

2023 Texas WIC Feeding Practices Survey Statewide Results

Purpose

The purpose of the *2023 Texas WIC Feeding Practices Survey* is to provide the WIC state agency and local agencies with information about the infant feeding experiences of women who were actively enrolled with WIC during their pregnancy or their infant's first year of life. WIC will use this information to aid in program planning and activity development.

This report summarizes the aggregate data collected from all the local agencies across Texas. In addition to the statewide report, each of the 63 local agencies in Texas receives the survey results from their participants. Local agencies can use the report, along with other tools, to help inform their annual breastfeeding plan and determine areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

Methods

Actively enrolled WIC participants who were the biological mother to a child under 31 months old were randomly sampled from each local agency. For select small agencies, all mothers who met the inclusion criteria were sampled to ensure adequate representation of their participants. Mothers with more than one child were asked to tell us about their baby who was 1 year or younger. Mothers of twins were excluded from sampling.

Responses from each local agency were statistically weighted based on the agency's percentage of total state WIC enrollment (see table *Local Agency Weighted Percentage of Responses*, page 36). The Texas WIC state agency administered the survey from October 30 through November 15, 2023. Mothers who met the inclusion criteria were sent the survey link in a text message. The survey took about 10-15 minutes to complete and was offered in English and Spanish. No incentives were provided for participation.

Results

Responses were received from 9,350 WIC participants at a response rate of 8.0 percent. The results of the report are divided into 14 sections.

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Local WIC Agency Weighted Percentage of Responses

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Report Highlights - Hospitals and Birth Centers

Notable Highlights

Texas WIC mothers in our survey reported initiating breastfeeding at a notably higher rate than the national average (91.6% versus 83.2%, [2022 CDC Breastfeeding Report Card](#)). Survey respondents had a very favorable view of the infant feeding support they received from WIC, with just over 90 percent rating it as good or very good. WIC was identified as the place that mothers

were most likely to have received prenatal breastfeeding education, as well as the place that they were most likely to seek and receive breastfeeding help that effectively resolved the problem — as compared to a friend or family member, a health care provider, a private lactation consultant or a breastfeeding support group.

In contrast to these positive findings, 55 percent of respondents said they did not breastfeed for as long as they wanted to. This finding presents an opportunity to identify the places in which WIC, health care providers and other community-based initiatives can reinforce their efforts to ensure moms are supported in meeting their personal breastfeeding goals. **Additional strengths and areas of opportunity are discussed in greater detail on pages 38-41 of the report.**

Limitations

Survey findings are not comparable to the previous [Infant Feeding Practices Surveys](#) due to changes in survey administration and methodology. Age of respondents' children ranged from birth through 31 months old without even distribution of age. For this reason, breastfeeding duration results should be interpreted with caution.

Generalization of the responses to the entire WIC population is limited since a convenience sample of mothers was used. However, the limitations are somewhat mediated due to the large total number of responses received.

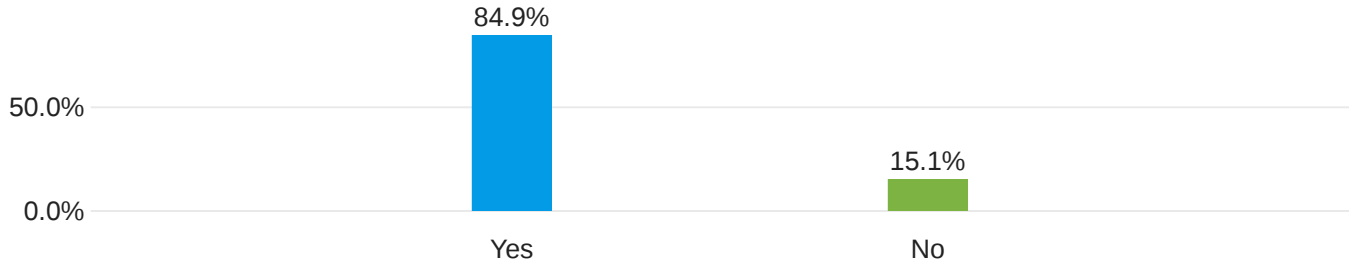
For questions about this report, please contact Lindsey.Gray@hhs.texas.gov or Betzabel.Botello@hhs.texas.gov.

To view the surveys in English and Spanish, please [visit this link](#).

Section 1: Demographics

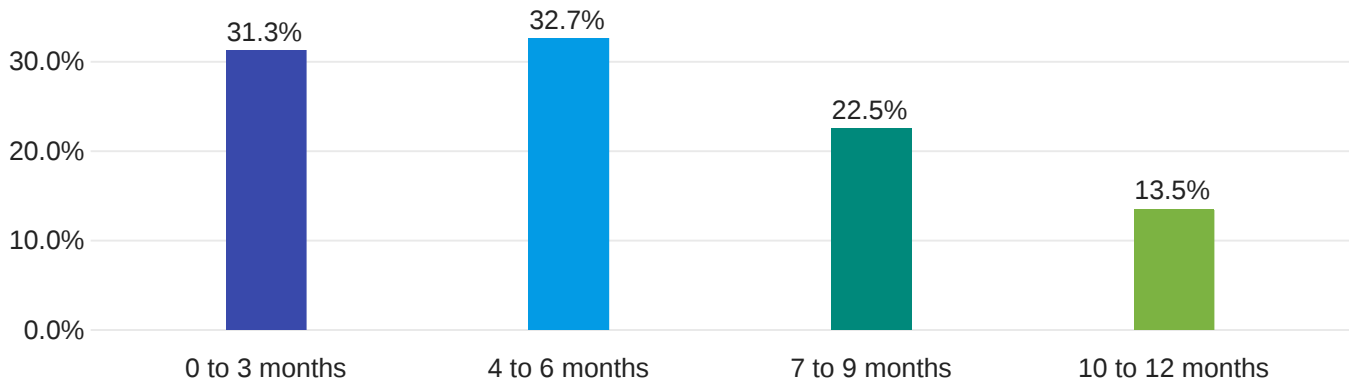
Q1 - Is your baby less than a year old?

9350 Responses



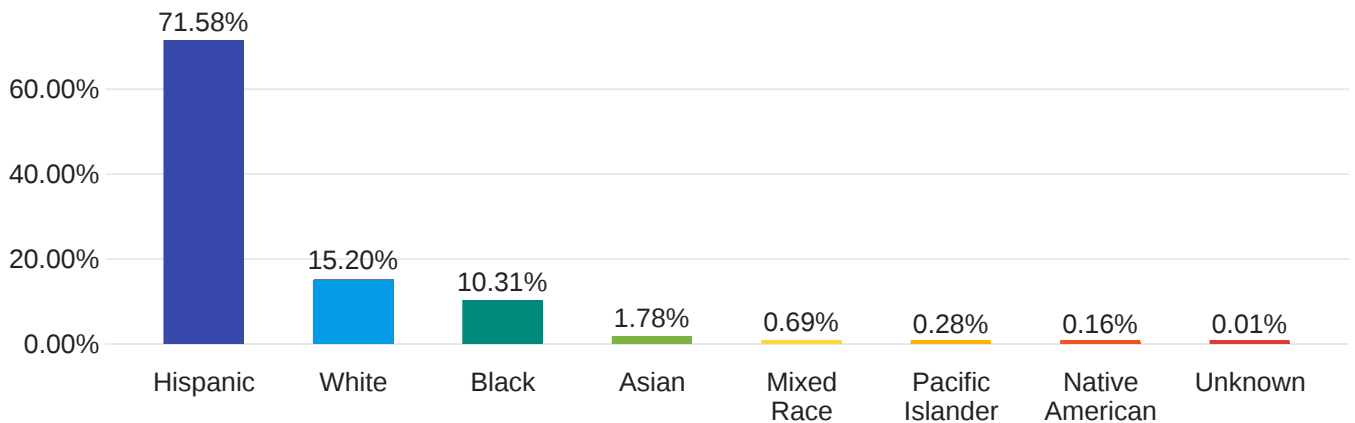
Q2 - If your baby is less than a year old, how many months old is your baby today?

8022 Responses



Q3 - Mom Reported Race/Ethnicity

9350 Responses



Q4 - Mom Age

9350 Responses

Average Mom Age

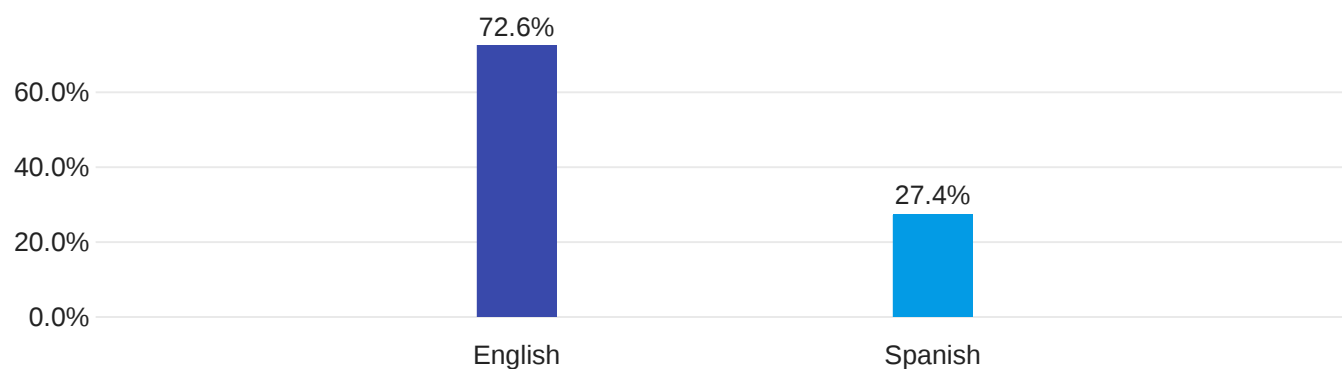
Mean

Mom_Age

26.8

Q5 - Language

9350 Responses

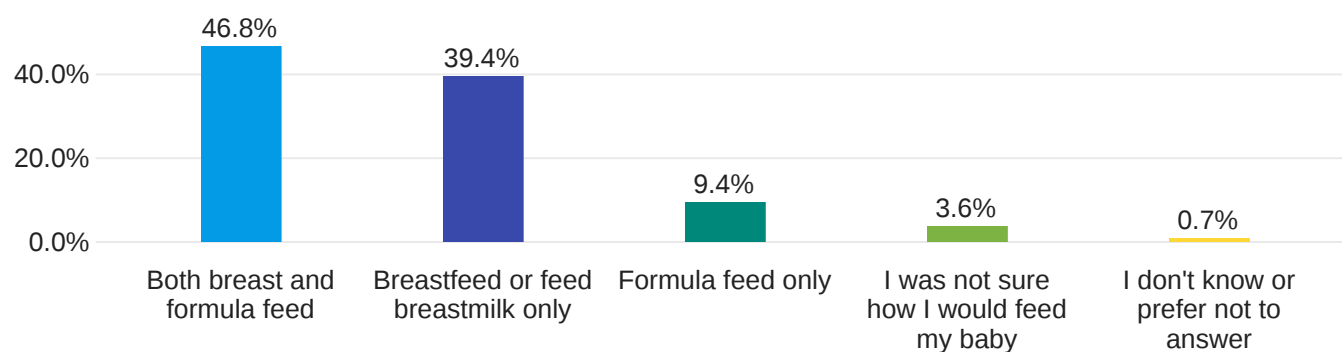


Section 2: Feeding Intention, Breastfeeding Initiation, Duration and Attainment of Breastfeeding Goal

Feeding Intention

Q6 - Thinking back to the time when you were pregnant, how did you plan to feed your baby during his or her first weeks of life?

