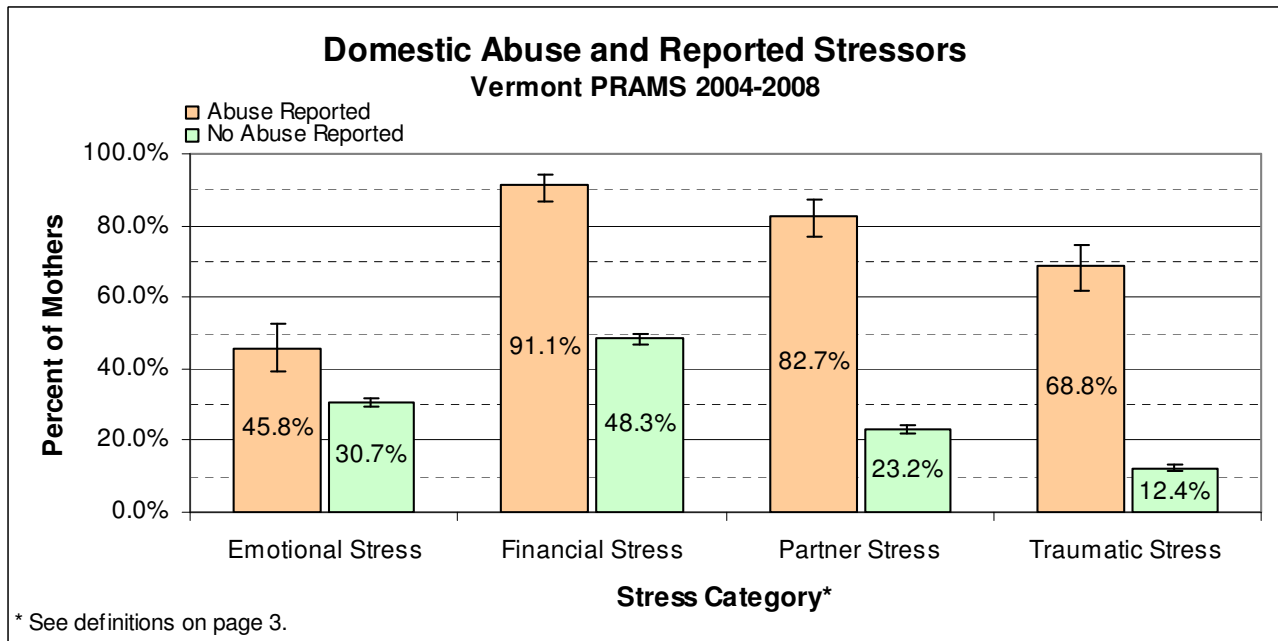
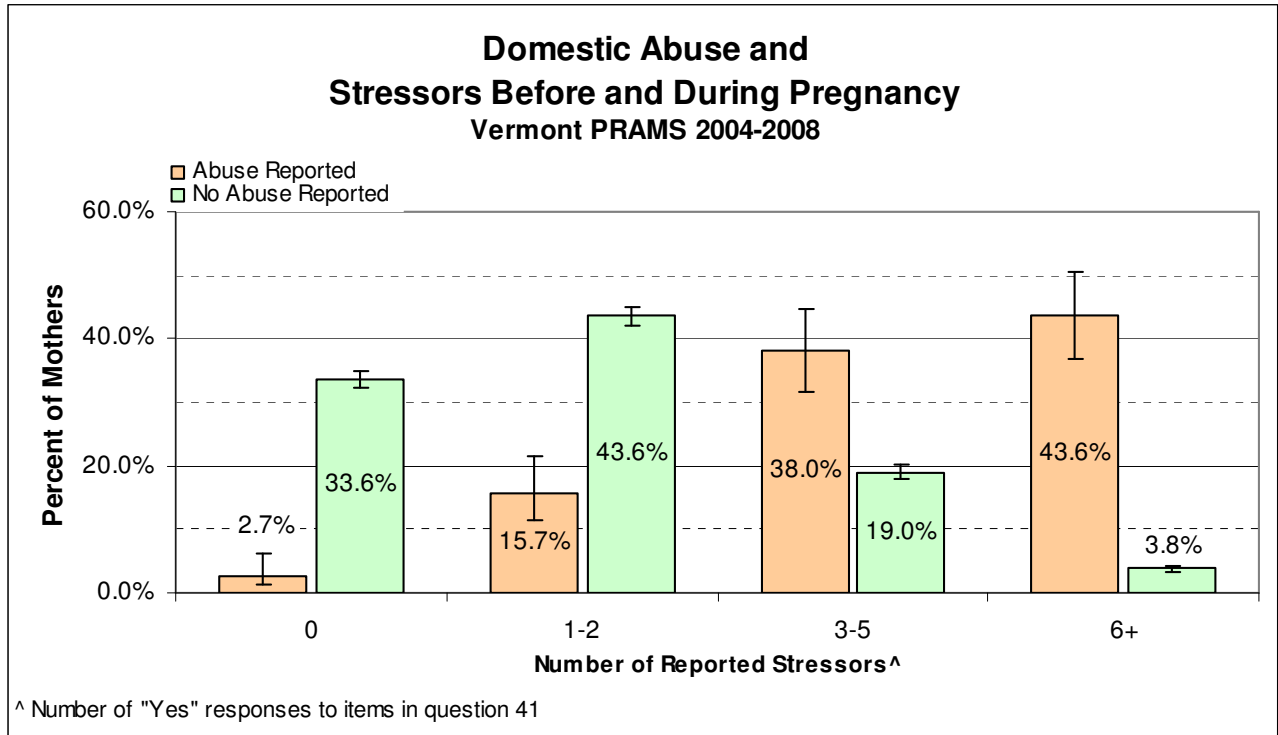
Domestic Abuse and Stress Before and During Pregnancy

