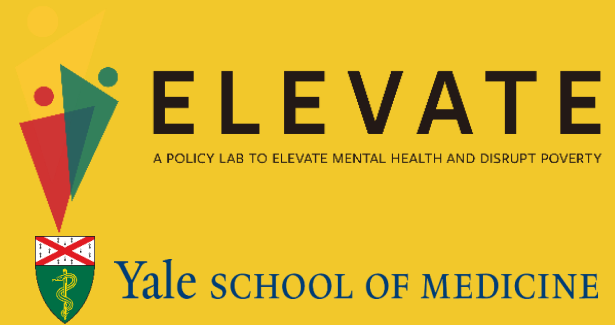




**BRIDGEPORT
MOMS
PARTNERSHIPSM
GOALS &
NEEDS
ASSESSMENT
RESULTS**

BRIDGEPORT, CT

SUMMER 2019



WHAT IS MOMS?

The MOMS Partnership® is a program that has successfully reduced depressive symptoms among over-burdened, under-resourced pregnant women, moms, and other adult female caregivers in a family (hereafter, “mothers”). Launched in New Haven in 2011 out of Yale, **the MOMS Partnership brings mental health within reach of these women**, literally meeting them where they are to help women and their families realize their full potential. Elevate is a policy lab at Yale dedicated to elevating mental health and disrupting poverty that is scaling MOMS to and with new communities in concert ultimately with government partners.

The MOMS Partnership offers up to four interventions including coaching, parenting supports, job readiness skill-building, and eight weeks of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) in places like grocery stores, shelters, community colleges, libraries, and tax prep organizations (“**neighborhood hubs**”), where the program also conducts outreach and enrollment. Unlike many other social services, the MOMS Partnership reaches people in their own communities on their own terms.





At these neighborhood hubs, we **provide mothers with resources** like free diapers and shampoo to cover basic needs and connect mothers with social services and government benefits for which they are eligible.

Partnerships with government agencies allow us to **follow outcomes** for participating families, including school attendance for example. This feedback is coupled by regular feedback from participants, who help fine tune the program for future cohorts.

Participants experience empathy in the form of **connection with other mothers** in the group settings of the interventions delivered by a licensed clinician and a **Community Mental Health Ambassador**, a local mother who can culturally and emotionally accompany mothers on their journeys to improved well-being.

Depression is hard. But it doesn't have to last forever. We help women who have struggled because every mother matters.



WHAT IS THE BRIDGEPORT MOMS GOALS & NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

The MOMS Partnership is obsessed with meeting mothers where they are. The MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment is a survey that the MOMS Partnership co-creates and distributes in order for mothers in a community to share **what they want, what they need, and what goals they have for themselves and their family.**

The Bridgeport MOMS PartnershipSM Goals & Needs Assessment (“Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment”) was developed and distributed in the Spring of 2019 to local mothers via the generous collaboration of many community partners. Partners who aided in distribution include:

- Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD, Inc.)
- All Our Kin
- Bridgeport Prospers
- East End Feeding Program
- Nancy Kingwood Ministries

In the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment, we **asked mothers questions** relating to themselves, their families, basic needs, employment and education, access to resources, and about their physical and emotional wellness.

The survey was **distributed in both paper and online formats** to local mothers via community partners and required about 15 minutes of respondents' time. Respondents who successfully completed the survey were compensated with a \$10 gift card for their time.

To be eligible to complete the survey, respondents must be a caregiver of a child or children under 18 years of age, not identify as a cisgender man, and be between 18 and 89 years of age.

183 respondents completed the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment between April 18th and May 16th, 2019.

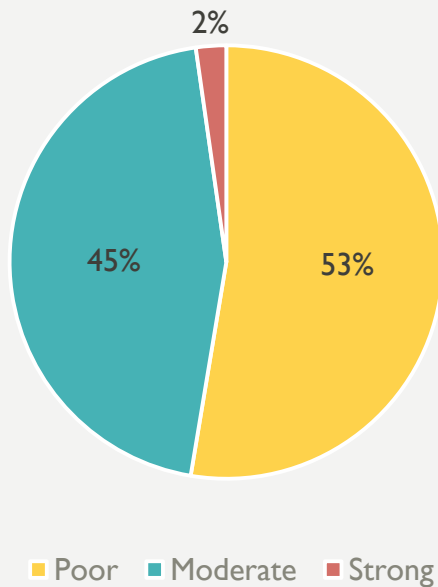
The data was cleaned for analysis by Elevate in June 2019, excluding observations where survey respondents did not respond to questions about their caregiving or parenting status, their gender, or their age to ensure that analysis included respondents whose eligibility was known with certainty. After cleaning, 135 eligible observations remained for analysis.