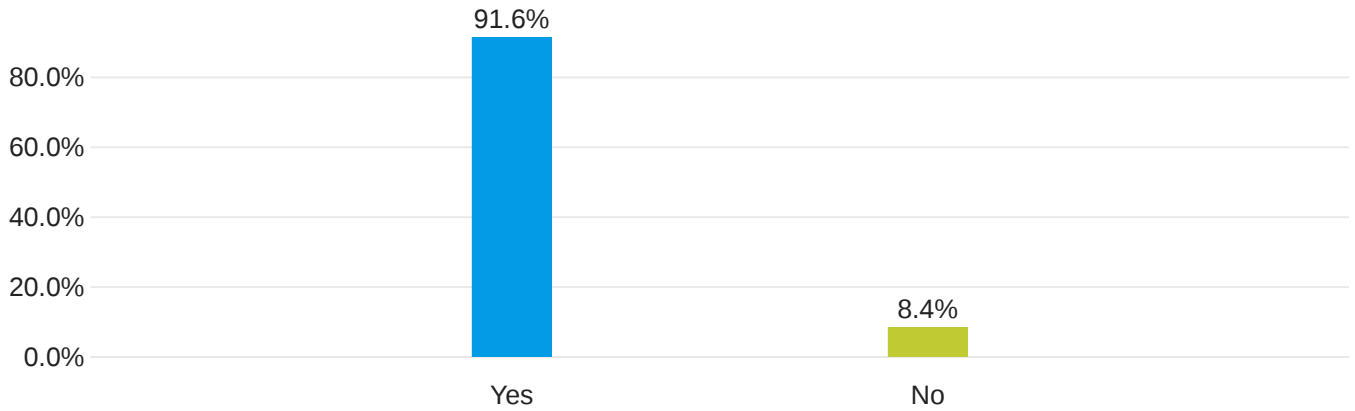
9350 Responses



Breastfeeding Initiation

Q7 - Was your child ever breastfed or fed breastmilk even if only once?

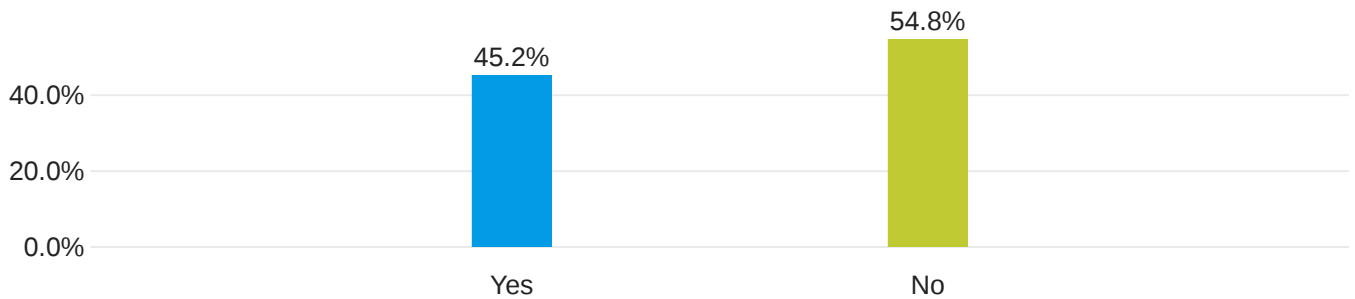
9350 Responses



Current Breastfeeding Status

Q8 - Are you still breastfeeding this baby?

8508 Responses

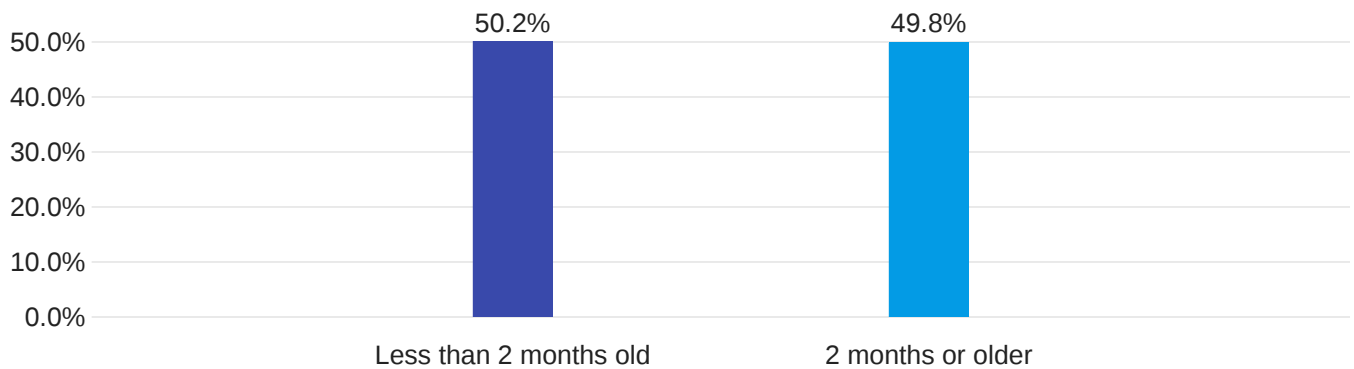


Breastfeeding Duration

These questions were asked of mothers who reported their child was ever breastfed but is no longer breastfeeding.

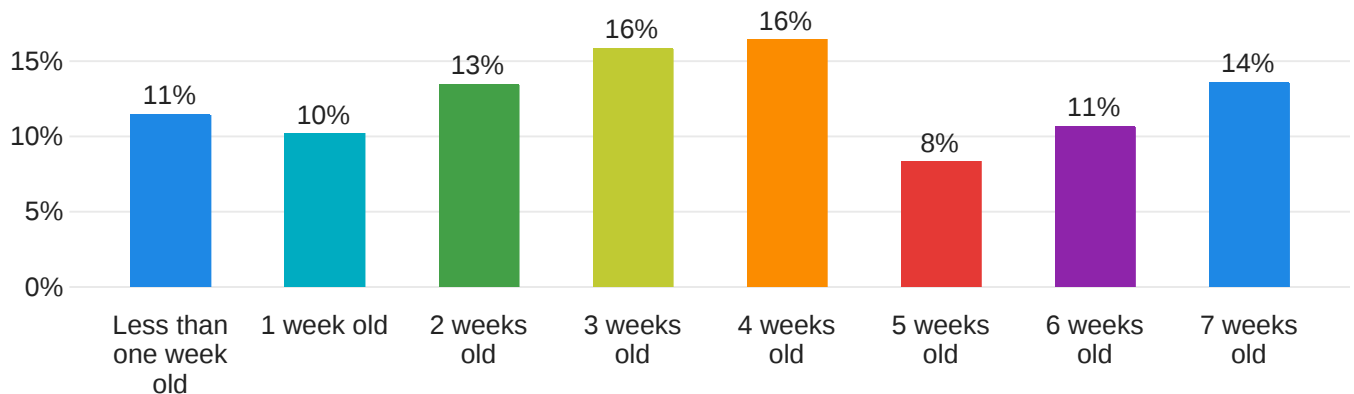
Q9 - How old was your baby when he or she completely stopped breastfeeding or being fed breastmilk?

4642 Responses



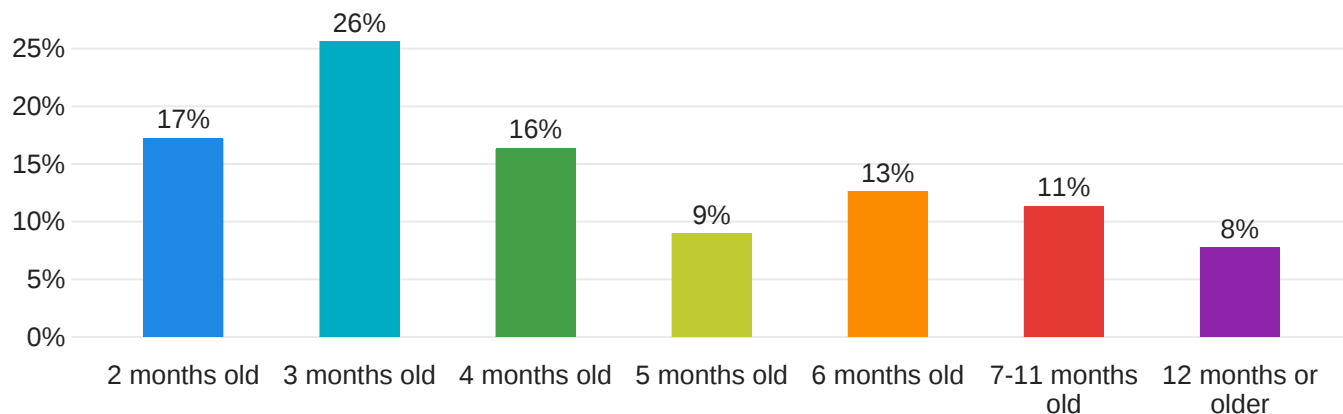
Q10 - If less than 2 months old: How many weeks old was your baby when he or she completely stopped breastfeeding or being fed breastmilk?

2361 Responses



Q11 - If 2 months old or older: How many **months** old was your baby when he or she completely stopped breastfeeding or being fed breastmilk?

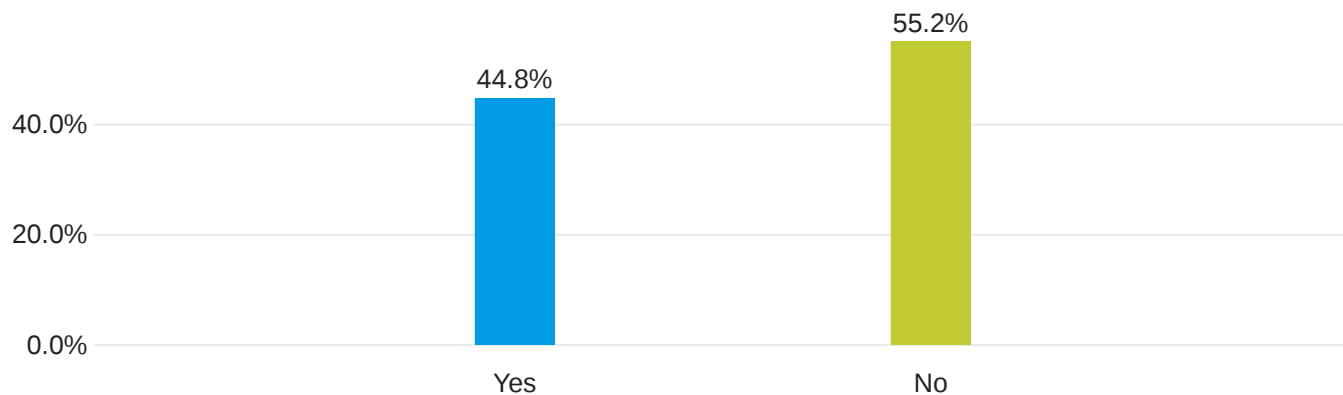
2251 Responses



Attainment of Breastfeeding Goal

Q12 - Did you breastfeed for as long as you wanted to?

