

# Family Needs Assessment Survey: impact of the opioid crisis on young children & families

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## BACKGROUND

- In the US, the state of Maryland reported the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate of opioid use among pregnant women in 2018<sup>1</sup>.
- In 2022, the US Centers for Disease Control expanded their strategic priorities for addressing opioid use disorder (OUD) to include increasing access to medication for OUD, reducing stigma, and addressing unmet socioeconomic needs for families<sup>2</sup>.
- Stigma and psychosocial barriers discourage mothers with OUD from seeking treatment and social services for themselves and their children<sup>3</sup>.
- Overcoming perceived stigma (e.g. “what other people think about me”) and self stigma (e.g. shame and self doubt) is a needed area of research for mothers seeking help for resources<sup>4</sup>.

## METHODS

**Procedures:** This cross-sectional study recruited women receiving opioid addictions treatment who were mothers of a child <5 years old. Surveys were administered virtually and in-person from 2021 to 2022, and individuals were compensated \$50 for their time.

**Measurements:** Information was gathered using survey items to identify demographics, engagement in social services, unmet socioeconomic needs, and the “Brief Opioid Stigma Scale”<sup>5</sup>.

**Analysis:** The results presented are a descriptive review of the sample of participants.

## OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this research study is to learn what services, community resources, and social supports are needed by families who are dealing with opioid use disorders and to gain insight into the barriers mothers experience while receiving services.

## RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristics of 58 Participants

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY (%)
*Age (years)	31.8 (5.9)
Age category (years)	
Under 25	7 (12.1)
25-30	16 (27.6)
31-35	19 (32.8)
36-40	13 (22.4)
>40	3 (5.2)
Race	
Black/African American	8 (13.8)
White	42 (72.4)
Multiracial	5 (8.6)
American Indian/Alaska Native	2 (3.5)
Other	1 (1.7)
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	3 (5.2)
Primary Language Spoken	
English	58 (100)
Level of Education	
<12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	21 (36.8)
High School Diploma/GED	21 (36.8)
1+ years of college/trade school (Not complete)	10 (17.5)
Completed trade school or associate degree	5 (8.8)

- The majority of participants endorsed having ever used the following substances: alcohol (96.6%), marijuana (94.8%), opioids (94.8%), prescription pain relievers (94.8%), and nicotine cigarettes (93.1%).
- Over one-third of the sample reported experiencing high rates of perceived stigma.
  - 45% of the sample reported that they believed most people blamed people with OUD for their problems.
  - 41% of the sample reported that they believed a person with OUD cannot be trusted.

Figure 1: Barriers To Accessing Services

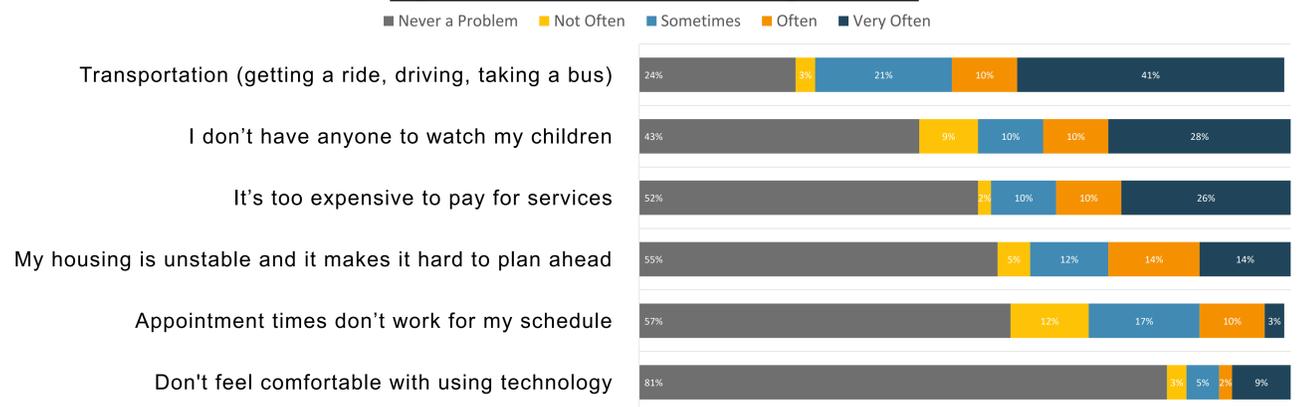


Figure 2: Opioid Stigma Scale to Assess Perceived and Self Stigma

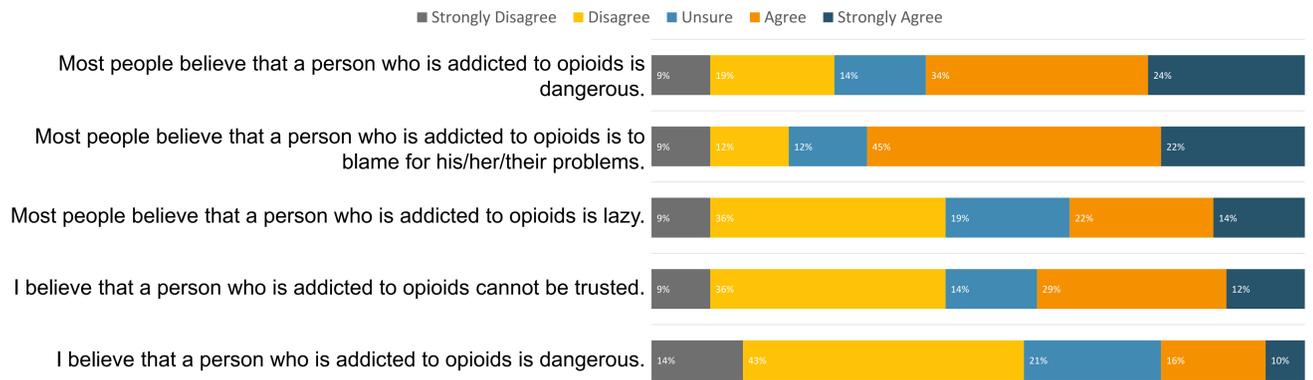
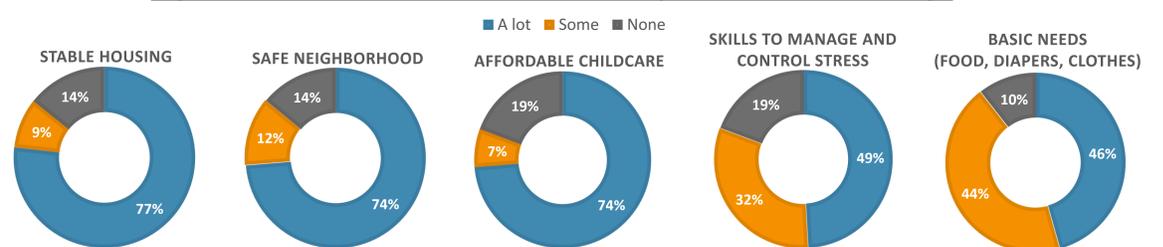


Figure 3. How much support or help would you like in the following?



## DISCUSSION

- Despite receiving intensive opioid addiction treatment, the majority of mothers had substantial unmet daily living needs.
- Perceived and self stigma about opioid addiction is an important target for treatment, suggesting the importance of peer support.
- Parent programs and family resources could be used to increase access to social services and unmet biopsychosocial needs of women with OUD and their young children.

## LIMITATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were not able to recruit mothers from outpatient treatment programs.
- Our participants were predominantly white. Further research should be conducted in diverse samples.
- Future research should investigate the impact of anti-stigma interventions on mother and child outcomes.

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