



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.



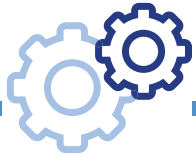
FIRST BREATH HEALTH EDUCATORS

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



94

New

SITES



290

Total

100% county coverage

(at least one site in each county)



7

New

OUTREACH



21

Total

Outreach presentations were facilitated

REFERRALS

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

- 637 pregnant and postpartum people
- 60 caregivers

INTENSIVE SERVICES

144 of the referred individuals received intensive 1:1 services. Health Educators completed 807 counseling sessions, including 597 face-to-face sessions and 210 phone calls.

TEXTING PROGRAM

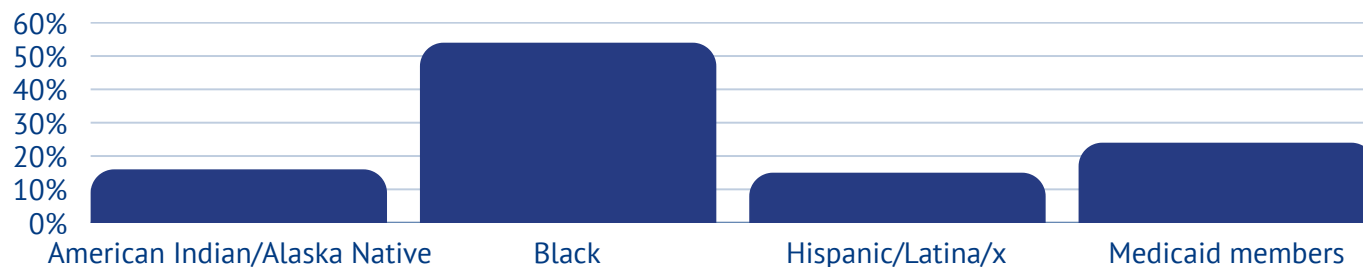
585 of the referred individuals enrolled in the texting programs.

- 533 new pregnant and postpartum people
- 52 support people

At year-end, 3,796 pregnant and postpartum people and 335 caregivers were subscribed to the texting programs.

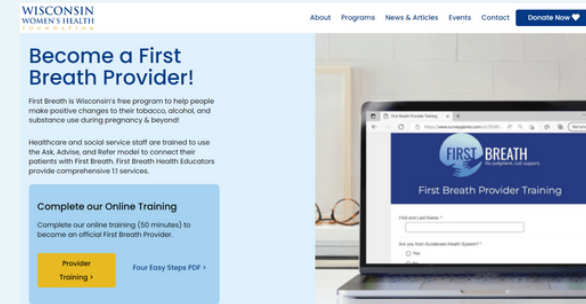
FIRST BREATH REACH (TOBACCO ONLY)

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 (2024: 637) 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 2024, **First Breath reached approximately 20% of all pregnant tobacco users in Wisconsin.** To ensure equitable access to First Breath, reach rates are also calculated for priority populations (below).



2024 First Breath Provider Onboarding training responses:

- **93 providers** completed the training.
- **95% were satisfied** with the training.
- **96% were confident** in their ability to implement First Breath.