4645 Responses

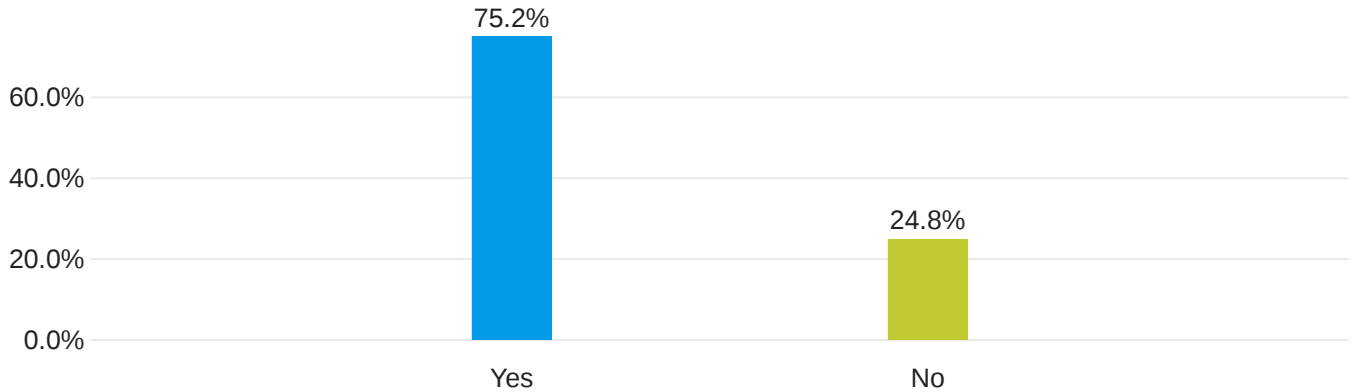


Section 3: Introduction of Foods or Liquids Other Than Breastmilk

The following two tables contain data derived from TXIN.

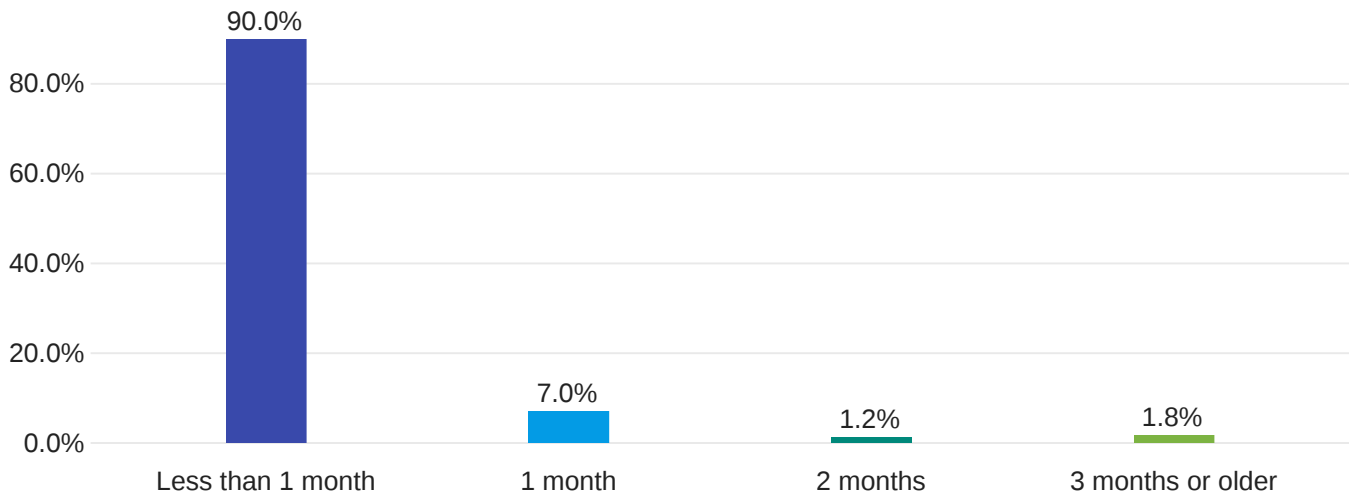
Q13 - Has your infant ever received formula?

8176 Responses



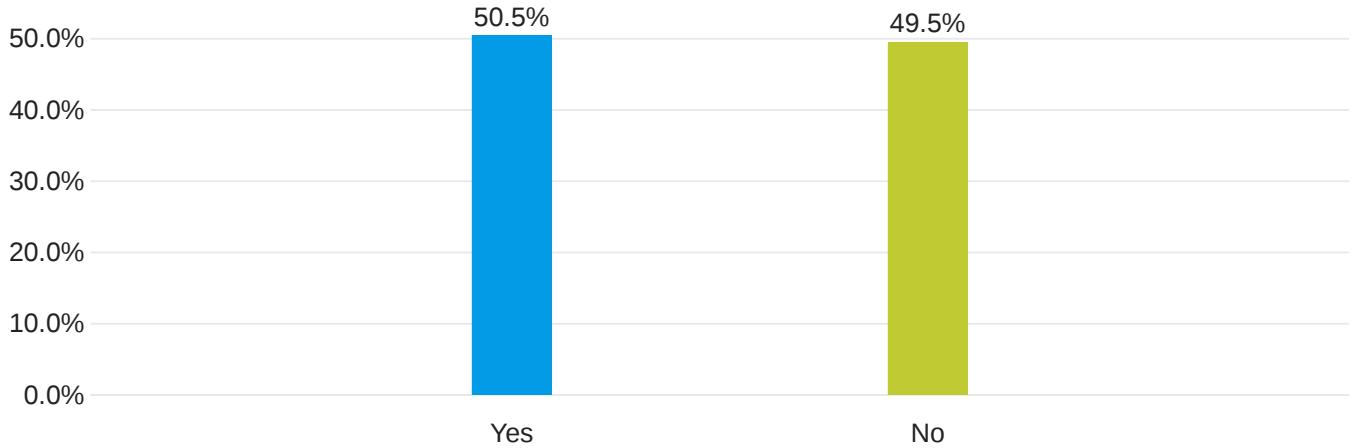
Q14 - What is the age in months that formula was first given to your infant? (Of infants who have ever received formula.)

6184 Responses



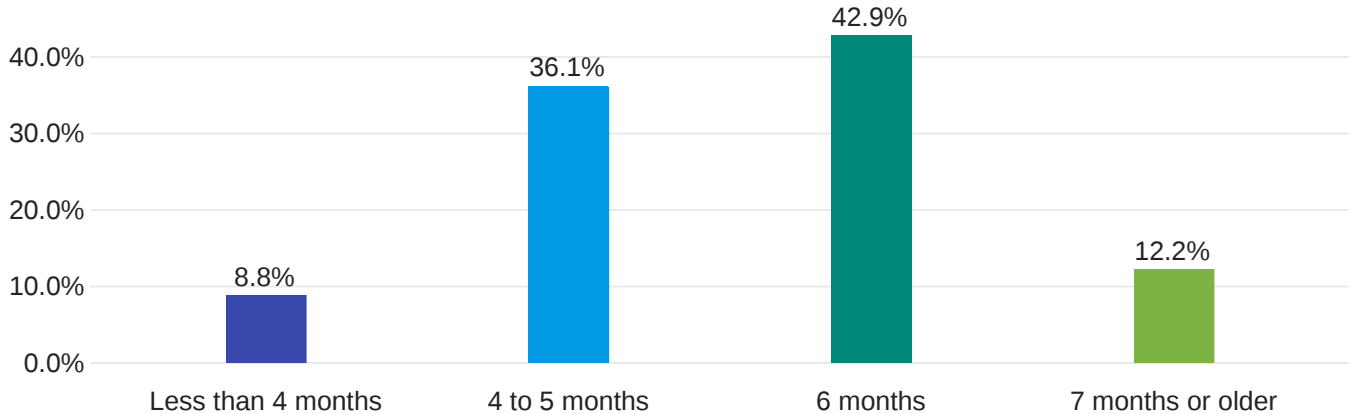
Q15 - Has your baby received any foods or liquids other than breastmilk or formula? This includes water, tea or any solids or pureed foods.

9350 Responses



Q16 - How old was your baby when he or she first had any foods or liquids other than breastmilk or formula? This includes water, tea, or any solids or pureed foods.

4400 Responses

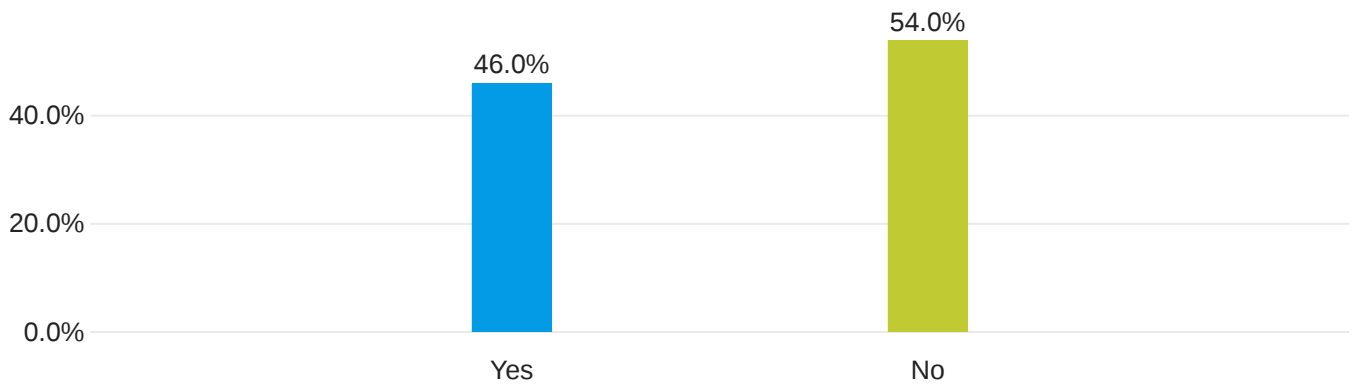


Section 4: Prenatal Breastfeeding Education, WIC During Pregnancy, WIC Infant Feeding Support

Prenatal Breastfeeding Education

Q17 - During the time that you were pregnant, did you take a class or learn about breastfeeding?

