

Status of Clark County Women

A Research and Report project completed by:

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In partnership with:



Springfield Foundation

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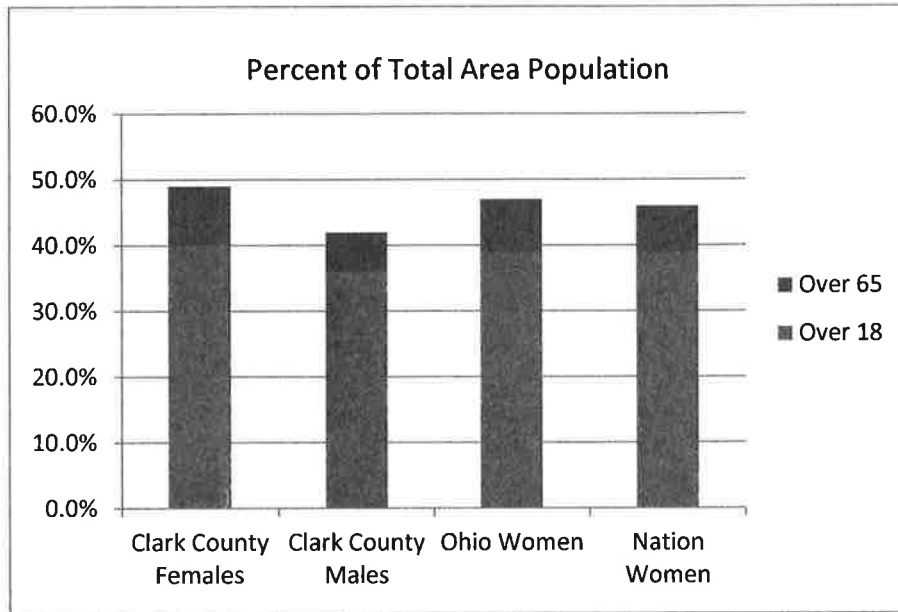


Steps to change women's lives for good.

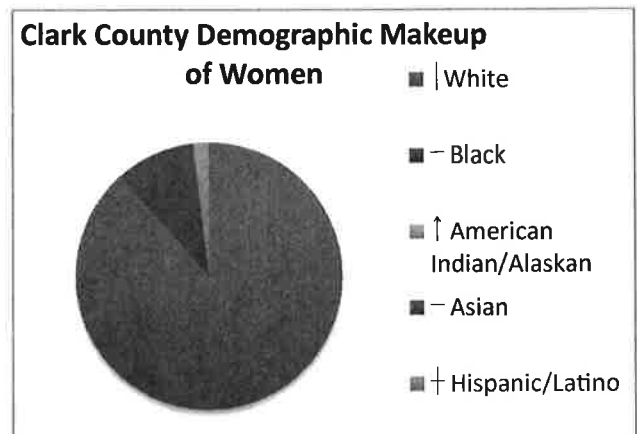
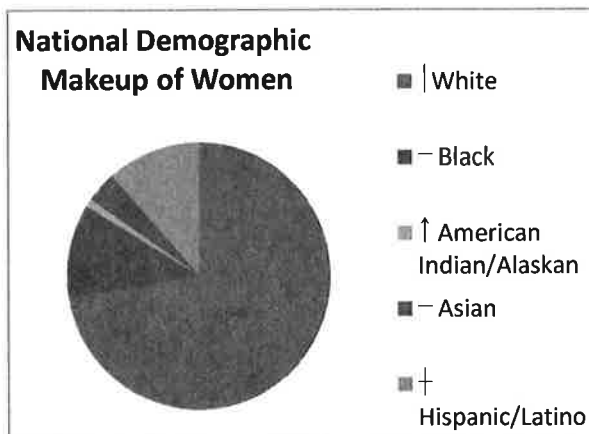