Analysis of the 135 eligible observations was completed in SAS 9.4 by Elevate following an internal data analysis plan calculating frequencies, means, ranges of variables among observations, as well as associations between variables. The results of this analysis are included in this report.

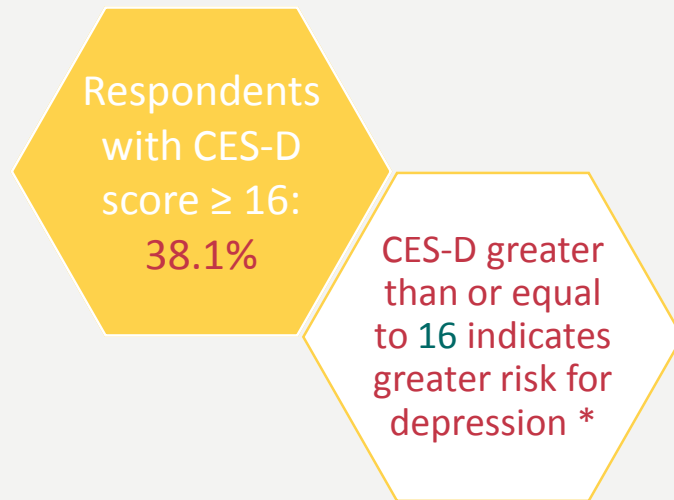
WHO COULD BRIDGEPORT MOMS SERVE?

Through the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment, Elevate found that the Bridgeport MOMS PartnershipSM could serve:

Mothers who self-report **low levels of social support**:

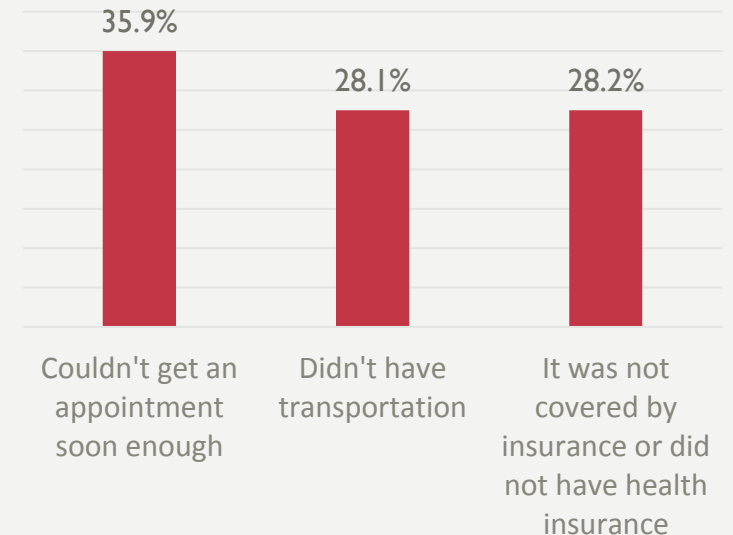


Mothers who screen as **at risk for depression**:



* CES-D, or Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale, is a screening test for depression and depressive disorder. The range of possible scores is between 0 and 60.