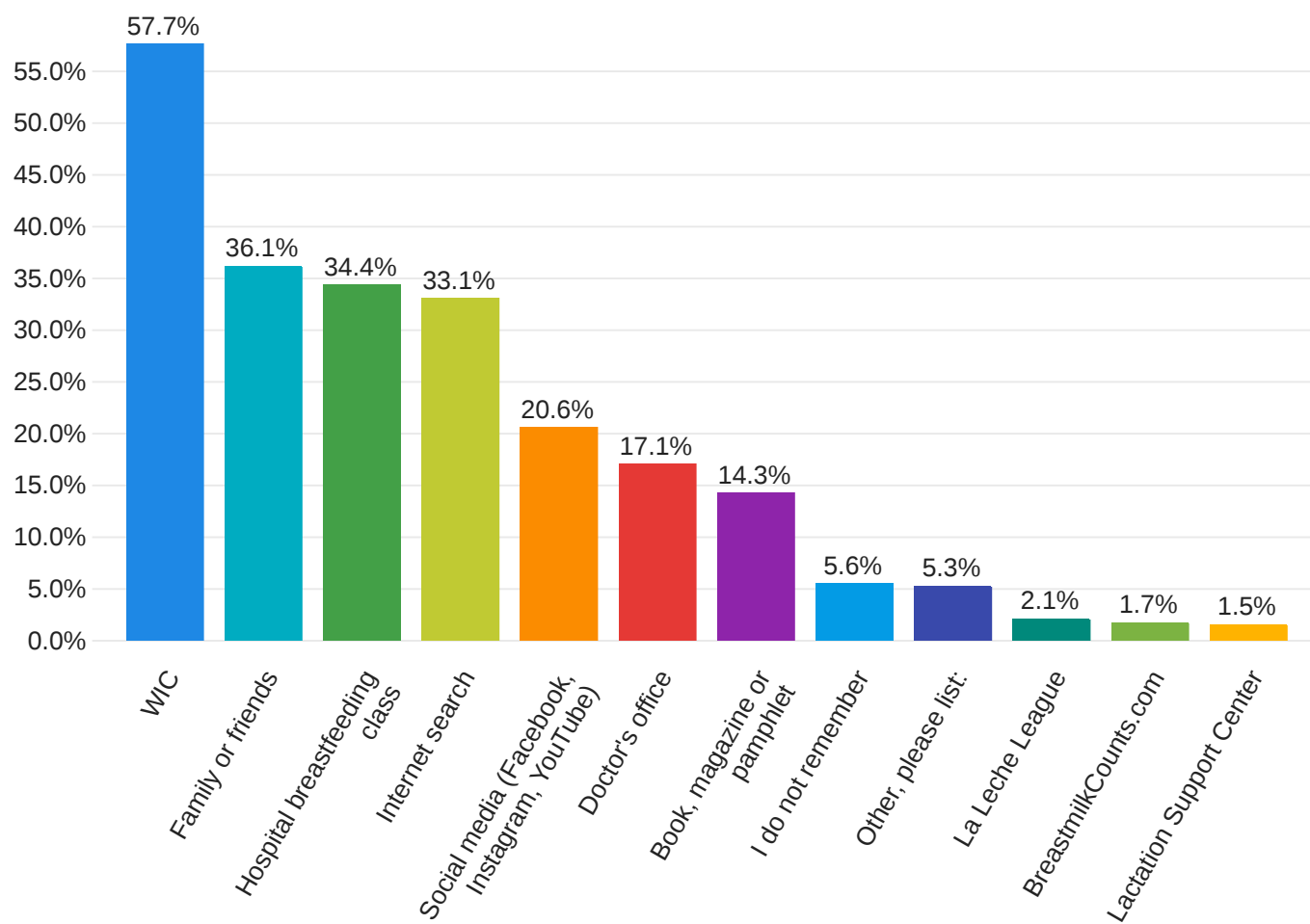
9350 Responses



The following question was asked of mothers who reported they took a class or learned about breastfeeding during the time they were pregnant.

Q18 - Where did you learn about breastfeeding during the time that you were pregnant? (Mark all that apply)

4209 Responses



Themes for those who selected "Other":

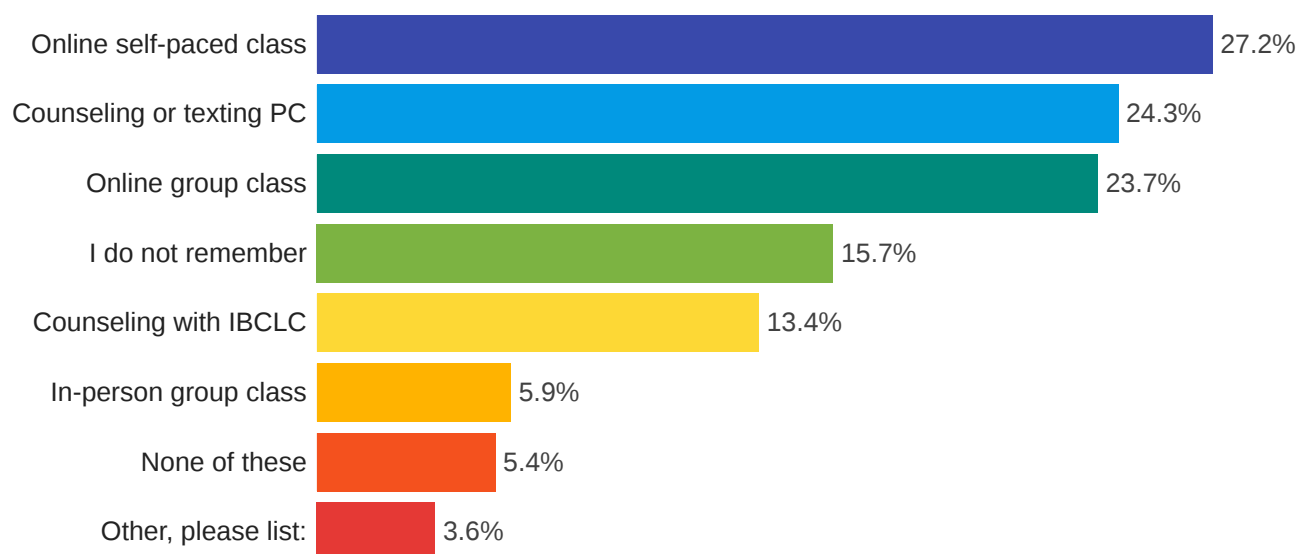
- Community partner (102 responses)
- Previous experience (50 responses)
- Doula or midwife (10 responses)
- Resource shared by my insurance (8 responses)
- AeroFlow (7 responses)
- Online class (6 responses)
- Birth center (4 responses)
- Familiar with lactation due to profession (3 responses)
- Apps (2 responses)
- All of the above (1 response)
- Advent-bottle/accessories company (1 response)
- Podcast (1 response)
- Ten respondents stated they learned about breastfeeding in the postpartum period instead of during pregnancy. Of these, 7 respondents stated they were helped by a health care provider in the hospital and 3 received support from a postpartum resource.

WIC During Pregnancy

The following question was asked of mothers who reported they received breastfeeding education from WIC during the time they were pregnant.

Q19 - What kind of breastfeeding education did you get from WIC during the time you were pregnant? (Mark all that apply)

2413 Responses

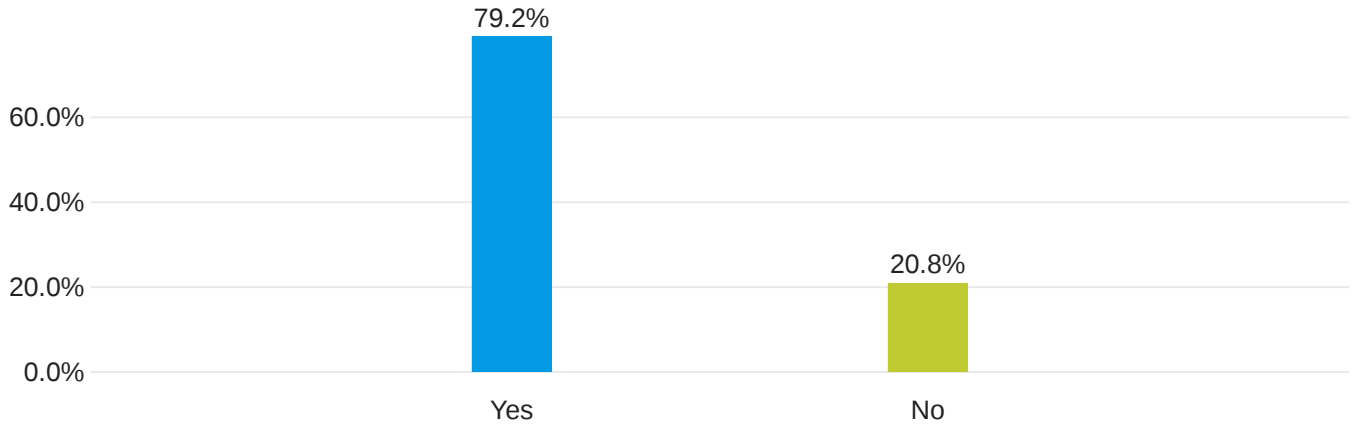


Themes for those who selected "Other":

- WIC pamphlets, brochures, magazines or books (35 responses)
- Phone call from WIC staff, credentials not specified (20 responses)
- One-on-one discussion with WIC staff, credentials not specified (10 responses)
- WIC online class, self-paced or group was not specified (8 responses)
- WIC class, online or in-person was not specified (5 responses)
- WIC videos online (3 responses)
- WIC Baby Café (1 response)
- WIC in Puerto Rico (1 response)

Q20 - Did you get WIC services while you were pregnant?

9350 Responses

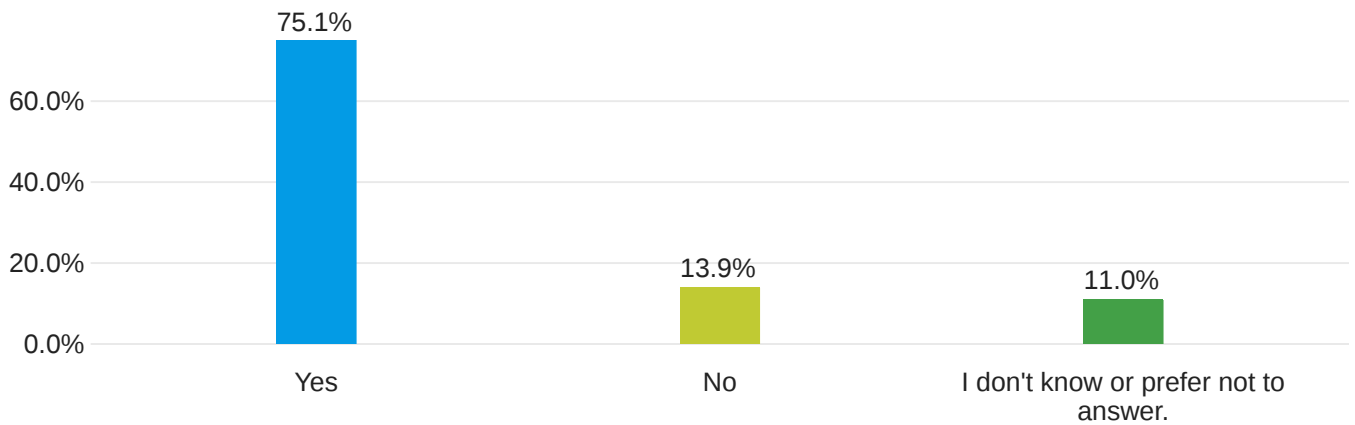


The following questions were asked of mothers who reported they received WIC services while they were pregnant.