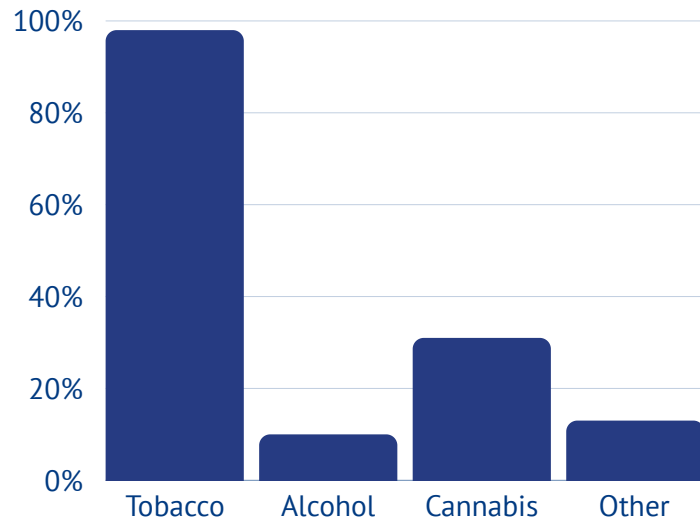
providefirstbreath.org



INTENSIVE SERVICES

FIRST BREATH PARTICIPANTS

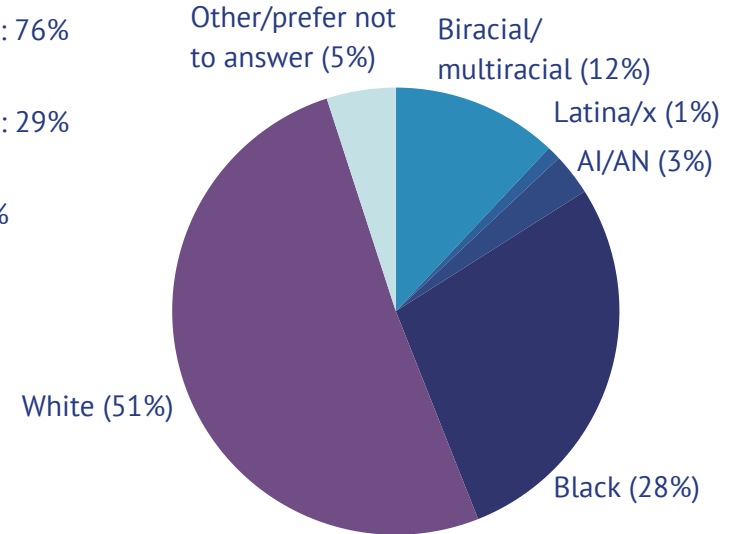
Substance Use At Enrollment (n=144)



Socio-demographics (n=144)

- Has a mental health disorder diagnosis: 76%
- Has a perinatal mood disorder: 42%
- Has a substance use disorder diagnosis: 29%
- Household income above \$50,000: 7%
- Household income below \$29,999: 77%
- Unemployed: 54%
- Medicaid member: 84%
- WIC participant: 65%
- Low social support: 21%
- High stress: 45%

Race/Ethnicity (n=144)



FIRST BREATH PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

By the end of their pregnancies:

68% of tobacco users (n=50) made positive changes

- 44% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 24% Cut down

98% of alcohol users (n=51) made positive changes

- 98% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 0% Cut Down

44% of cannabis users (n=9) made positive changes

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



By six months postpartum:

79% of tobacco users (n=52) made positive changes

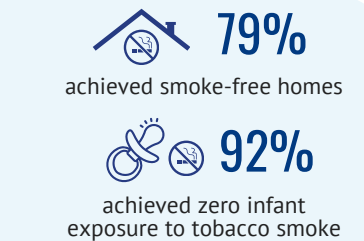
- 58% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 21% Cut down

10% of alcohol users (n=39) made positive changes

- 10% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 0% Cut Down

78% of cannabis users (n=14) made positive changes

- 21% Quit/Stayed Quit
- 57% Cut Down





FEEDBACK

ANNUAL PROVIDER SURVEY

121 First Breath Providers completed an annual program survey.



99%

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



87%

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



78%

Report that they have completed the updated expansion training

Provider Quotes:

Knowledge is power. Being able to help empower these families by First Breath's support helps to make me a better OBGYN nurse case manager caring for young families.

It's helpful to have an effective tool to be able to offer clients who are interested in receiving support to achieve their goals.

PARTICIPANT ADVISORY GROUP (PAG)

66 current and past participants took part in the virtual participant advisory group. In the survey, they 1) shared in-depth, real life experiences on influences of their mental health, 2) described barriers to accessing mental health resources, and 3) provided ideas for additional mental health support they would like from First Breath.

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

52 First Breath Participants completed a satisfaction survey.



81%

Rated First Breath "very good" or "excellent"



85%

Would recommend First Breath to others



85%

Learned new skills to help them quit



85%

Learned new information



82%

Said First Breath helped them quit

Participant Quotes:

It's been 2 months without smoking cigarettes and I hope I continue to not smoke. I feel good. Thank you for listening!

I am really grateful to be signed up with you guys.

Do not give up, even if you go back to it, just try again, no matter how many tries it takes!

My coach was awesome and I appreciate everything she has done for me and my family.

I'm free from smoke with extra money in my pocket before back to school and I'm smiling ear to ear because I really did it for me and the kids. To be free is a blessing and I'm happy I did it and my coach was amazing with the support and commitment.

Read participant success stories at www.hf.org/firstbreath