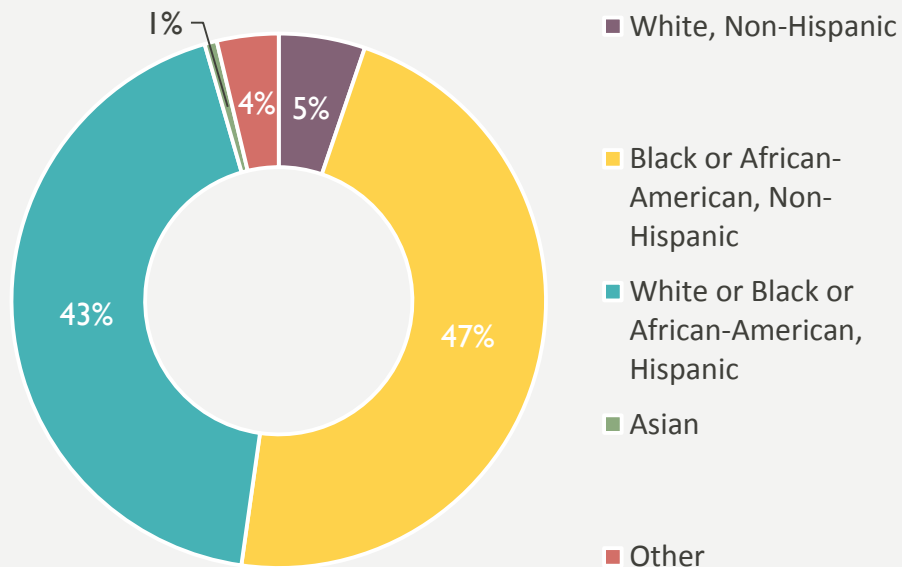
Mothers who report experiencing **difficulties accessing treatment** for mental and emotional health:



Mothers were asked about their racial and ethnic background, the number of children that they care for, and their age.

Mothers reported a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

(1) Non-Hispanic **Black or African-American** and (2) **Hispanic White, Black, or African American** were the most commonly reported races and ethnicities.



Respondents ranged **between 21 and 67 years of age**

Average age of respondents:
37.8

Respondents had or cared for at least one child, with a range **between 1 and 6 children**



Average number of children of respondents



WHAT HOPES AND GOALS DO BRIDGEPORT MOTHERS HOLD?

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

Securing employment or finding a job

Moving or changing housing situation

Improving finances and paying bills or debt

Beginning, continuing, or graduating school

Taking care of their health

Taking a vacation

Improving their parenting

The MOMS Partnership recognizes the importance of the hopes and goals of all mothers and their families, and seeks to **assist** mothers to achieve them through MOMS' services.

WHAT NEEDS DO BRIDGEPORT MOTHERS VOICE?

Of the mothers who responded to the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment:

65.3%

Screened positive for
food insecurity

60.7%

Screened positive for
housing insecurity

- **55.7%** of respondents reported that there was a time in the last 12 months where they were **not able to pay mortgage or rent on time**
- **57.0%** reported ever receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) benefits and **53.3%** reported ever receiving SNAP for Women, Infants, and Children (**WIC**) benefits
- **57.0%** reported receiving HUSKY A, B, C, D (**Medicaid**) health insurance coverage and **80.0%** reported that their children receive HUSKY A or HUSKY B health insurance coverage

Though many mothers who experience food, housing, and resource insecurity access government assistance programs and resources, many mothers still experience difficulties obtaining basic supplies for their children and supporting their own emotional health and wellbeing:

- **57.1%** of respondents 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.
- **31.5%** of respondents reported ever wanting help with their emotional health but not receiving it
 - ▶ **19.3%** of respondents reported experiencing **more than one barrier** to receiving treatment for their emotional health, such as inability to get an appointment soon enough or not having transportation.
- **36.2%** of respondents reported that at least six months had passed since they did something for themselves that they enjoy, and **20.0%** of respondents did not remember the last time that they did something for themselves that they enjoy.

The needs of these mothers impact other aspects of their lives, as suggested by statistically significant* associations found between:

● Mother's experience of food insecurity	AND	her depressive symptoms	p = 0.029
● Mother's experience of diaper need	AND	her depressive symptoms	p = 0.016
● Mother's experience of any barrier to receiving health care	AND	her status of being at risk for depression**	p = 0.004
● Mother's participation in treatment for stress, sadness, depression, anxiety, or any other emotional or mental health conditions	AND	her employment status	p = 0.001

* Significance of an association was determined if $p < 0.05$ in linear or logistic regression analysis.

** Status of being "at risk for depression" is determined by CES-D score ≥ 16 .

To sum, mothers who completed the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment reported **experiencing food, housing, and diaper insecurity and difficulty accessing emotional or mental health resources**, and different aspects of their lives—whether their experience of depressive symptoms, risk for depression, or employment status—can be **associated with these experiences**. In the next section, mothers describe their lived experiences with these challenges in their own words.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT MOTHERS IN BRIDGEPORT FACE?

In describing the **challenges** that they face as a parent, mothers often included stress, finances and expenses, balancing responsibilities, and living as a single parent.