The following statements are experiences that you may have had with WIC staff. Please indicate if you had these experiences.

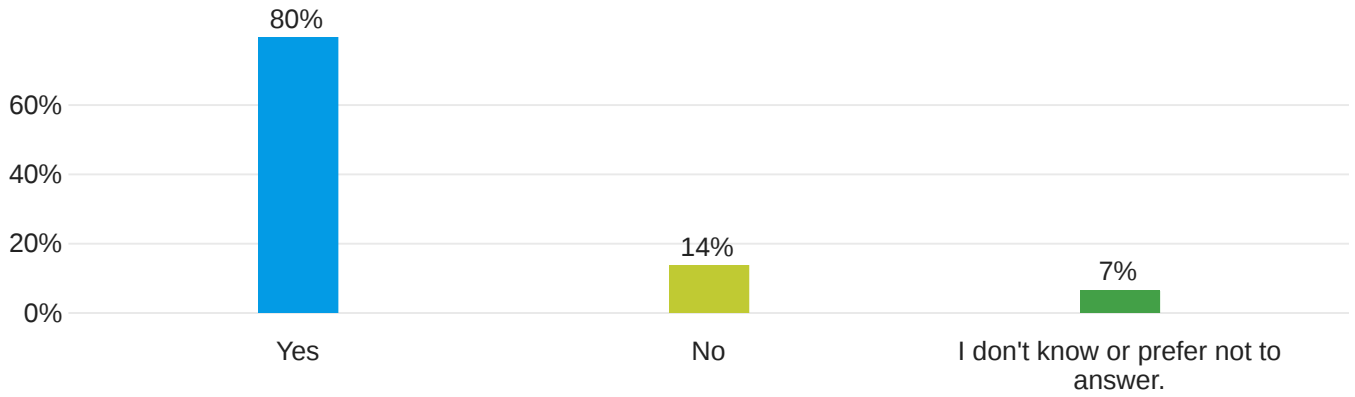
Q21 - WIC staff encouraged me to breastfeed.

7262 Responses



Q22 - WIC staff told me about the benefits of the food package for breastfeeding mothers.

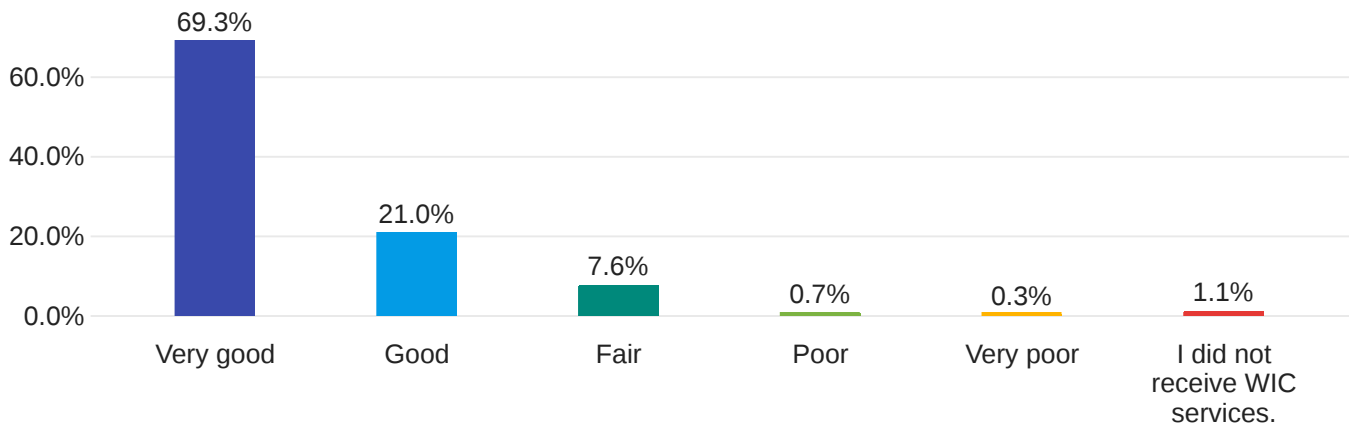
7262 Responses



WIC Infant Feeding Support

Q23 - How would you rate the support you received with infant feeding from WIC staff?

9350 Responses



Section 5: Birth Experiences - Support in Hospital or Birth Center

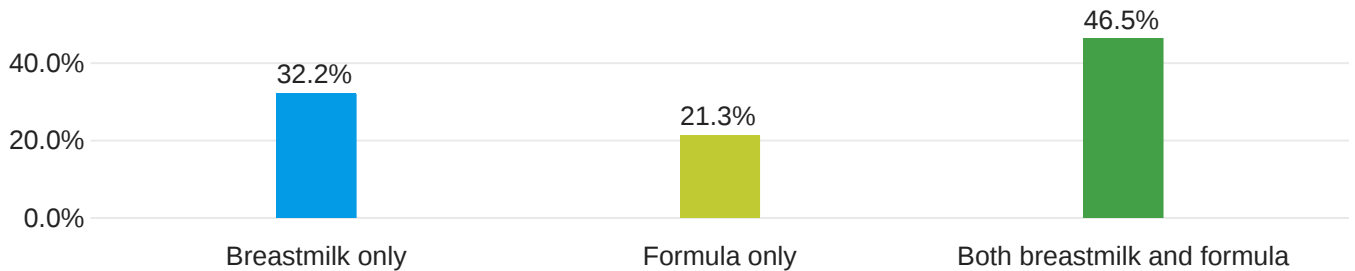
Q24 - Was your baby delivered by cesarean section (C-section)?

9350 Responses



Q25 - While your baby was in the hospital or birth center, what was your baby fed?

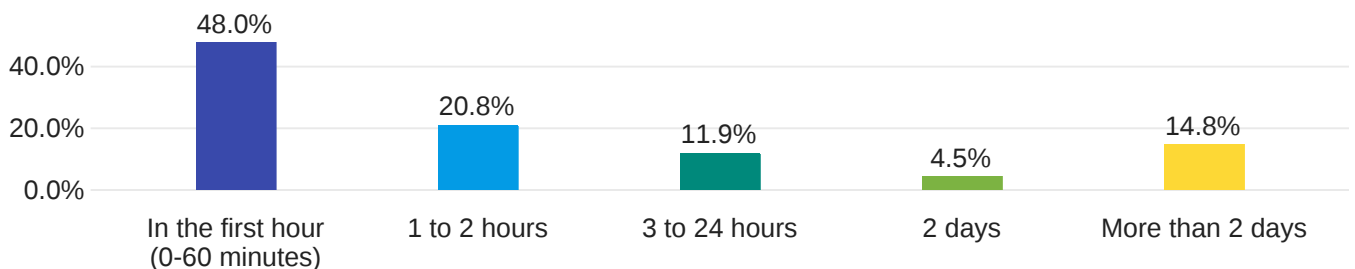
9350 Responses



The following questions were asked of mothers who said, "Yes," to the question, "Was your child ever breastfed or fed breastmilk even if only once?"

Q26 - About how long after delivery did you breastfeed or try to breastfeed your baby for the very first time?

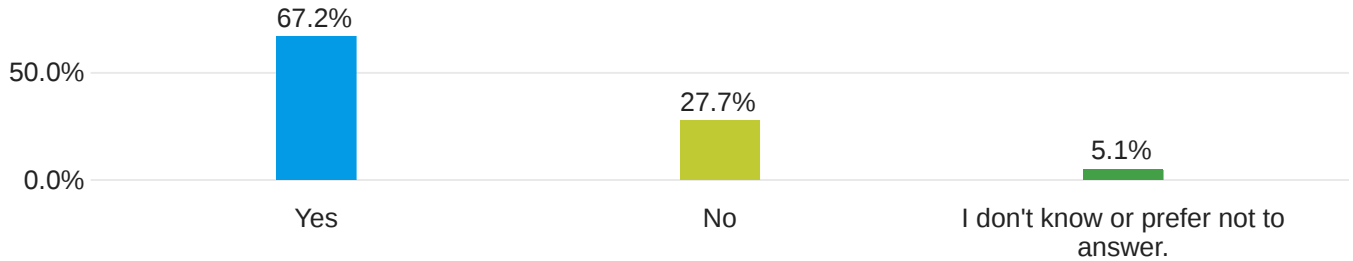
8508 Responses



The next 10 questions ask about your experience while you were in the hospital or birth center. While you were in the hospital or birth center for delivery of this baby, did someone...

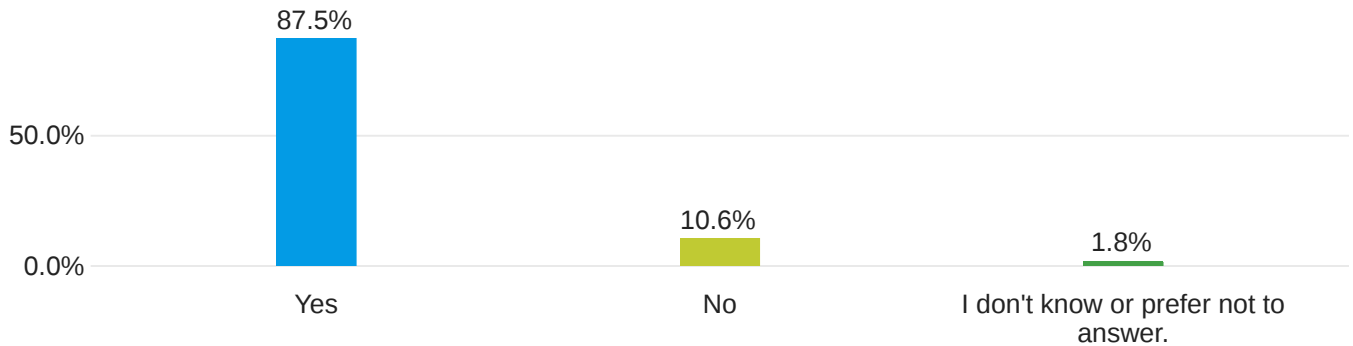
Q27 - Encourage you to give your baby only breastmilk?