- Mothers who reported abuse before or during pregnancy were significantly more likely to report other stressful life events during the year prior to their most recent delivery.
- Nearly all women (97%) who reported abuse also reported at least one other stressful life event, while two thirds of women who did not report abuse reported other stressful events.
- 44% of women who reported abuse before or during pregnancy also reported 6 or more stressful life events, while fewer than 4% of women who reported no abuse reported as many as 6 stressors.

Domestic Abuse and Types of Stress

- Mothers who reported domestic abuse before or during pregnancy are 1.5 times more likely to report emotional stress than mothers who did not report abuse.
- Financial stress was reported by over 90% of women who reported abuse, almost twice as often as by women who did not report abuse.
- Women reporting abuse were over 5 times more likely to report traumatic stress than women who did not report abuse.

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PRAMS Questions used in this brief:

41. This question is about things that may have happened during the 12 months before your new baby was born. For each item, circle **Y** (Yes) if it happened to you or circle **N** (No) if it did not. (It may help to use the calendar.)

No Yes

- a. A close family member was very sick and had to go into the hospital N Y
- b. I got separated or divorced from my husband or partner N Y
- c. I moved to a new address N Y
- d. I was homeless N Y
- e. My husband or partner lost his job N Y
- f. I lost my job even though I wanted to go on working N Y
- g. I argued with my husband or partner more than usual. N Y
- h. My husband or partner said he didn't want me to be pregnant N Y
- i. I had a lot of bills I couldn't pay. N Y
- j. I was in a physical fight N Y
- k. My husband or partner or I went to jail N Y
- l. Someone very close to me had a bad problem with drinking or drugs N Y
- m. Someone very close to me died N Y

42. During the 12 months before your new baby was born, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

- No
- Yes

The next questions are about the time during the 12 months before you got pregnant with your new baby.

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

Definitions of Stress Categories:

Emotional Stress:

Answered "Yes" to question 41a or 41m.

Financial Stress:

Answered "Yes" to any of questions 41c, 41e, 41f, 41i or 42.

Partner Stress:

Answered "Yes" to any of questions 41b, 41g, 41h, 44a or 44b.

Traumatic Stress:

Answered "Yes" to any of questions 41d, 41j, 41k or 41l.

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