Demographic Information

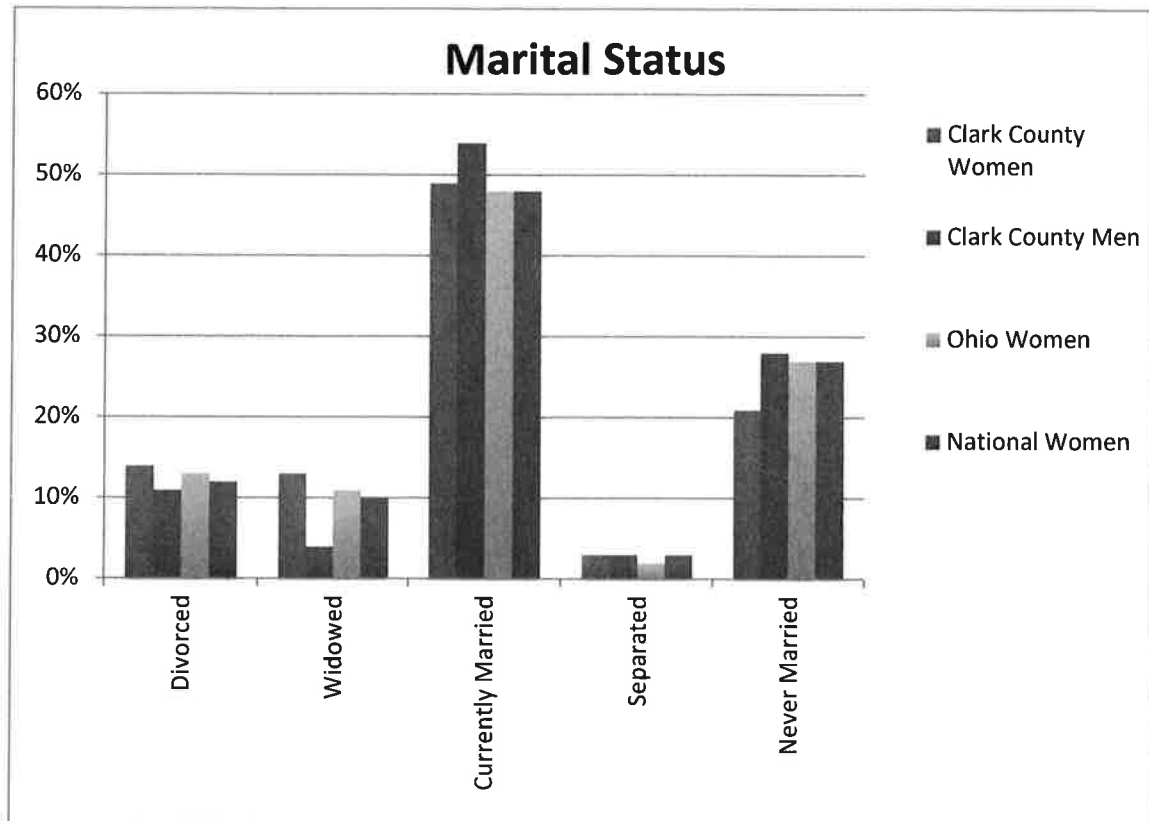
Of the residents of Clark County females aged 18 years and older make up 40.0% of the population, males in this age group account for 36.0% of the total population. Women over 65 years of age are 9.0% of the county population, which is slightly higher than males in this age group, which make up 6.0% of the total population. Both county population statistics are non-significantly higher than state and national averages.



The racial make up of the Clark County population is predominately white, with over 80.0% of the population identifying themselves as Caucasian. Black/ African American is the second largest ethnic group in Clark County accounting for around 10.0% of the population, and all other races including Hispanic/Latino account for around 2.0% of the total population. These numbers closely follow state and national averages with slight differences appearing in the larger percentage of whites in Clark County and the significantly lower percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents.



The marital status of Clark County women is consistent with their state and national counterparts. With currently married women accounting for 49.0% of women over 15, 14.0% divorced, and 13.0% widowed. Compared with Clark County men, women are widowed at a significantly higher rate at 13.0% compared with 4.0% of men over 15. There are also a higher percentage of never married men at 28.0% than women at 21.0%.



The percentage of urban and rural households in Clark County is split between 77.0% Urban and 23.0% rural, which closely mirrors state and national statistics.

7.0% of eligible Clark County women are currently enrolled in the armed forces; this is nearly half of the national average of 15.0% of women. However the percentage of veterans between 18-64 years is slightly higher than the national average.

Socioeconomic Information

Occupation and Status

Women are approximately half of the labor force of Clark County. With 6.85% unemployment, women are unemployed at a lower rate than men at 9.0%. However, women report significantly smaller average earnings than men in the county, and are also below state and national averages. Men earn on average 22.3% more than women in Clark County. The number of women owned/led businesses accounts for 28.4% of Clark County businesses, which falls between state and national levels of 26.2% and 31.6% respectively. An overwhelming majority of Clark County non-profit organizations

include women on their board of directors. The presence of women executive directors for such organizations is limited, although due to the small amount of published information on such positions no conclusions can be drawn at this time on the number of women holding executive positions.

