

Vermont PRAMS Data Brief

Breastfeeding – part I

This is a report on the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), a survey conducted on a sample of Vermont women with live births during calendar year 2004.

The topic for this report is breastfeeding. PRAMS has several questions on this topic including the following:

Did you ever breastfeed or pump breast milk to feed your new baby after delivery?

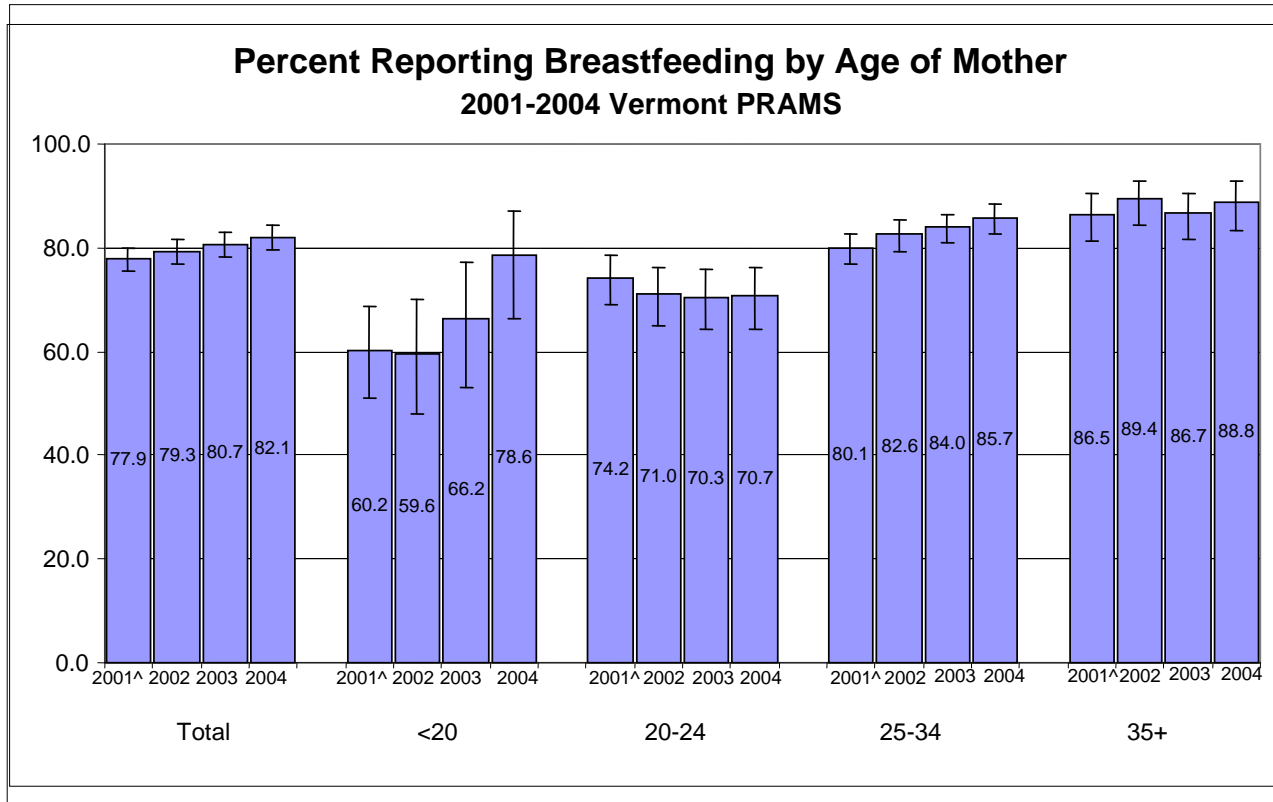
How many weeks or months did you breastfeed or pump milk to feed your baby?

Are you still breastfeeding or feeding pumped milk to your new baby?

Using this question set along with several demographic variables, a profile of Vermont mothers' breastfeeding behavior is available.

Breastfeeding Initiation

The percentage of mothers reporting breastfeeding has been increasing since the survey began in 2001, with the sharpest increase seen in teen mothers.



^ Also includes October-December 2000.

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Overall, 82 percent of mothers report initiating breastfeeding after delivery in 2004, which is well over the Healthy People 2010 target of 75 percent during the early post partum period. However, as shown below, certain demographic groups show levels of initiation of breastfeeding lower than the overall figure.

	Percent Initiated Breastfeeding
Did not graduate high school	63.1
High school degree, but no college	71.7
Enrolled in Medicaid	73.2
Mother's Age 20 to 24	70.5

Although in 2004, 78.6 percent of teen mothers reported breastfeeding, rates in previous years were much lower.