8508 Responses



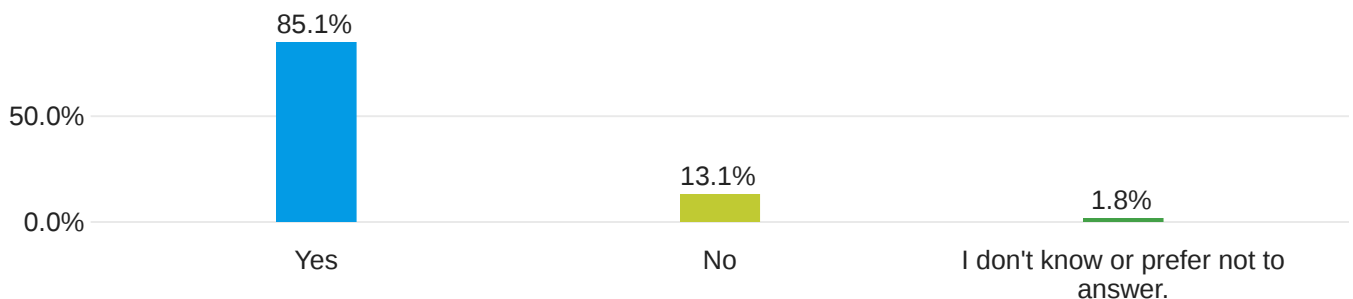
Q28 - Help you with breastfeeding by showing you how or talking to you about breastfeeding?

8508 Responses



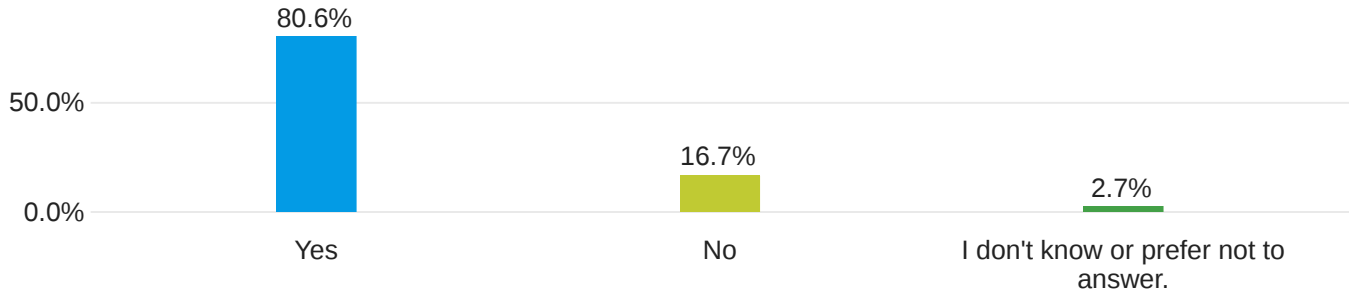
Q29 - Tell you how to know when your baby is hungry, such as when your baby sucks on his or her tongue, lips, hands or fingers?

8508 Responses



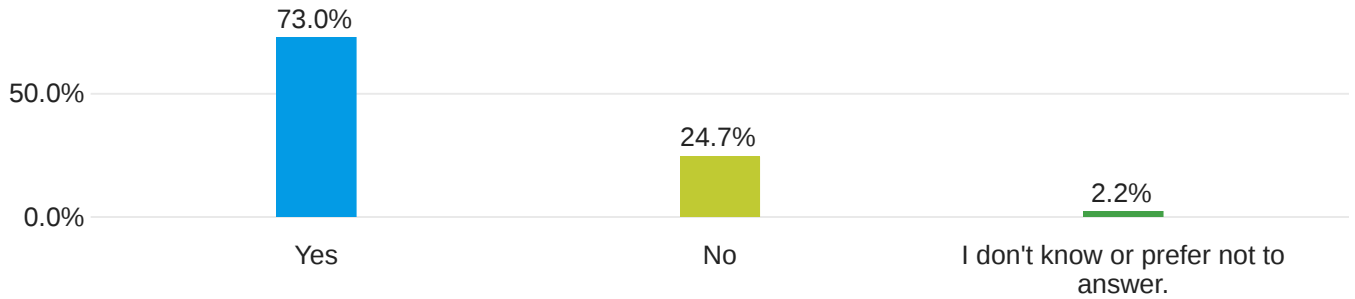
Q30 - Tell you how to know when your baby is getting enough to eat?

8508 Responses



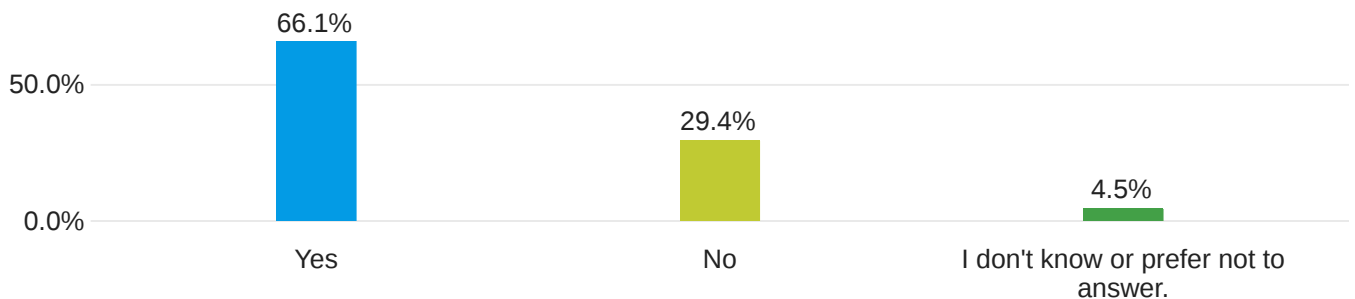
Q31 - Show you how to hand express (use your hands to remove your milk from your breast)?

8508 Responses



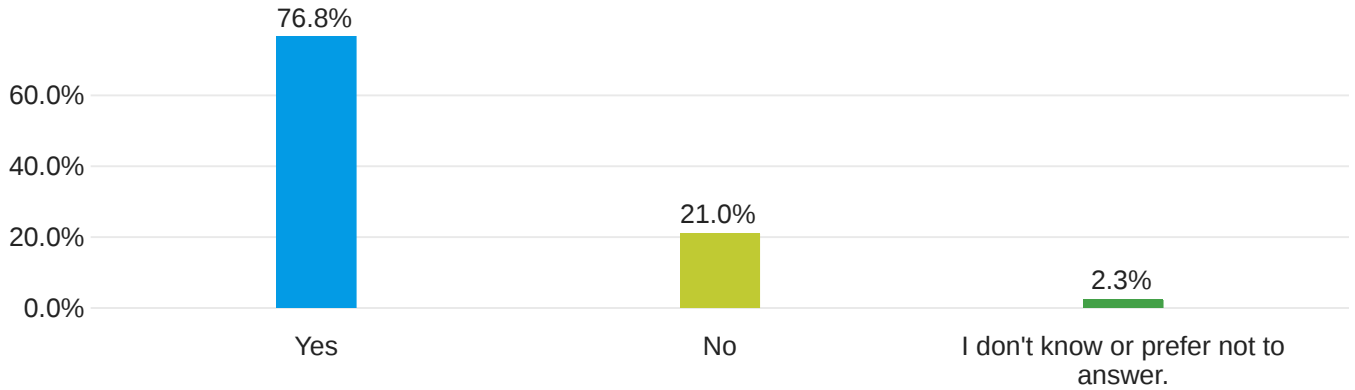
Q32 - Tell you to limit the length of time your baby breastfed (for example, tell you to breastfeed only 10 or 15 minutes per breast)?

8508 Responses



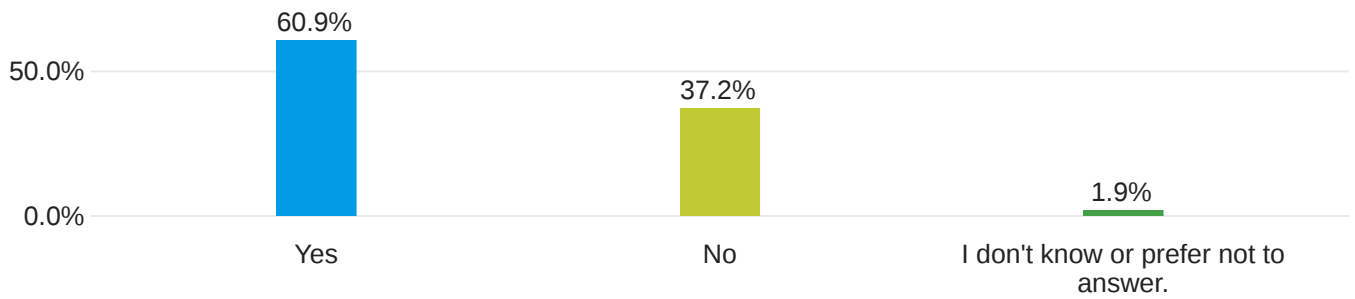
Q33 - Provide or offer formula?

8508 Responses



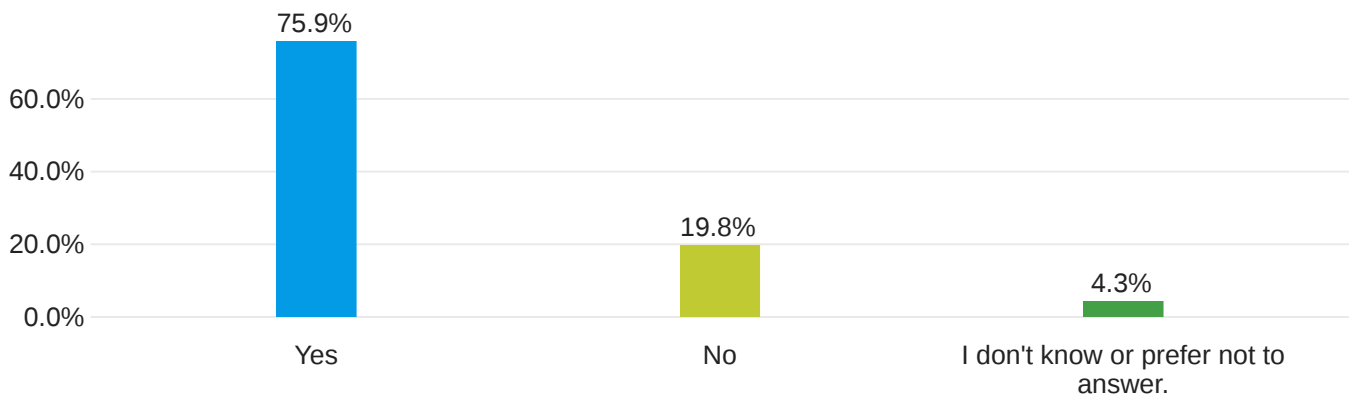
Q34 - Give your baby a pacifier?

