



Pregnancy in Somerville



The health of a person prior to pregnancy along with their access to early and adequate prenatal care are important to the life long health trajectory of parent and child.

► How can we ensure that all Somerville residents receive quality healthcare and social support before, during, and after their pregnancy?

Who is giving birth?

The vast majority of births to Somerville residents occur in the young adult age span of 25-40 years.

Teens

The total number of births to those between ages 15-19 is decreasing. (p.26)

Age 40+

Some Somerville residents, who delayed childbirth, are now having babies in their 40s, automatically placing them in a higher risk category.

Who is receiving quality Prenatal Care?

In 2015, 87.1% of pregnant Somerville residents received adequate prenatal care, an improvement from prior years. (p.26) Adequate prenatal care helps insure healthy birth weights and establish the foundation for future wellbeing.

By Race

Black, non-Hispanics received the lowest level of prenatal care among Somerville mothers, however it was still higher than the state levels. (p.26)

Teens

- In 2015, 66.7% of Somerville pregnant teens under 18 were reported to have received adequate or better prenatal care. (p.26)
- Teens in Somerville had lower rates of adequate prenatal care over the last two decades, relative to other age groups. (p.26)

Health Risks During Pregnancy

Protective Factors

Physical and psychological stress during pregnancy can impact fetal development in utero, as well as after birth.

Breastfeeding supports early nutritional needs adding protection against infectious diseases and childhood obesity. (p.28)

Stress related to racial discrimination and lack of culturally responsive health care can affect the health of mothers and babies. (p.40)

Smoking during pregnancy can increase the risk of preterm labor and low birth weight. (p.28)

For Somerville new mothers, intention to breastfeed varied by age, with lower rates for teens (78.6%) and higher rates for those over 30 (94.3%). (p.26)

Postpartum Depression

Next Steps for Somerville

- Nationally, nearly 1 in 5 women will experience depression or anxiety in pregnancy or postpartum. (p.32)
- 4.6% of those screened for postpartum depression at CHA screened positive. (p.32)

- Increase % of pregnant people receiving early and adequate prenatal care, specifically engaging pregnant teens.
- Reduce teen pregnancies with sensitivity to culturally diverse norms.
- Expand outreach to first-time older mothers to improve birth outcomes.
- Explore policies to support equitable family leave.

Resources

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

MA has passed a Pregnant Workers Fairness Act that supports protective factors for the future health of today's young infants. The Act requires "reasonable accommodations" for pregnant women, time off after childbirth and accommodations to support breastfeeding.

mass.gov/service-details/mcad-guidance-on-the-pregnant-workers-fairness-act

MotherWoman

A nonprofit with local branches working to support moms, build community safety nets, and promote related public policy. Learn more at motherwoman.org

SomerBaby

The City pilot program provides welcome baby bags, useful baby supplies, community resources, and a home visit to new parents in the city, in collaboration with local providers. To make an appointment for a visit, or get more information, contact Flor Apolaya at 617-625-6600 x6702.

CHA COPE (Co-Operative Parenting Education)

CHA educational program for pregnant and parenting teens in Somerville. The program provides case management, tutoring, support groups, education, and advocacy, with the goal of helping parents graduate. For more information, contact the C.O.P.E. Educator at 617-625-6600 x6156.

Cambridge Health Alliance WIC

CHA operates the local WIC program in Somerville, which provides extensive breastfeeding support.

challiance.org/community/women-infants-children-program

SomervilleMoms

The SomervilleMoms listserv includes nearly 5,000 members, and provides a forum for sharing parenting topics with a Somerville focus.

To learn more or to join, visit groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SomervilleMoms/info

CASPAR's New Day Program and Parenting Journey's Sober Parenting Program

Local programs that address parent's substance use disorder help promote childhood and family wellbeing.

Learn more at casparinc.org/new-day.html and parentingjourney.org/parents/sober-parenting-journey