

# Vermont PRAMS Data Brief

## Stressors Before and During Pregnancy – part 1

This is a report on the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), a survey conducted on a sample of Vermont women with live births during calendar years 2001-2009. Included in the survey are questions that ask women about stressful events that may have occurred during the 12 months before giving birth to their most recent baby.

This report gives an overview of the data on stressors for 2009, and examines trends from 2001-2009. Future reports will provide a demographic breakdown of the more recent data and examine the relationship between stressful events and birth outcomes and maternal behaviors.

The question wording and response categories are included at the end of this report.

### Stressful Events Before and During Pregnancy

- In 2009, 72% of mothers reported at least one stressful life event during the year prior to their most recent live birth, 6% reported six or more stressors.
- The single most common reported stressor was moving to a new address, reported by 34% of mothers.
- 27% reported having bills they could not pay.
- 24% reported a close family member was hospitalized.
- 23% argued more than usual with their spouse or partner.
- 16% reported someone close to them had a problem with alcohol or drugs.
- 10% reported eating less than they should because they did not have enough money to buy food.

### Types of Stress<sup>^</sup>

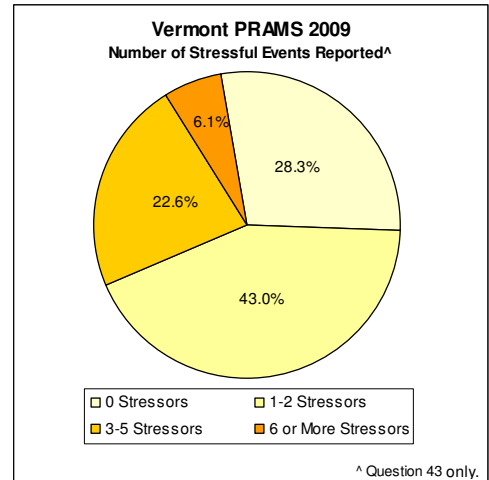
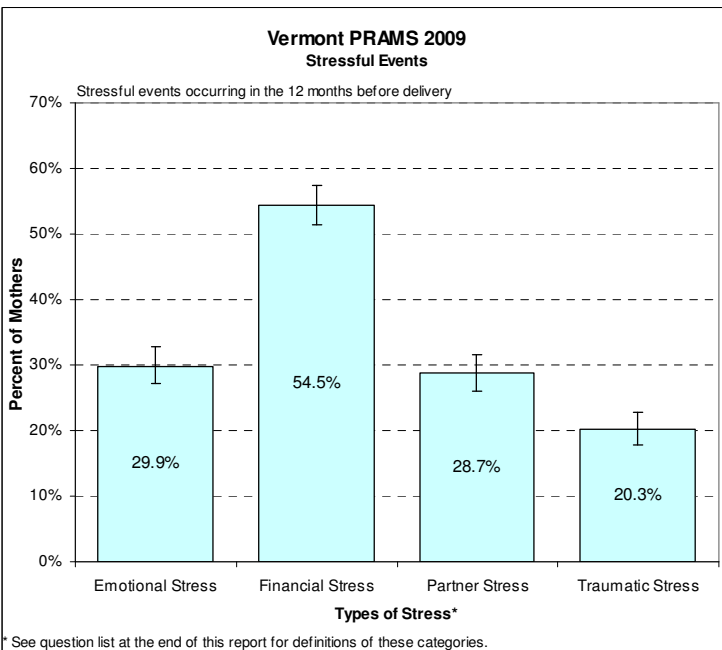
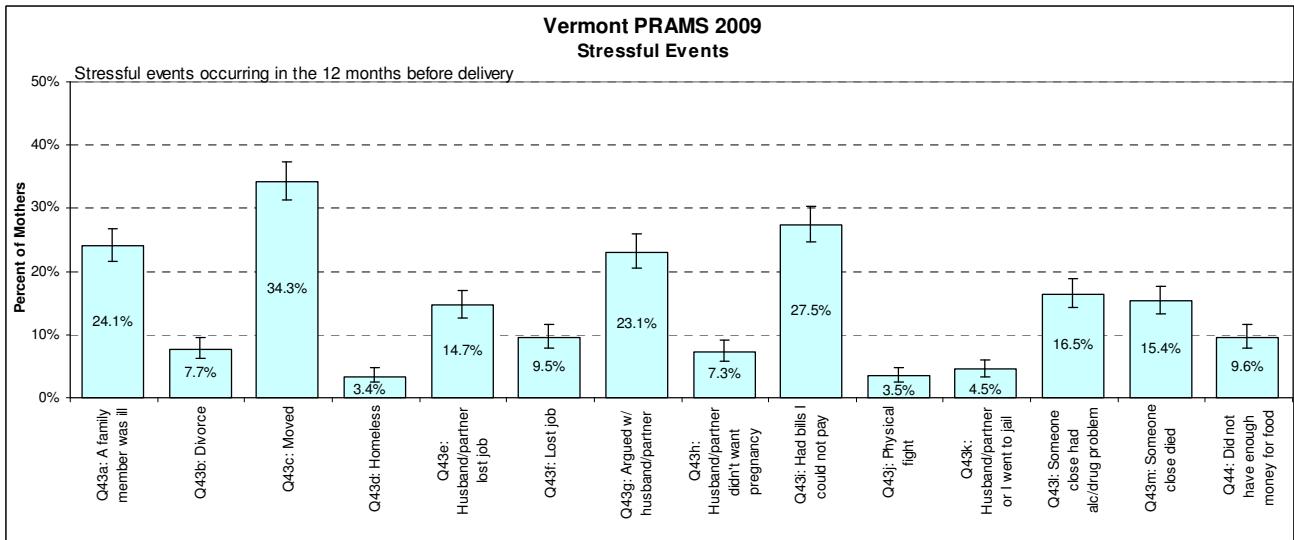
- Financial stress was most widely reported, with 54% reporting at least one financial stressor in the 12 months prior to giving birth.
- 30% reported emotional stress during the year before delivery.
- 29% reported partner stress.
- 20% reported traumatic stress.