Use of Government Assistance

Clark County women use government assistance programs on a whole more than their counterparts at the state and national level. While reported numbers of families using ongoing cash assistance is a slightly smaller percentage at 1.90% than state and national averages at around 2.5% each, Clark County numbers are reported for families rather than household units. Clark County data is also based on 2002 reports, due to recent economic conditions one would speculate that the number of families receiving cash assistance in recent years has increased. Clark County residents are enrolled in food assistance programs and Medicaid at a higher rate than state and national levels. 12.8% of Clark County women are enrolled in food assistance programs at a rate that is about 4.0% higher than state and national statistics. With 25.3% of women in Clark County receiving Medicaid, this number greatly outweighs state and national reports at 21.6% and 15.0% respectively. It is also important to note that of total recipients of government assistance women represent a higher proportion than men, particularly in the collection of child support and welfare programs such as Ohio Works First which report that 59.0% of participants on the state level are women.

Poverty Status

The reported rates of Clark County women living in poverty are comparable to those of women at Ohio and national levels. As seen in the data the percent of each household type living in poverty increases with the existence of children in the household. About 28.0% of households with a female householder are in poverty, 37.0% of those with the existence of children under 18 are in poverty, and 50% of those with children under 5 are in poverty. Also, compared with both total families and married couple families with related children under 18, households with female householders and no husband present report around double the percentage of families under the poverty level. Also, when comparing total families and married couple families under the poverty level, the rates for Clark County are slightly higher than both state and national reports. These reports raise concern particularly for those households with related children under 5 years of age; at such a pivotal time in development it is crucial to provide these families the support needed for a healthy upbringing.

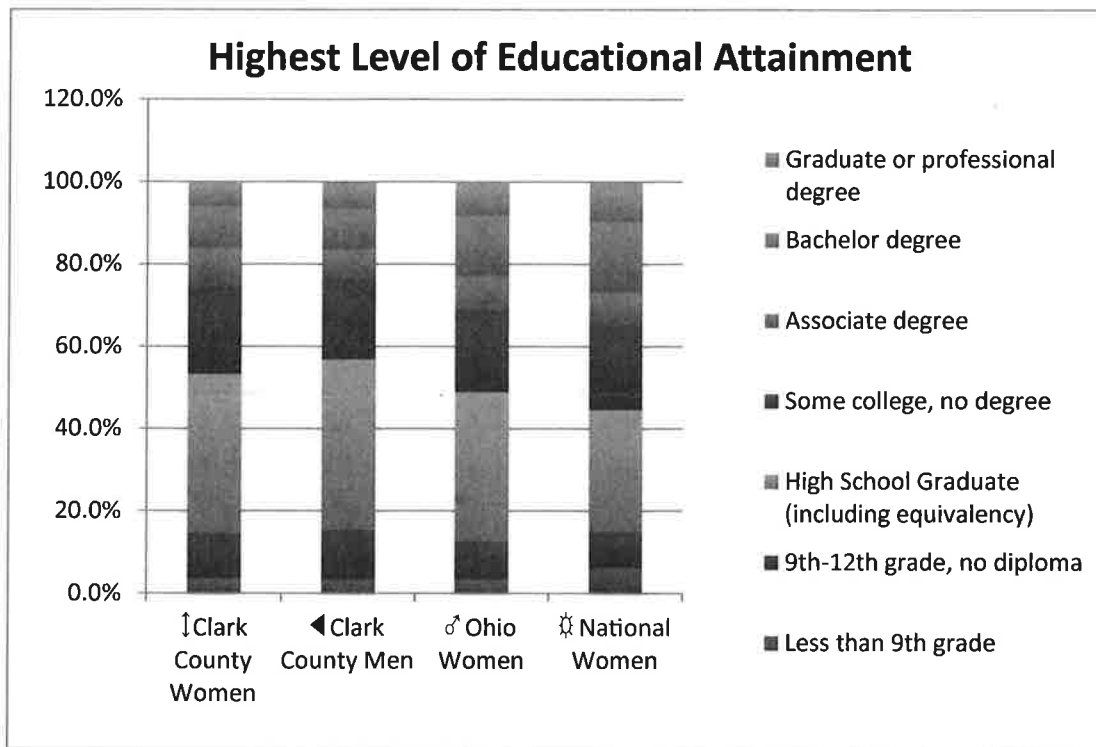
Female Householders

Clark County women head households at the same rates as women on state and national levels. This is true for both households with and without children present, those with children present accounting for 4.0% and those without children representing 9.0% of households. But, taking into account the great poverty discrepancies associated with female householders with no husband present compared to others, it is notable that 9.0% of total Clark County households are headed by females with children under 18 and no husband present.

