



## 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.



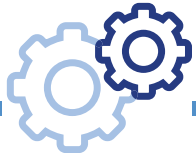
### FIRST BREATH HEALTH EDUCATORS

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

## PROVIDERS



112

New

## SITES



281

Total

99% county coverage

(at least one site in each county)



7

New

## OUTREACH



21

Total

Outreach presentations were facilitated

## REFERRALS

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

- 823 pregnant and postpartum people
- 45 caregivers

## INTENSIVE SERVICES

188 of the referred individuals received intensive 1:1 services. Health Educators completed **1,079** counseling sessions, including **702** face-to-face sessions and **377** phone calls.

## TEXTING PROGRAM

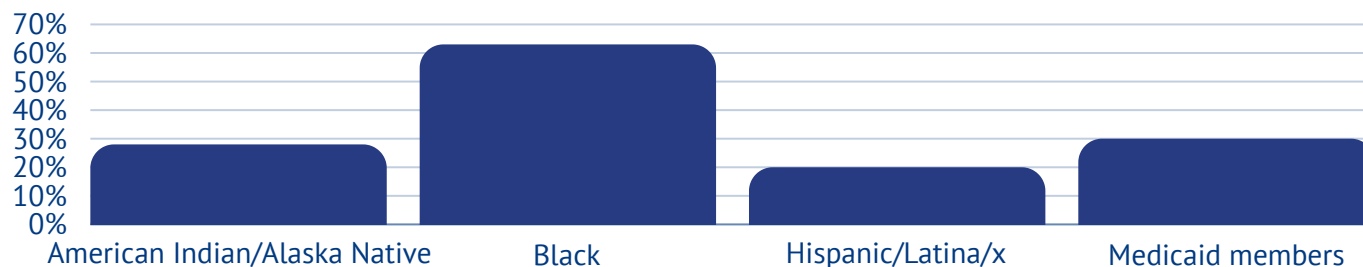
729 of the referred individuals enrolled in the texting program.

- 697 new pregnant and postpartum people
- 32 support people

At year-end, **3,404** pregnant and postpartum people and **292** caregivers were subscribed to the program.

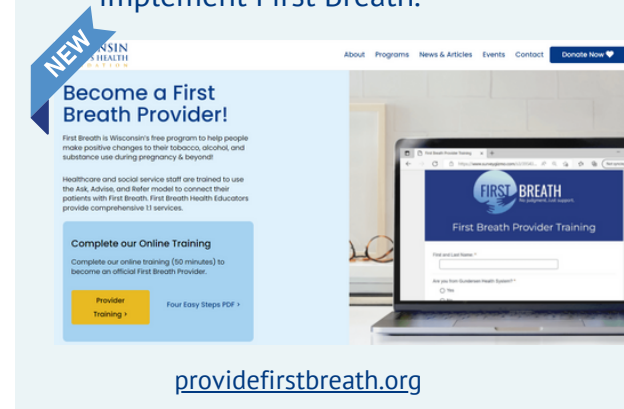
## FIRST BREATH REACH (TOBACCO ONLY)

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 (2023: 823) divided by the total number of pregnant people who use tobacco in the state, based on the most recent birth certificate data (2022: 3,226). In 2023, **First Breath reached approximately 25.5% 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. Since:

- **677 providers** completed the training.
- **96% were satisfied** with the training
- **99% were confident** in their ability to implement First Breath.