### Trends in Stress Reporting, 2001-2009

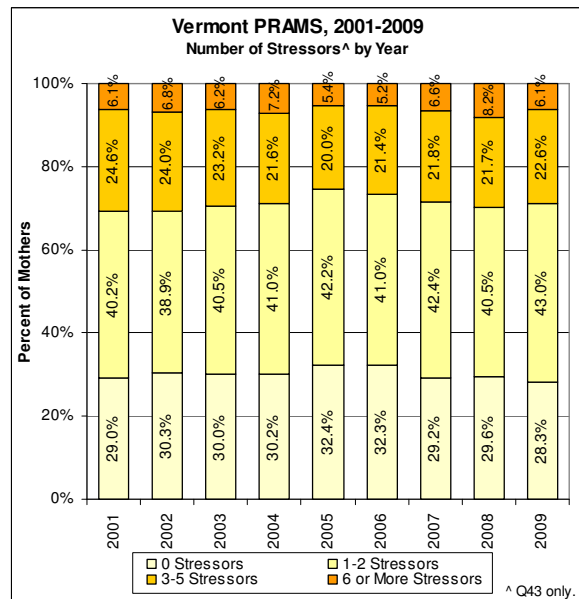
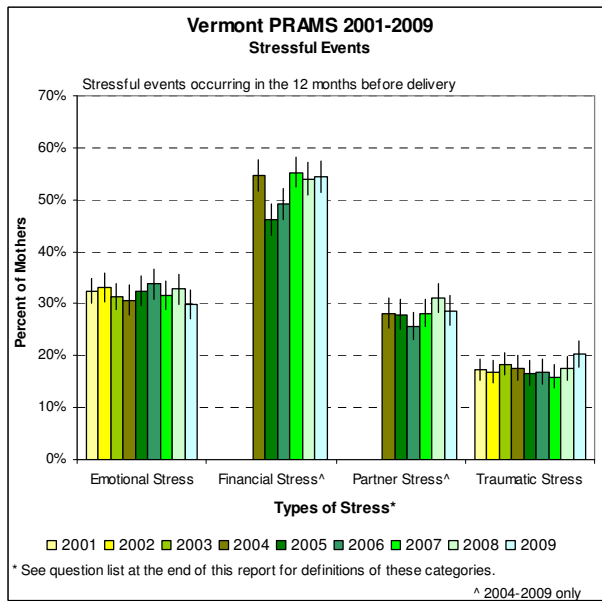
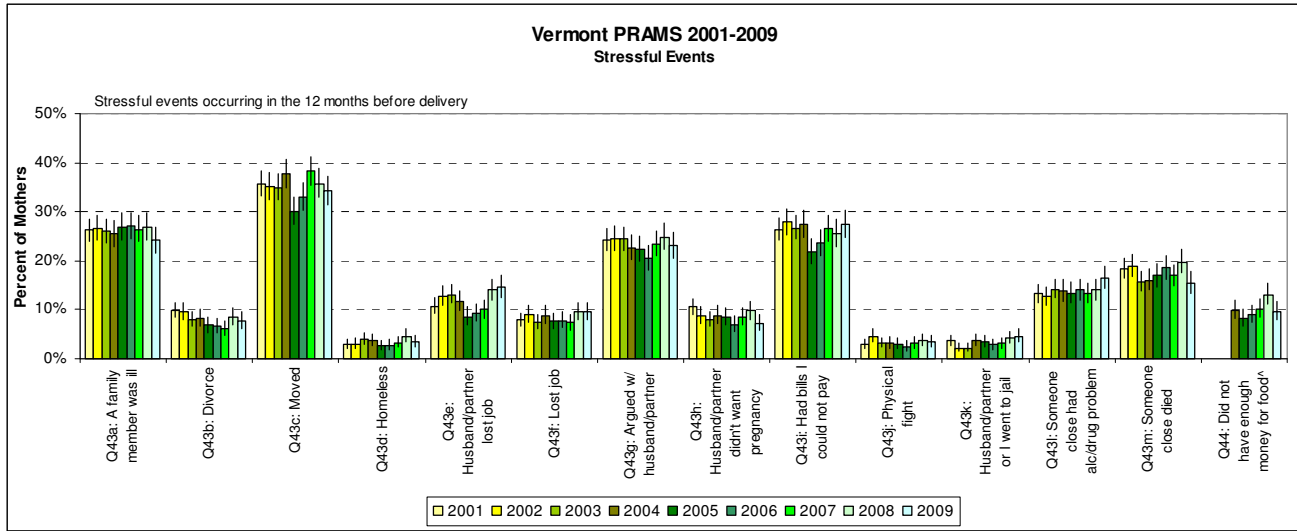
- Financial stress was significantly lower in 2005-2006 than in other years.
- Most indicators were reported less in 2005 and 2006.
- Traumatic stress was higher in 2009 than other years, but the difference is not statistically significant.

<sup>^</sup> See question list at the end of this report for definitions of these categories.

# Vermont PRAMS Data Brief



# Vermont PRAMS Data Brief



## Vermont PRAMS Data Brief

### PRAMS Questions used in this brief:

**43. 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 look at the calendar when you answer these questions.)

**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 problem with drinking or drugs . . . . . N Y
- m. Someone very close to me died . . . . . N Y

**44. 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

**45. During the 12 months before you got pregnant with your new baby, did your husband or partner push, hit, slap, kick, choke, or physically hurt you in any other way?**

- No
- Yes

**46. During your most recent pregnancy, did your husband or partner push, hit, slap, kick, choke, or physically hurt you in any other way?**

- No
- Yes

### Definitions of Stress Categories:

#### Emotional Stress:

Answered "Yes" to question 43a or 43m.

#### Financial Stress:

Answered "Yes" to any of questions 43c, 43e, 43f, 43i or 44.

#### Partner Stress:

Answered "Yes" to any of questions 43b, 43g, 43h, 45 or 46.

#### Traumatic Stress:

Answered "Yes" to any of questions 43d, 43j, 43k or 43l.

Questions or comments about this report may be addressed to Mike Nyland-Funke, [michael.nyland-funke@ahs.state.vt.us](mailto:michael.nyland-funke@ahs.state.vt.us), (802)863-7261.