Breastfeeding Continuation

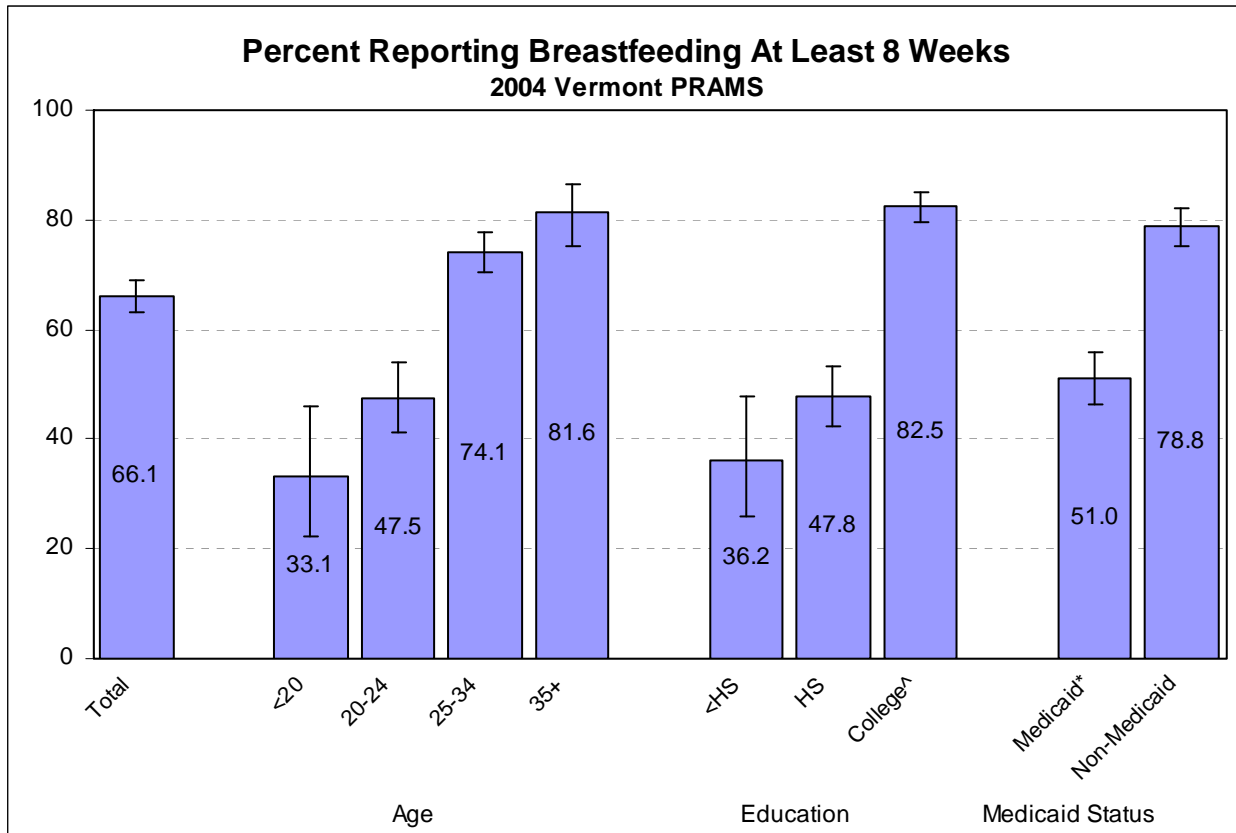
The following table summarizes the responses on breastfeeding duration:

Breastfeeding Duration	Percent Mothers Reporting	
Never	18.0	
Less than 4 weeks	9.3	
4 to 8 weeks	6.6	
Over 8 weeks, but discontinued	9.0] 66.1
Still breastfeeding at time of survey	57.1	
100.0		

Since the timing of survey completion varies by individual, 8 weeks is the longest duration that can be calculated for all respondents. Combining those who breastfed over 8 weeks with those still breastfeeding at the time they completed the survey gives us 66.1 percent breastfeeding greater than 8 weeks.

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Shorter duration of breastfeeding is correlated with lower education, age and Medicaid enrollment.



^ Includes mothers who completed any college work, whether or not they earned a degree.

* Mother was enrolled in Medicaid prior to pregnancy, or Medicaid** paid for prenatal care, or Medicaid** paid for delivery.