"Emotionally sometimes I feel overwhelmed because I am a single mother. I don't like to complain so I just do what I have too; But most times it drains me. My children and their well being are my sole priority so with the limited amount of resources for help I often don't have the time to pour into my self as a woman."

"Financial stressors, trying to maintain sobriety, finding time/activities to enjoy life with my kids, managing irritability, depression, fatigue, ect. [sic]"

"not having enough hours in the day to get everything done"

"a lil stress because i have 2 kids and i do everything by myself and its stressful with no help."

Other challenges included **finding appropriate childcare, their child's behavior, fear of the effects of peer pressure on their child, fatigue, and caring for a child with special needs.**

WHAT BRINGS JOY TO MOTHERS IN BRIDGEPORT?

Besides describing the challenges that they face, mothers also described **what brings them joy** as a parent in the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment.

Mothers describe their experiences seeing their child smiling, learning, happy, growing, healthy, and successful as joyful, as well as spending time with their child and receiving their child's affection.

"The smile my son has when he sees me and the little conversations we have"

"seeing my daughter learning new things and being healthy"

"Seeing my children live life and being happy. Love to watch them grow."

"Watching them grow into themselves"

"Watching my children achieve their goals"

"Nurturing and spending time with my children."

HOW CAN MOMS HELP?

In New Haven, the MOMS Partnership has seen that:

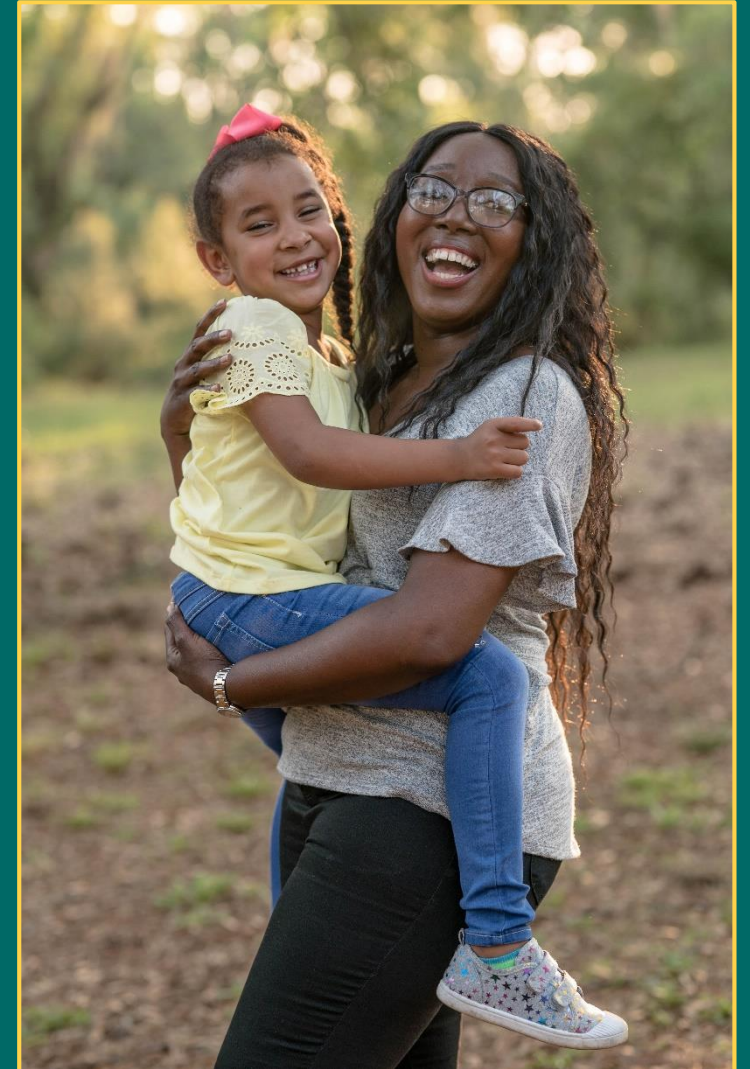
76% of participants experience a **decrease in depressive symptoms** from beginning to end of MOMS. Of those experiencing a decrease, the average participant experienced a 48% drop in depressive symptoms.

Participants have a 67% **decrease in parenting stress** from beginning to end of MOMS.

Children of participants attend 6 **more days of school per year** compared to children of nonparticipants.

The percentage of **women working at least 15 hours a week** dramatically increases after participating in MOMS – from 15% at time of enrollment to 39% at six months after graduating from MOMS.