8508 Responses



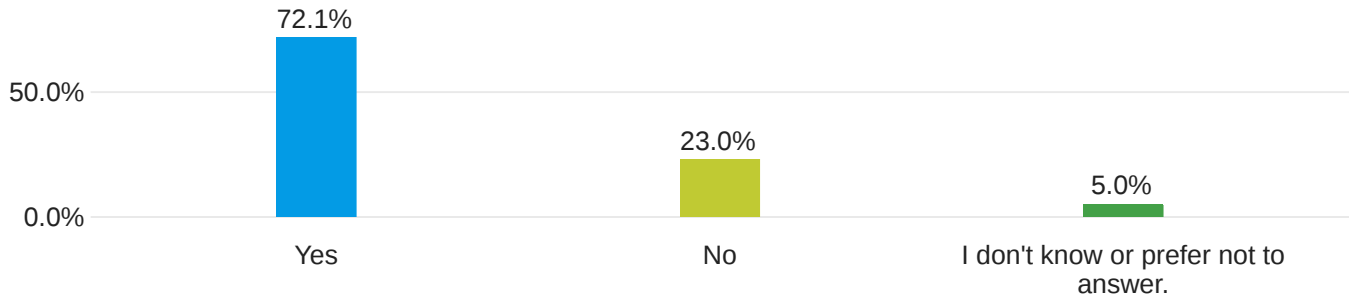
Q35 - Give you a telephone number that you could call for help with breastfeeding once you left the hospital?

8508 Responses



Q36 - Give you information about any breastfeeding support groups or services for help with breastfeeding once you left the hospital?

8508 Responses

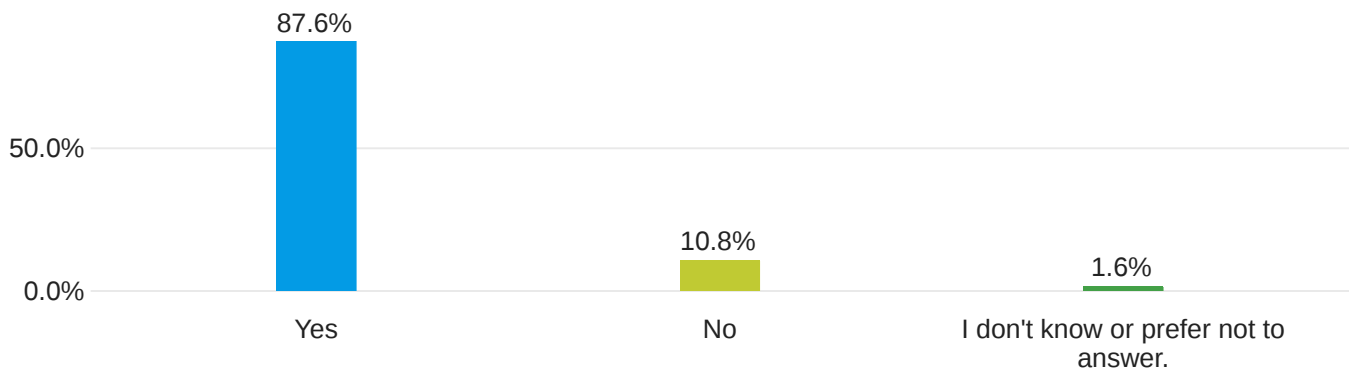


The following questions (except Q40) were asked to all survey respondents.

The following are things that may have happened while you were in the hospital or birth center when your baby was born...

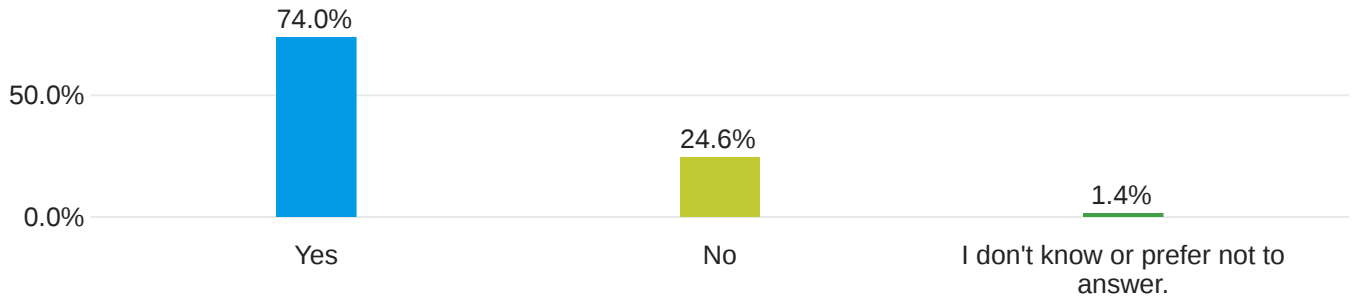
Q37 - I was encouraged to spend time holding my baby "skin-to-skin." (Skin-to-skin means holding your baby against your chest, under your gown, shirt or blanket, with your baby clothed only in a diaper and a cap.)

9350 Responses



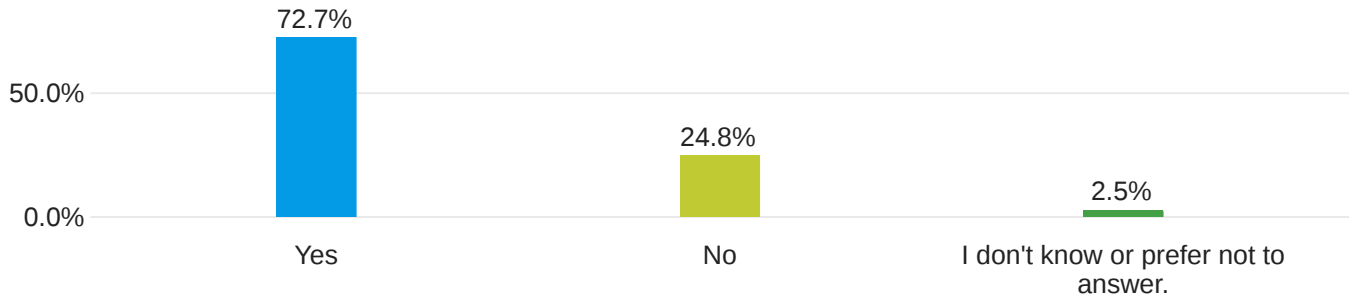
Q38 - My baby was placed on my stomach or chest "skin-to-skin" immediately after birth.

9350 Responses



Q39 - I was able to hold my baby after delivery for at least 30 minutes in the first hour after birth.

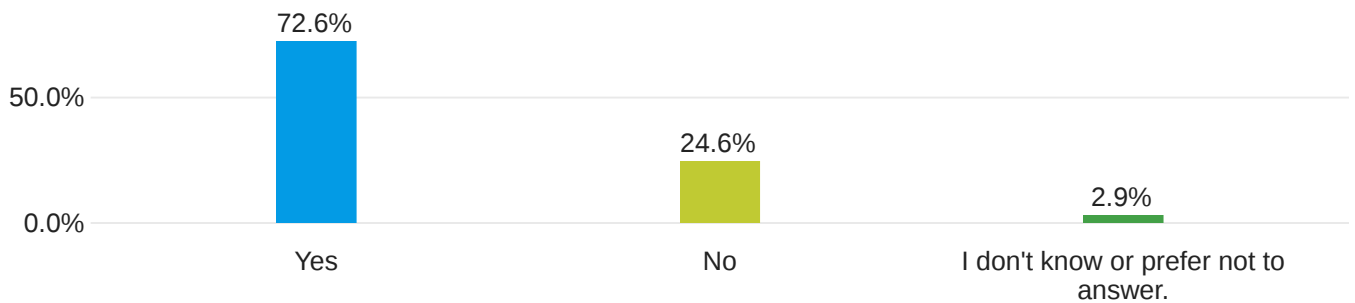
9350 Responses



Q40 - My baby received breastmilk for the very first feeding.

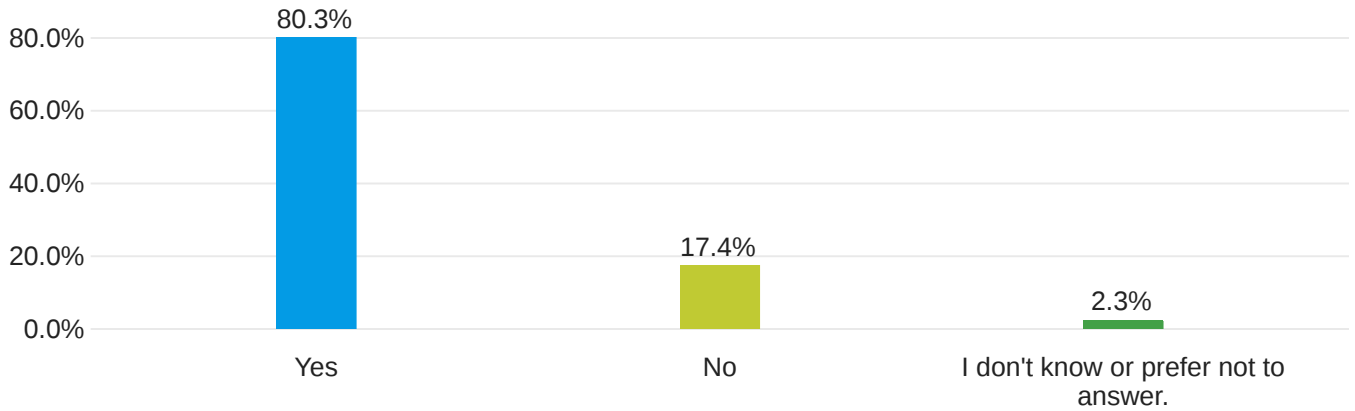
Displayed only to mothers who marked, "Yes," to the question, "Was your child ever breastfed or fed breastmilk even if only once?"

8508 Responses



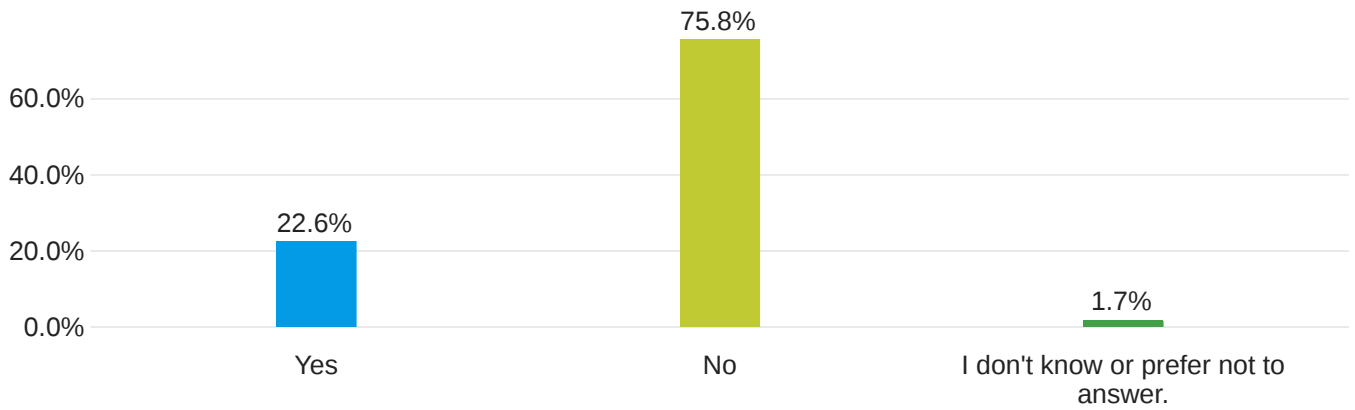
Q41 - My baby stayed in the same room with me at all times except for surgical procedures.

