



Boy	4 - 8 years	1 to 1-½ cups	1-½ cup
	9 - 13 years	1-½ cups	2 cups
	14 - 18 years	1-½ cups	2-½ cups

CONDITION OF *Women* REPORT

2019

In 2009, United Way of East Central Iowa developed the Community Condition Project to create a “big picture” view of our community and well-being. The project highlights strengths and challenges in our neighborhoods, while also inviting the public to take action and shape a better future for all of us. The following report on the condition of women is one component of this larger project.

Iowa women’s health is a glimpse into the health of all Iowans. Healthy women mean a healthy workforce, a healthy community, and healthy families. Their well-being also affects their children’s health. A mother’s education, mental health and relationship she has with her child all influence children’s future success.

Four factors contribute to women’s overall health and well-being



**ACCESS
TO CARE**



**SOCIOECONOMIC
FACTORS**



**HEALTH
BEHAVIORS**



ENVIRONMENT

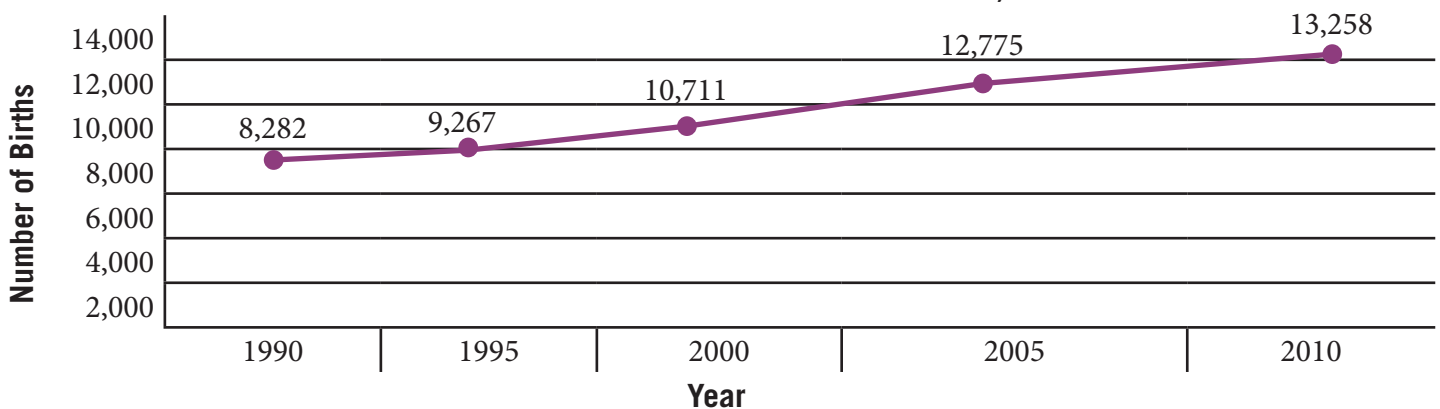
Iowa women face many barriers when seeking medical services they need

Income and education are important factors in women’s well-being. As education levels and incomes drop, so does access to health care.

Lower socioeconomic status means lower numbers of health screenings and less access to care due to lack of transportation, time off work and health insurance. From 2010–12, only 63.5% of women in Iowa with less than a high school degree received mammograms. Likewise, 60.3% of women who earned less than \$15,000 received mammograms.

Limited financial resources can create many barriers in a woman’s life, especially when she is trying to provide for her children. For example, women from low-income households are more likely to have complications at birth. In 2013, unwed mothers represented 38.1% of all births in Linn County and 39% in Jones County.

Trend of Births to Unmarried women in Iowa, 1990-2010



Medicaid helps these women by providing prenatal care, labor, delivery, 60 days of post-partum care and one year of health coverage for their baby. In 2009, there were 981 Medicaid births in Linn County, compared to 897 in 2013. This shows that many women and children are still financially vulnerable and is a cause for concern.

Women and children make up the majority of the homeless population in Cedar Rapids

Homelessness is another growing issue in Cedar Rapids. The lack of stability that comes with being homeless directly and negatively affects healthy outcomes for women and mothers. From 2013–14, there was a 27.2% increase of women experiencing homelessness. This number has grown during the past four years.