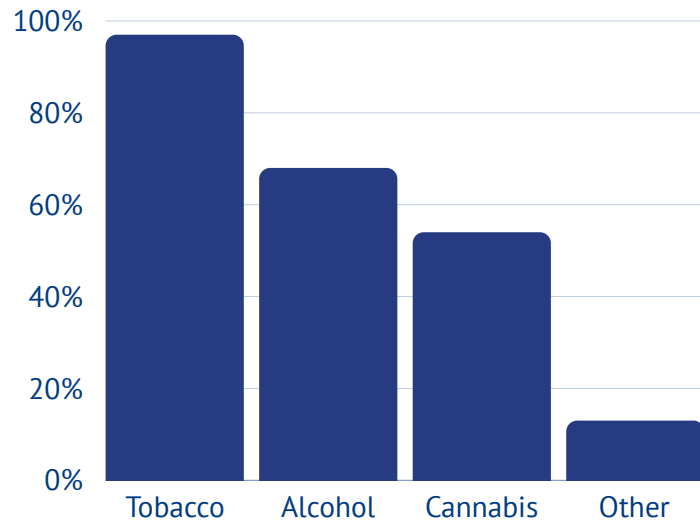




# INTENSIVE SERVICES

## FIRST BREATH PARTICIPANTS

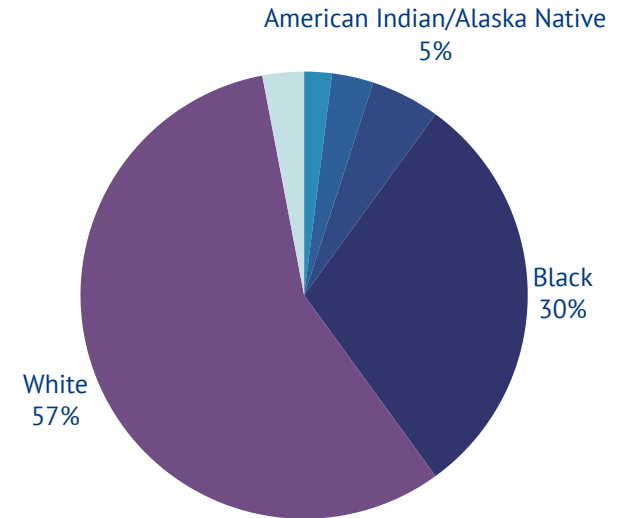
Substance Use At Enrollment (n=188)



Socio-demographics (n=188)

- Has a mental health disorder diagnosis: 72%
- Has a perinatal mood disorder: 33%
- Has a substance use disorder diagnosis: 31%
- Household income above \$50,000: 12%
- Household income below \$29,999: 76%
- Unemployed: 52%
- Medicaid member: 86%
- WIC participant: 69%
- Low social support: 18%
- High stress: 45%

Race/Ethnicity (n=188)



## FIRST BREATH PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

### By the end of their pregnancies:

**80% of tobacco users** (n=105) made positive changes

- 50% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 30% Cut down

**94% of alcohol users** (n=106) made positive changes

- 92% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 2% Cut Down

**63% of cannabis users** (n=32) made positive changes

- 41% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 22% Cut Down



### By six months postpartum:

**79% of tobacco users** (n=80) made positive changes

- 56% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 23% Cut down

**12% of alcohol users** (n=53) made positive changes

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

**72% of cannabis users** (n=29) made positive changes

- 41% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 31% Cut Down





# FEEDBACK

## ANNUAL PROVIDER SURVEY

111 First Breath Providers completed an annual program survey.



100%

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



96%

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



78%

Report that they have completed the updated expansion training

### Provider Quotes:

*First Breath helps bring up the conversation. Not all clients are interested in the program but it is always good to offer it and gets people talking.*

*We are thankful to have First Breath as a resource for the pregnant and post-partum clients we serve.*

## PARTICIPANT ADVISORY GROUPS (PAG)

19 current and past participants took part in the virtual participant advisory group. In one-on-one interviews, they 1) shared in-depth, real life experiences on influences of their cannabis and tobacco use, 2) described barriers to cessation, and 3) provided ideas for support.

## PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

64 First Breath Participants completed a satisfaction survey.



94%

Rated First Breath "very good" or "excellent"



99%

Would recommend First Breath to others



97%

Learned new skills to help them quit



97%

Learned new information



87%

Said First Breath helped them quit

### Participant Quotes:

*I appreciated the help and encouragement on this journey and the commitment shown to me.*

*One day I just decided to take her [Health Educator] advice and I went cold turkey and I have been since March.*

*I haven't smoked for 4 months now. I can breathe better and my health issues are getting under control. Thank you First Breath for helping me with my addiction.*

*Take advantage of this program, it's worth it and you are worth it!*

*Everyday it gets a little easier and I hope one day I can go a full day without thinking about it. First Breath's texts and check-in calls really did help, someone to talk to was nice.*

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