Education

Highest Level of Educational Attainment

In general women in Clark County’s highest level of educational attainment is lower than state and national averages. Although the percent of women who have attained a high school diploma or GED is comparable to state and national averages at around 38.0%, the number who have attained a bachelors or professional degree is significantly lower at 10.0% completing a bachelors degree compared with 17.2% of women nationally. Women and men in Clark County report similar levels of educational attainment, with a slightly larger proportion of women completing post secondary degrees than men. The data represents the population over the age of 25, trends towards higher education may have changed since the survey data was collected thus affecting the results of the research.



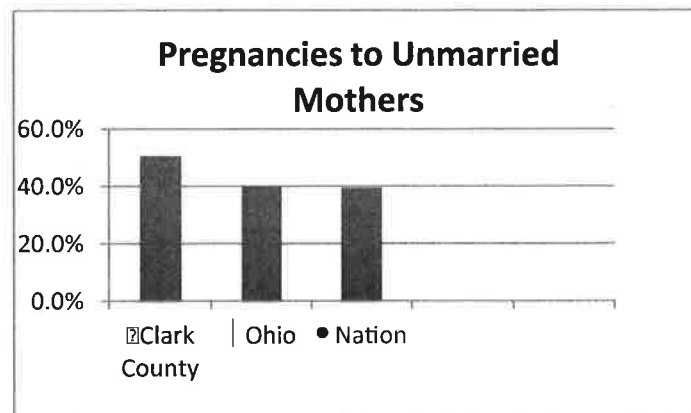
Health

Health Care Availability and Access

Clark County is designated as a health care provider shortage area (HPSA), and reports almost twice the ratio of patients to provider as the state of Ohio. This problem is further emphasized by the low number of medical professionals who serve Medicaid patients in the area. Both Clark County and Ohio residents are insured at a higher rate than the nation as a whole. 89.2% of Clark County residents are insured compared with 86.9% nationally. However, Clark County data reflects the total population whereas the national data is for the female population only. It is unclear whether there is a significant difference between the rates at which men are insured compared to women.

Reproductive and Sexual Health

Clark County reports higher teenage birth rates, pregnancies to unmarried mothers, and infant mortality rate than both the state and the nation. Clark County's teenage birth rate is 25.2 per 1,000 live births, and the infant mortality rate is 8.3 per 1,000 live births compared to 6.78 nationally. At the same time the amount of women entering prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy is lower than state and national averages. Only 67.8% of mothers received prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy. Half of all Clark County pregnancies are to unwed mothers.



With the exception of gonorrhea Clark County reports lower rates per 100,000 population for STD and HIV/AIDS infections.

Mortality Rates

Clark County reports a higher mortality rate than both the state of Ohio and the nation. However, this difference may be partially attributed to the differences in recording the data. The data is not age adjusted.

Mental Health and Alcohol Use

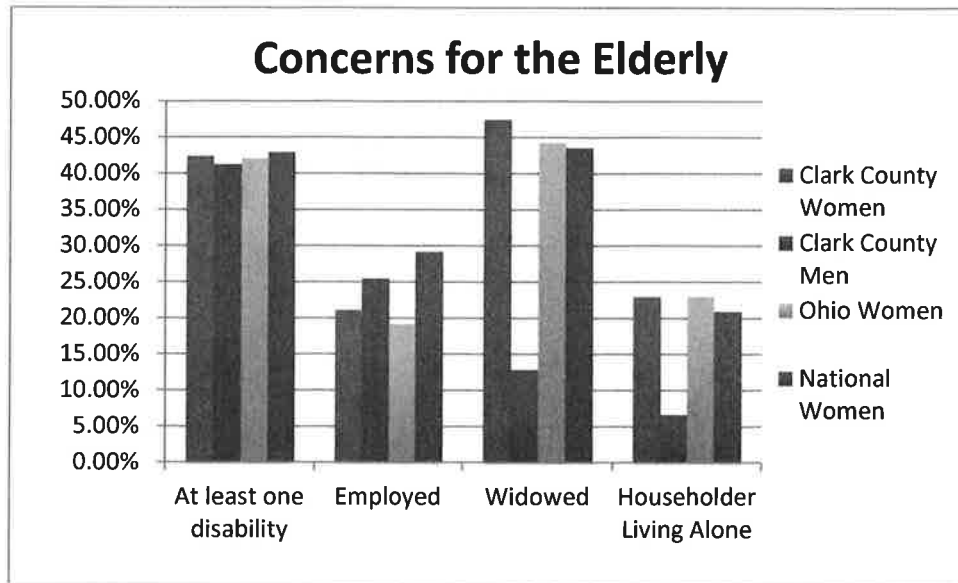
As a county the percentage of adults using mental health services is slightly higher at 6.80% than that of state and national levels each at around 3.0%. However, this data was collected from different sources and may have used different means of qualifying mental distress. The data also represents both men and women, although it was mentioned that more adult women than men use mental health services.