The cause for growing number of homeless women links to more female-headed households, births to unmarried women, families living in poverty and domestic violence cases. In Iowa, domestic violence increased 8.1% between 2009 and 2010. Poor mental health also contributes to homelessness.



Linn County Women by the Numbers

Many women living in Iowa do not receive routine dental exams

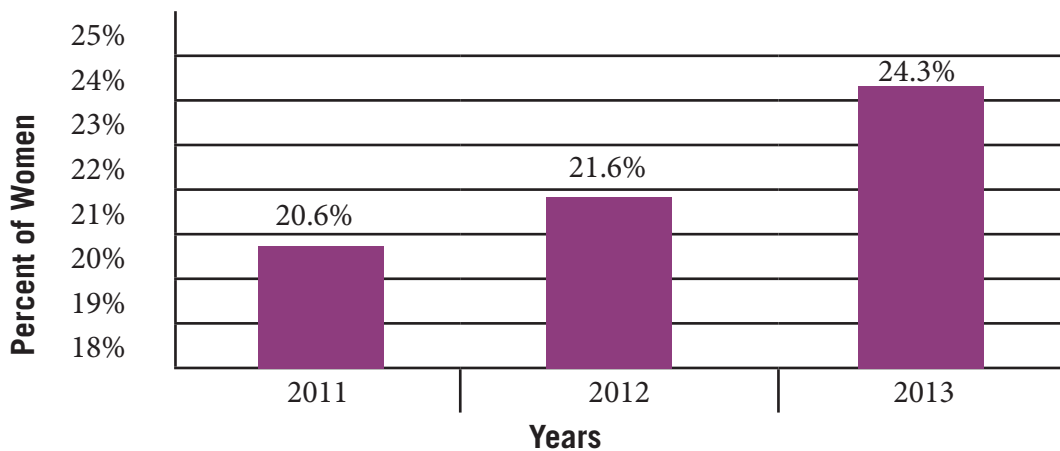
Since 2014, the Affordable Care Act has assisted thousands of low-income women in Iowa receive affordable health insurance. Despite this growth, dental exams are still an area where women lack treatment. Limited access and lack of yearly dental exams leads to poor oral health, affecting women's overall health and well-being. In 2012, 24.8% (384,420) of Iowa women did not receive a dental exam in the past year.

Dental exams are extremely important for a many reasons. Regular dental exams every six months prevent certain health conditions from becoming worse and making eating, swallowing and talking harder. Poor dental health is also a sign of other serious health issues such as diabetes and possible HIV infection.

More Iowa women experience depression today than in the past

Women's mental health in Iowa is another area of concern. In 2013, doctors diagnosed 24.3% of Iowa women with some form of depression; this is a 2.7% increase since 2011. For women, as income decreases, poor mental health increases.

Percentage of Women Experiencing Depression in Iowa, 2011-2013



Low-income mothers are twice as likely to experience some form of depression in their lifetime. Depression causes problems in women's social lives and can lead to higher divorce, unemployment and poverty rates. When a mother is depressed, it also negatively affects her children's cognitive and social-emotional development, behavior, school readiness and overall health.

In the United States, only half of all mothers experiencing depression receive support. In 2010, 19.1% of women in Linn County did not receive social and emotional support they needed. This is especially true for Black and Hispanic women. By increasing access to care, supportive services and reducing stigma, women experiencing mental health can get the help they need

76.9%

participated in some type of physical activity in the past month

8.2%

participated in heavy drinking

17.5%

binge drank

18.3%

smoked

35.2%

were obese

9%

lacked access to health care coverage

29.3 %

volunteered, contributing on average 50 hours per year



Women's Leadership Initiative

How we are responding

Since its beginning, United Way's Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) has raised more than \$1 million dollars to help women in Linn County have better access to health services they need. WLI partners with local centers and organizations to make services more affordable, make health care systems easier to use, and improve mental health for low-income women. These partners provide prescription and co-pay assistance, dental services and vouchers, HPV vaccinations, eye exams and glasses and diabetic testing supplies. Last year, WLI and partners helped about 2,978 women in our community receive these services. With your support, we can continue to improve Iowa women's access to care and their quality of life.

How you can help

You can support women's health projects in our community by **designating a gift of \$500 or more** to the Women's Leadership Initiative when you give to United Way of East Central Iowa either individually or through your company campaign. Together we can make change for women and their families in our community.



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of East Central Iowa**

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