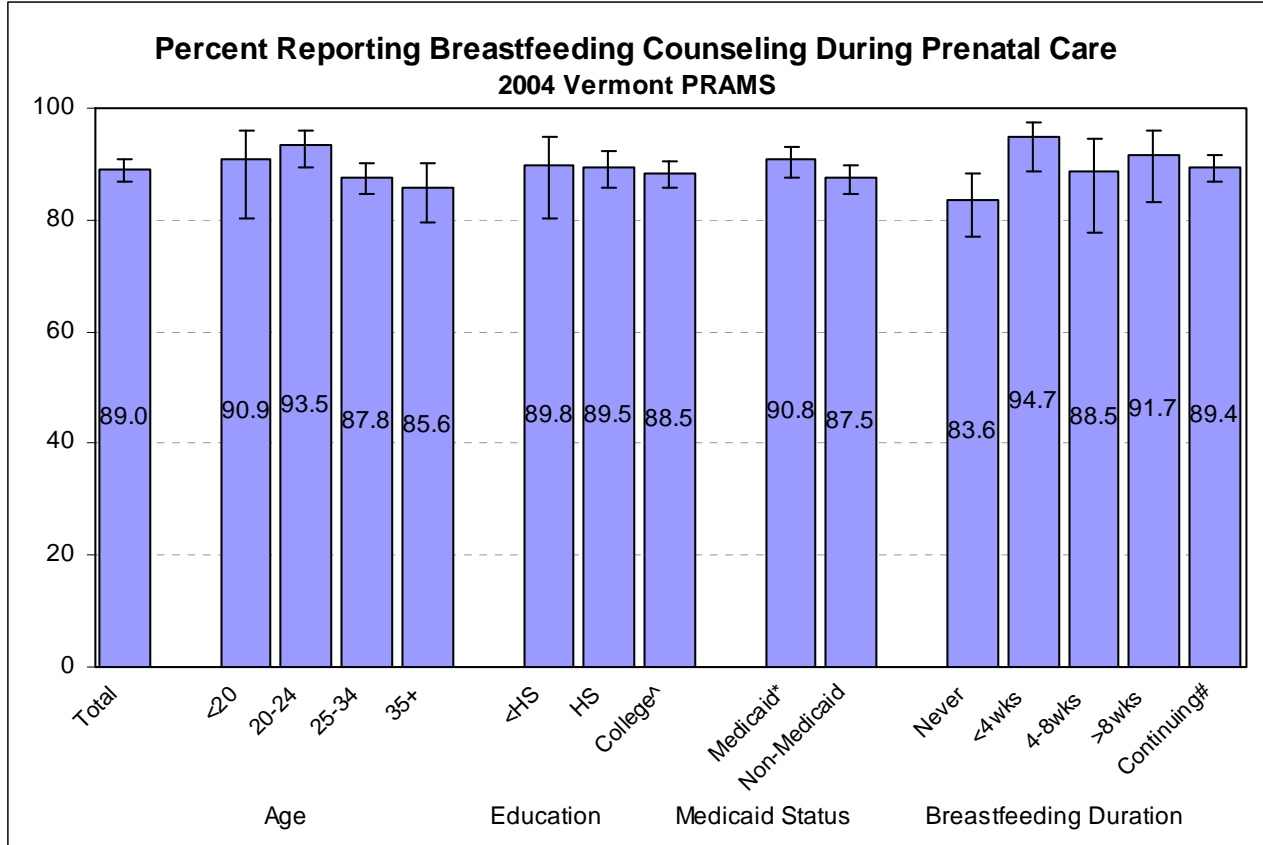
** Includes Dr. Dynasaur.

Breastfeeding as a Prenatal Care Topic

The percentage of Vermont mothers reporting that breastfeeding was a topic a health care worker discussed during prenatal care has remained high in 2004 at 89 percent.

This counseling appears to be fairly evenly distributed when examining age, education level and Medicaid status. Those that have never breastfed their new baby are significantly less likely to report receiving counseling on breastfeeding during their prenatal care than mothers who did breastfeed. However, since this data is self-reported this may be a reporting issue.

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** Includes Dr. Dynasaur.

Baby still being breastfed at time of survey.

The next PRAMS Data Brief will examine reasons reported for not initiating breastfeeding, reasons reported for stopping breastfeeding, and experiences in the hospital.

Questions or comments about this report may be addressed to John Gauthier, Vermont PRAMS Coordinator, jgauthi@vdh.state.vt.us, (802)863-7661 or to Mike Nyland-Funke, mnyland@vdh.state.vt.us, (802)863-7261.