31.0% of adult females in Clark County are receiving substance abuse treatment. This data was not stratified by substance. However, according to the Count On Her Report, 8.0% of women at the state and national level binge drink. It is not certain whether or not this number could also be applied as an accurate representation of the Clark County female population.

Concerns for the Elderly

Clark County records similar rates of concerns for the elderly. Such concerns include the existence of at least one disability at 42.0% of the elderly population, elderly abuse, employment at around 80% unemployed* (need to check number, may not be true measure of those actively seeking employment), and widow status with around 45.0% of elderly residents who are widowers. However, elderly women are much more likely to be

widowed than men. And, the number of elderly women living with or responsible for children under the age of 18 is growing. Another concern is elder abuse. This data is vastly under reported but the state Department on Aging notes that is a growing concern for the community.



Crime and Safety

Rape

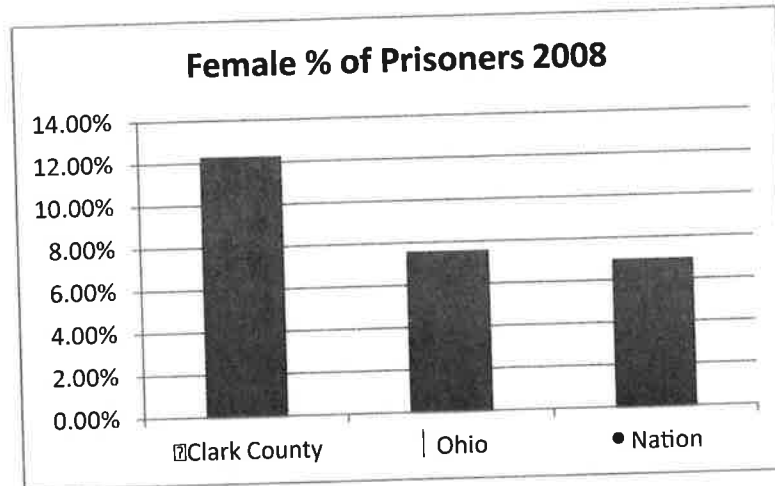
Clark County women reported rape incidence falls between state and national levels at 37.8 per 100,000 females. However, these numbers are for reported rapes only. It was estimated at the state and national levels that actual rape incidence is nearly double the reported number. It can be assumed that these projections could be mirrored in Clark County as well.

Domestic Violence

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics 10.4 per 1,000 women in Clark County experience intimate partner violence. This is much higher than the national average of 3.9 women. This area of data collection was extremely varied, and it is assumed that a large number of incidences go unreported.

Criminal Activity

Clark County intake profiles indicate that women account for around 12.0% of prison inmates. This rate is higher than state and national averages at around 7.0% for both. Based on this data it can be assumed that the intake rate per 100,000 women is much higher than the 66.0 and 68.0 rates reported by the state and nation respectively.



Substance Abuse at Time of Arrest

Clark County intake records indicate that nearly one quarter of inmates were under the influence of drugs at the time of their arrest, 12.5% were abusing alcohol, and 17.0% abused some form of both substances. These numbers are for total intakes, not solely women.

Next Steps

To further utilize and improve the results of this study it would be beneficial to first establish what efforts towards improving women's quality of life are already being implemented in Clark County. There was a concerted effort made in the collection of data for this report to use government or accredited sources. However, there are still disparities in the data and some of the items may be outdated. The use of data from the 2010 census when it becomes available will be essential in updating the study.

One of the most pressing problems for the Clark County community seems to be the high incidence of teenage pregnancy and pregnancy to single mothers. This problem seems to cause a domino effect of other hardships for women in the community as well. Undoubtedly there are already groups established in the community dedicated to addressing this problem. But, with the Women's Fund root cause approach to solutions this may be an area of interest for the Fund. And is surely one that the Women's Fund can have a great impact on.

The most prudent measures that the Women's Fund can take are to collect information on what local organizations devoted to assisting women currently exist, continue to find and update the study with current data, and identify any local studies that have already been taken. Additionally, a survey of local women could be extremely beneficial in identify holes in services provided and areas of need for the community. I believe that the Women's Fund goal of addressing the root cause of problems in the Clark County community will distinguish their services from other local organizations and allow them to make a strong and lasting impact on the lives of women.