



## WHAT IS FIRST BREATH?

First Breath is a program that **helps people make positive changes** to their tobacco, alcohol, and other substance use during pregnancy and beyond. First Breath started in 2001 as an evidence-based tobacco treatment program.

Over the past **20+ years**, the program has grown and adapted to meet the needs of pregnant people and families throughout Wisconsin. After many years of development and testing, in 2022 First Breath expanded its services to address all perinatal substance use.

## HOW DOES FIRST BREATH WORK?



### FIRST BREATH PROVIDERS

First Breath trains health professionals to use the **Ask-Advise-Refer model** to address perinatal substance use as part of existing perinatal care. Providers use a validated tool to assess for use, provide a brief intervention, and then submit a referral to First Breath.



### FIRST BREATH HEALTH EDUCATORS

From there, First Breath's team of highly trained, locally based Health Educators provide **comprehensive services** to help participants stop or reduce their use of tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, and other substances. Services are participant-centered and use a strengths-based, harm reduction approach.

These services include:

- ✓ Individualized, one-on-one education and counseling (up to 13 sessions)
- ✓ Text message support
- ✓ Caregiver/family support
- ✓ Long-term engagement



# UTILIZATION & REACH

FIRST BREATH  
2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## PROVIDERS



288

New

## SITES



277

Total

99% county coverage

(at least one site in each county)



8

New

## OUTREACH



22

Total

Outreach presentations  
were facilitated

## REFERRALS

908 pregnant, postpartum, and caregiving individuals were referred to First Breath.

- 852 pregnant and postpartum people
- 56 caregivers

## INTENSIVE SERVICES

243 of the referred individuals received intensive 1:1 services. Health Educators completed **1,387** counseling sessions, including **994** face-to-face sessions and **393** phone calls

## TEXTING PROGRAM

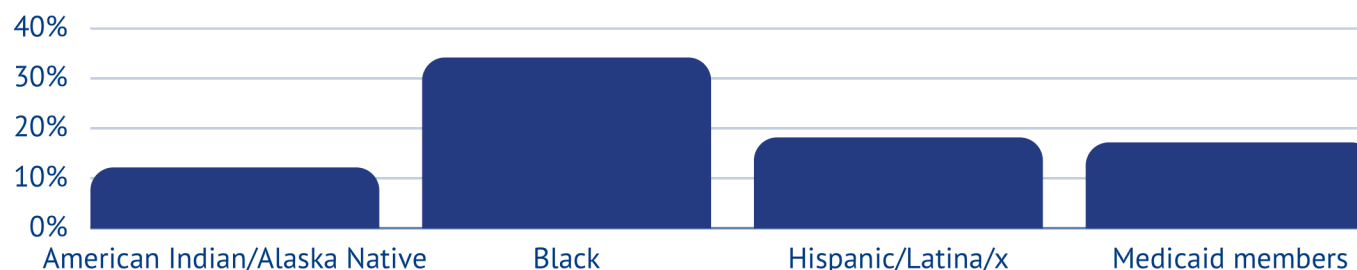
695 of the referred individuals enrolled in the texting program.

- 654 new pregnant and postpartum people
- 41 support people

At year-end, **2,813** pregnant and postpartum people and **266** caregivers were subscribed to the program.

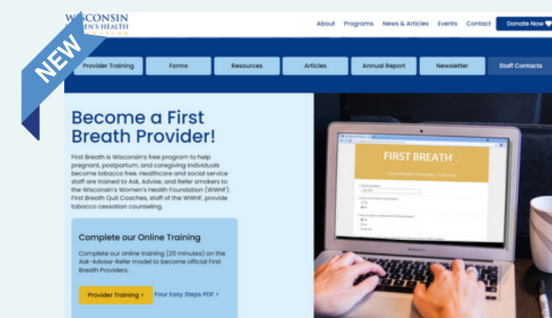
## FIRST BREATH REACH (TOBACCO ONLY)

First Breath calculates an approximate "reach rate" for pregnant tobacco users. Reach rate is the number of First Breath referrals received in a given year (2022: 852) divided by the total number of pregnant people who use tobacco in the state, based on the most recent birth certificate data (2020: 5,080). In 2022, **First Breath reached approximately 17% of all pregnant tobacco users in Wisconsin.** To ensure equitable access to First Breath, reach rates are also calculated for priority populations (below).



In 2022, First Breath launched a new, online Provider Onboarding training.

- **648 providers** completed the training.
- **96% were satisfied** with the training
- **97% were confident** in their ability to implement First Breath.