Through the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment and through conversations with community partners, Elevate at Yale sees an opportunity to establish MOMS' services in Bridgeport to assist mothers in receiving the support and resources that they need.



WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR THE BRIDGEPORT MOMS PARTNERSHIPSM?



Moving forward, Elevate wants to build on the findings of the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment by launching a forthcoming pilot of the MOMS **Stress Management course** intervention for mothers in Bridgeport. **70.5% of mothers who completed the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment responded that they would be interested in receiving more information about Bridgeport MOMS services in the future.**

The findings of the Bridgeport Goals & Needs Assessment will strongly inform the delivery of the intervention. For example, when asked to name three **places in their community where they feel safe and supported**, mothers taking the Goals & Needs Assessment named **their church, their home, the community organization ABCD, the grocery store, and work**. Elevate will use the findings—as well as feedback from community partners and stakeholders—to **tailor the forthcoming pilot of MOMS services in Bridgeport planned for 2020.**

A pilot of MOMS services in Bridgeport 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 and their families' full potential.

Ultimately, Elevate aims for the MOMS Partnership to be a useful and sustainable resource in Bridgeport and to help improve the lives, mental health and wellbeing, and connectedness of mothers who live there.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Sincere **thanks to Elevate's community partners** who assisted in the distribution of the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment, including:

Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD, Inc.)

All Our Kin

Bridgeport Prospers

East End Feeding Program

Nancy Kingwood Ministries

Elevate and the MOMS Partnership would also like to **thank the Bridgeport community** for allowing us to work together find ways to help and empower mothers and female caregivers, and, most importantly, to **thank the mothers themselves** who took the time to share with us so much about their lives through the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment.

APPENDIX

Elevate would like to note some additional findings from the Bridgeport MOMS Goals & Needs Assessment that provide insight into the lives of Bridgeport mothers who completed the survey:

- 17.9% of respondents identified Spanish as the primary language they speak.
- 46.3% of respondents reported their marital status as either married or living with a partner, and 32.1% of respondents reported never being married.
- 63.9% of respondents reported renting their home or apartment, and 13.9% of respondents reported owning their own home.
- 25.4% of respondents reported living in two or more different places in the last 12 months.
 - ▶ 15.5% of respondents reported there being a time in the last 12 months where they did not have a steady place to sleep or they slept in a shelter. Of those respondents who reported that they did not have a steady place to sleep or slept in a shelter in the last 12 months, 52.6% reported that their children lived with them at that time.
- 45.2% of respondents reported getting to their job or work activity by driving their own vehicle, and 10.8% of respondents reported doing so by taking the bus.
 - ▶ Only 19.3% of respondents reported having more than one form of transportation to get to their job or work activity.
- 22.8% of respondents reported ever losing a job because they did not have transportation to get there, and 36.8% of respondents reported ever losing a doctor's appointment because they did not have transportation to get there.

- 36.8% of respondents reported having ever received treatment for stress, sadness, depression, anxiety, or any other emotional or mental health conditions.
- 55.7% of respondents reported attending church or religious meetings at least a few times a month.
 - ▶ 50.4% of respondents reported spending time in private religious activities, such as prayer, meditation, or Bible study, once a week or more.
 - ▶ 81.8% of respondents reported that experience of the presence of the Divine (i.e., God) either tended to be true or definitely was true of themselves.
- Respondents reported delaying getting medical care because they couldn't get an appointment soon enough (27.7%), had to wait too long to see the doctor once they were in the office (20.8%), did not have insurance coverage that would cover care (21.5%), or did not think they really needed care (20.2%).
 - ▶ 58.5% of respondents reported experiencing one or more barriers to receiving timely medical care.
- 20.5% of respondents reported completing high school or their GED, and 66.7% of respondents reported completing some college or vocational school, being a college graduate, or having completed more than college.
- 67.9% of respondents reported working for pay at the time of survey, and 67.8% of those women reported working full-time.
- When asked the time of day they would prefer to receive services in the future from the MOMS Partnership in Bridgeport, 34.4% of respondents reported preferring morning classes, 16.4% of respondents reported preferring afternoon classes, and 49.2% of respondents reported preferring evening classes.

For more information, please visit elevate.yale.edu and moms.yale.edu and contact us at bridgeportmoms@yale.edu.

