



The Untapped Potential of Text Messaging Among Childbearing Women in New Hampshire

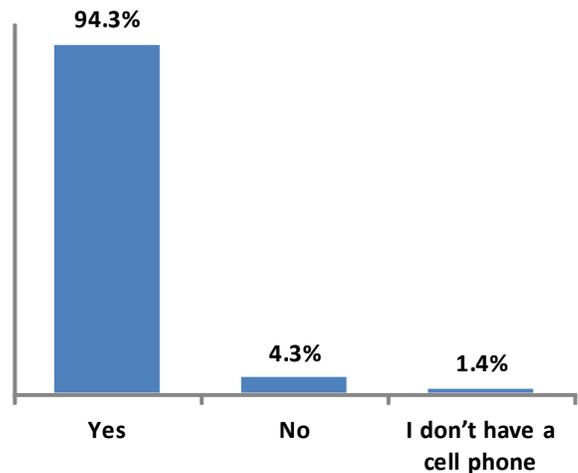
The New Hampshire Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (NH PRAMS) collects data on a variety of topics related to maternal health. This report is based on data collected from NH residents who gave birth in 2013. For more information on NH PRAMS and to access the complete 2013 NH PRAMS Data Books visit: <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/bchs/mch/prams.htm>

Two questions on the NH PRAMS survey were designed to enhance understanding of preferred modes of communication among childbearing women in New Hampshire. Recent estimates indicate that 90% of adults in the U.S. own a cell-phone and 64% own a smartphone. In the 18-29 year old age group, 98% own a cell phone and 85% own a smartphone.¹ Women entering childbearing age are far more reliant on various modes of technology and social media than previous generations, thus it is important to understand and adapt to cultural changes in order to reach target populations with important health messages.

¹Pew Research Center, April, 2015, "The Smartphone Difference" Available at: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/01/us-smartphone-use-in-2015/>

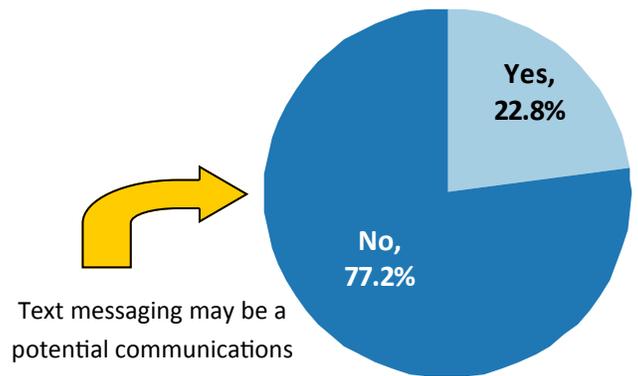
We analyzed data from the 2013 NH Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS, n=639). Respondents were asked "In the past 12 months, have you sent or received a text message on your cell phone?" and "Have you used any of the following sources to find information or assistance with pregnancy issues?" A list of 12 response choices to the latter question included "Text messages." While accounting for the complex sampling, we used weighted frequencies and proportions to describe responses to these questions with a focus on mothers who reported using text messaging in the last year, but did not report using text messaging to find information or assistance with pregnancy related issues ("untapped potential"). PRAMS data are self-reported and subject to recall and social desirability biases. Previous texting history does not necessarily indicate a respondent would choose to receive messages in this way and therefore may not accurately measure untapped potential.

In the past 12 months, have you sent or received a text message on your cell phone?