[providefirstbreath.org](https://providefirstbreath.org)

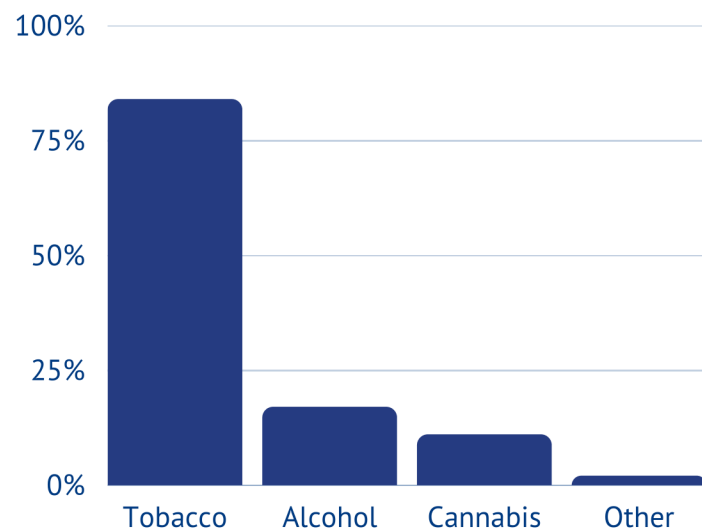


# INTENSIVE SERVICES

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## FIRST BREATH PARTICIPANTS

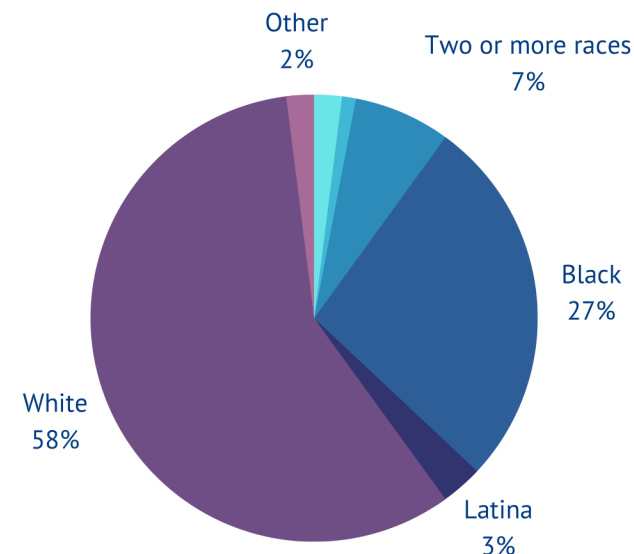
### Substance Use At Enrollment (n=243)



### Socio-demographics (n=243)

- Has a mental health disorder diagnosis: 66%
- Has a perinatal mood disorder: 38%
- Has a substance use disorder diagnosis: 31%
- Household income <\$49,000: 77%
- Household income <\$29,000: 42%
- Unemployed: 47%
- Medicaid member: 86%
- WIC participant: 69%
- Low social support: 21%
- High stress: 30%

### Race/Ethnicity (n=243)



## FIRST BREATH PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

### By the end of their pregnancies:

**77% of tobacco users** (n=108) made positive changes

- 35% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 42% Cut down

**88% of alcohol users** (n=90) made positive changes

- 84% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 4% Cut Down

**75% of cannabis users** (n=36) made positive changes

- 53% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 22% Cut Down



### By six months postpartum:

**67% of tobacco users** (n=107) made positive changes

- 47% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 20% Cut down

**29% of alcohol users** (n=31) made positive changes

- 23% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 6% Cut Down

**63% of cannabis users** (n=33) made positive changes

- 45% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 18% Cut Down





## FEEDBACK

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### ANNUAL PROVIDER SURVEY

179 First Breath Providers completed an annual program survey.



98%

Say that First Breath materials and services are appropriate for the communities they serve



89%

Are satisfied with the communication, technical assistance, and support from First Breath



47%

Report that COVID-19 impacted their ability to implement First Breath

#### Provider Quotes:

*Clients are getting more in-depth education and support from the [First Breath] Educators than we can provide at our level given all of the programs and public health responsibilities that we already have.*

*The WWHF/and First Breath group in particular are always so helpful and responsive.*

### PARTICIPANT ADVISORY GROUPS (PAG)

59 current and past participants took part in the virtual participant advisory group. They 1) provided in-depth feedback on our texting program, 2) edited our overdose prevention toolkit, and 3) weighed in on an idea to host virtual support groups.

### PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

63 First Breath Participants completed a satisfaction survey.



91%

Rated First Breath "very good" or "excellent"



97%

Would recommend First Breath to others



91%

Learned new skills to help them quit



91%

Learned new information



86%

Said First Breath helped them quit

#### Participant Quotes:

*I loved how my quit coach was very personal with me. I felt like I could be 100% honest with my quit coach and that helped me out a lot.*

*The help my Health Educator provided to help keep me on track with cutting down smoking. So much support!*

*[I liked] the help with identifying triggers and great ways to deal with them.*

*I liked that my [Health Educator] was very hands on with me, and I felt as if she cared about making a personal connection to help me better with my goals.*

*Having a real person I could contact and who contacted me and validated my needs and feelings was exactly what I needed to make the leap from cutting down to quitting.*

Read participant success stories at  
[wwwhfh.org/firstbreath](https://wwwhfh.org/firstbreath)