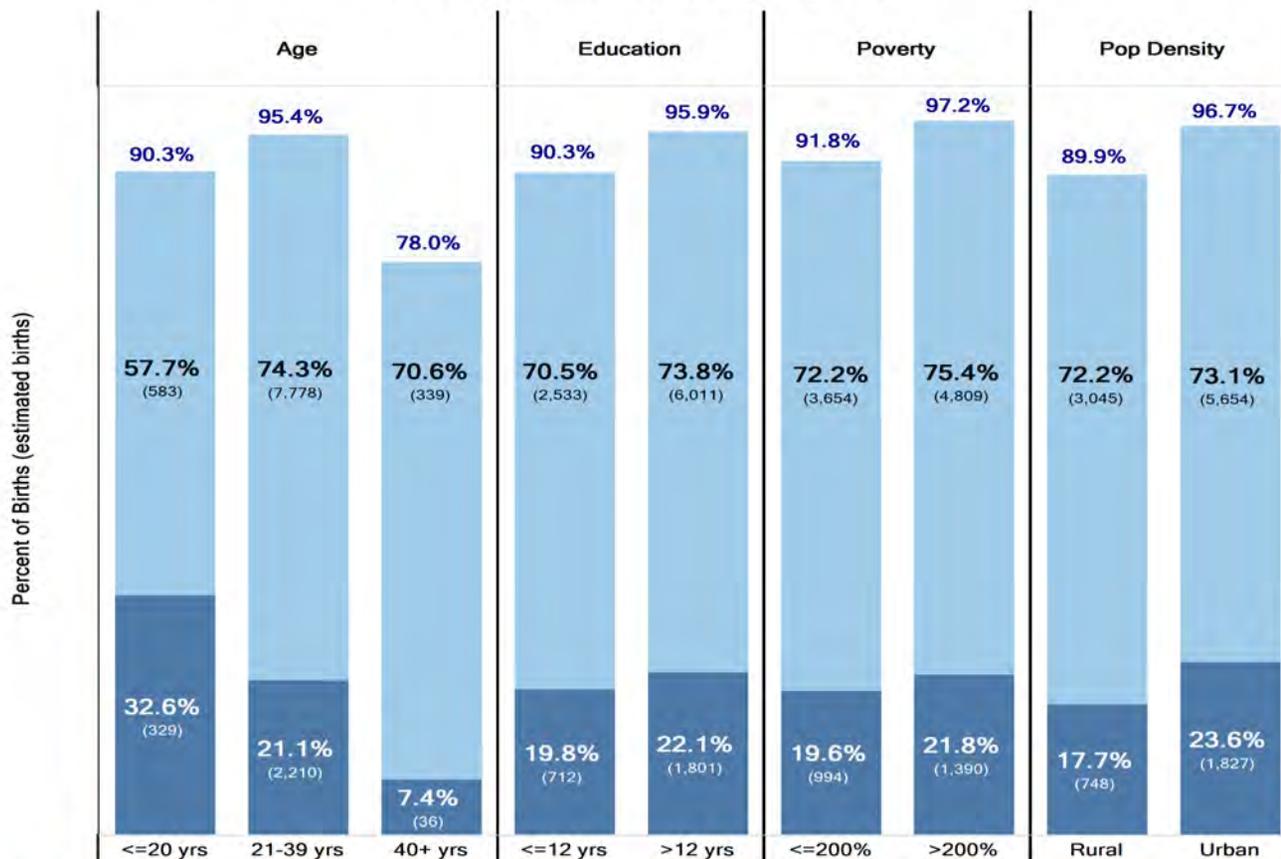
Used text messaging to get information or assistance with pregnancy issues

Among those who sent or received a text message in the past 12 months
NH PRAMS, 2013



Text messaging may be a potential communications channel for this group

The Untapped Potential of Text Messaging During and After Pregnancy New Hampshire Resident Births, 2013



■ Untapped potential: Did not use texting for pregnancy information or assistance, but reported texting in last year
■ Used texting to find information or assistance with pregnancy issues

What's the point?

1. Although we found significant differences between groups within each factor (age, education, poverty, and population density), a high proportion of mothers reported texting during pregnancy in *every group*.
2. Relatively few mothers used texting to find information or assistance with pregnancy issues.
3. Across all groups, there is a large amount of untapped potential to use text messaging as a health communication channel during and after pregnancy.

Public Health Implications

These findings point to an opportunity for expanding delivery of tailored health messages during and after pregnancy in New Hampshire. Health care providers may be persuaded to increase their efforts in support of free text programs such as Text4baby, <https://www.text4baby.org/>.

About NH PRAMS

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, PRAMS, is an ongoing population based surveillance project of the CDC and state departments of health, with the goals of reducing infant mortality and low birth weight and improving the overall health of mothers and infants. New Hampshire PRAMS was funded in 2011 by the CDC and began collecting data in 2013. Funding for NH PRAMS was provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under grant #U01DP003156. Contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

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