9350 Responses



Q42 - My baby spent one night or more away from me in the nursery.

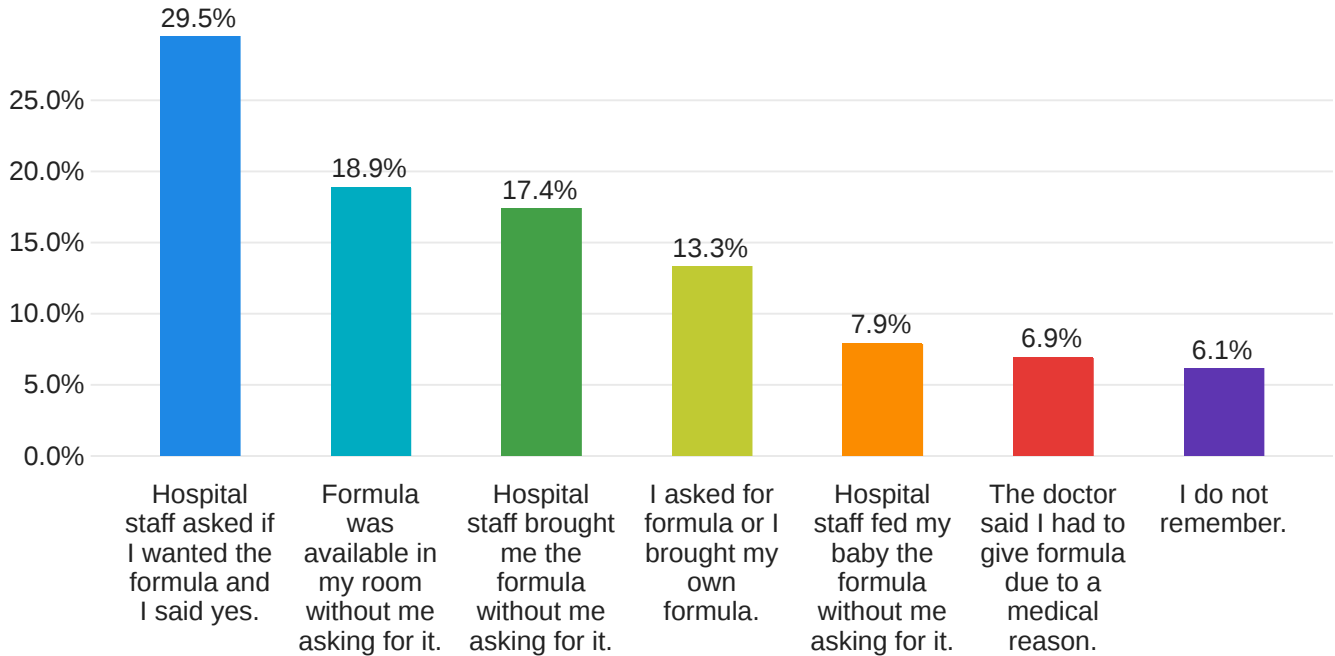
9350 Responses



The following question was asked of mothers who reported that their baby received formula while they were in the hospital or birth center.

Q43 - How did you get the formula for your baby the first time he or she was given formula in the hospital?

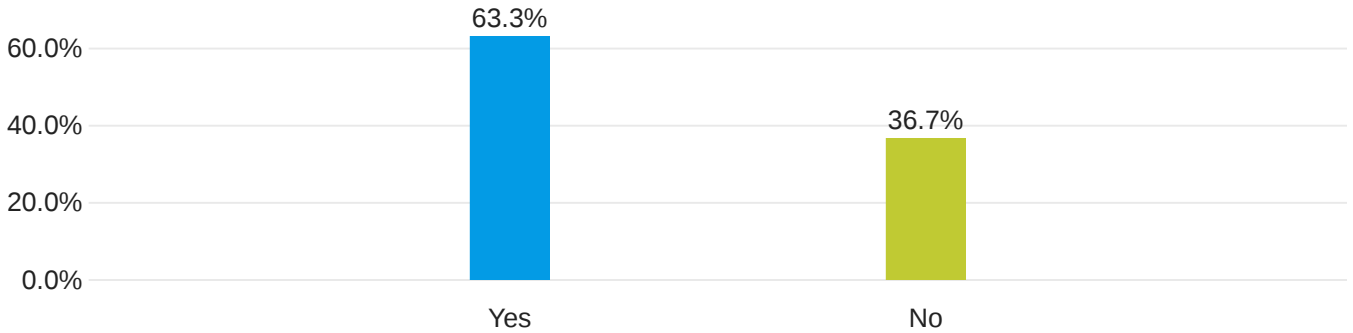
6364 Responses



Section 6: Free Formula Samples

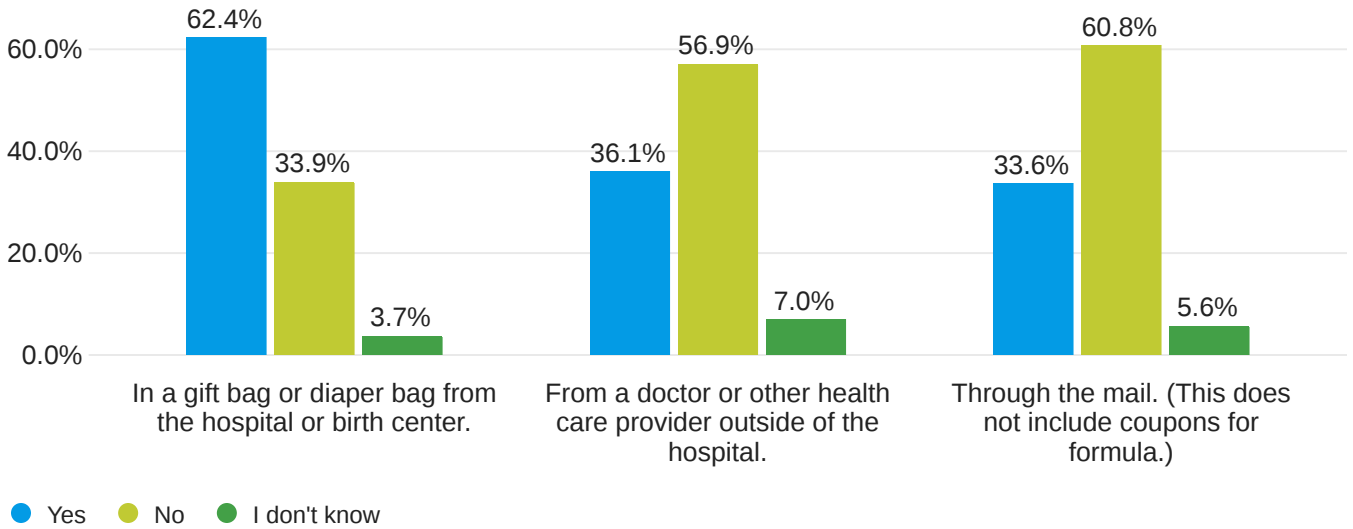
Q44 - Did you receive free samples of infant formula at any time during your pregnancy or after delivery?

9350 Responses



Q45 - If "yes" to the previous question:
Did you receive free samples of infant formula from the following...

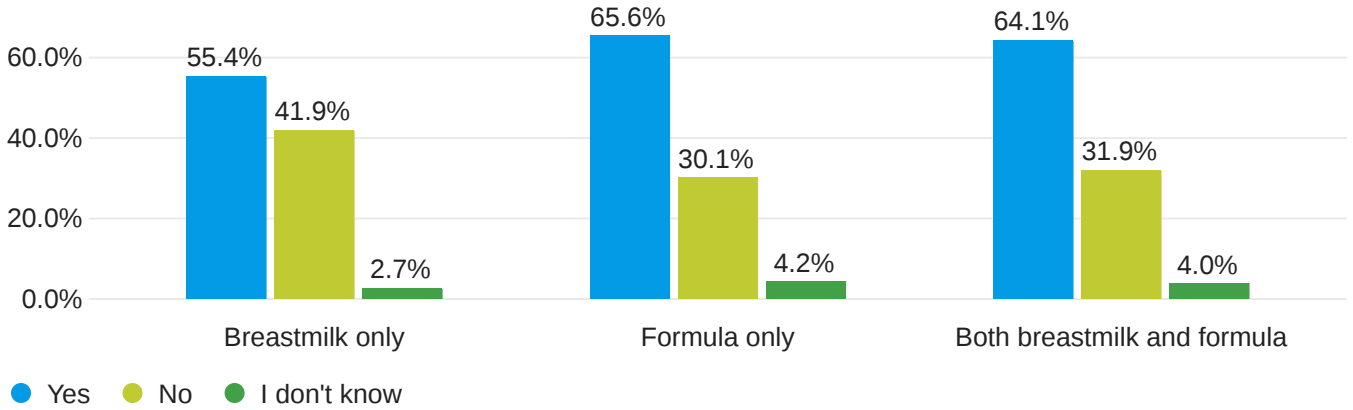
5976 Responses



Q46 - If "yes" to "In a gift bag or diaper bag from the hospital or birth center?"*

*Breakout by how baby was fed while in the hospital or birth center.

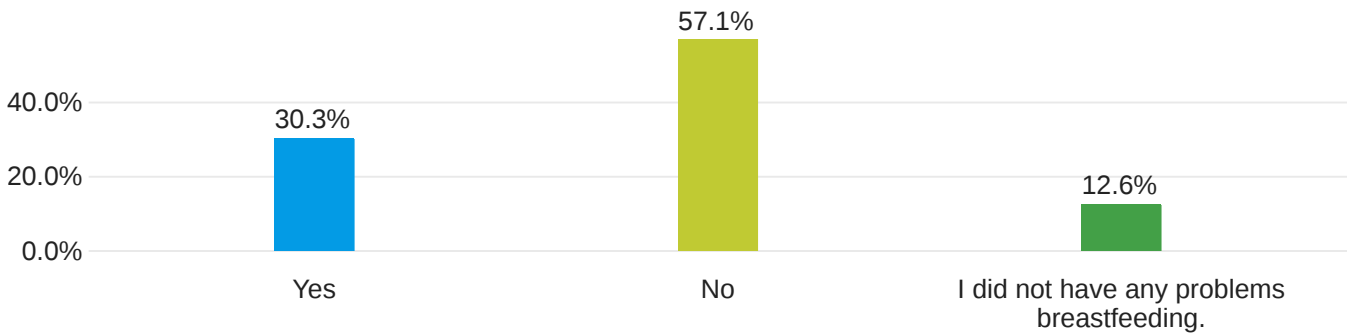
5976 Responses



Section 7: Breastfeeding Support Received After Discharge

Q47 - After you left the hospital, did you ask for help with breastfeeding problems?

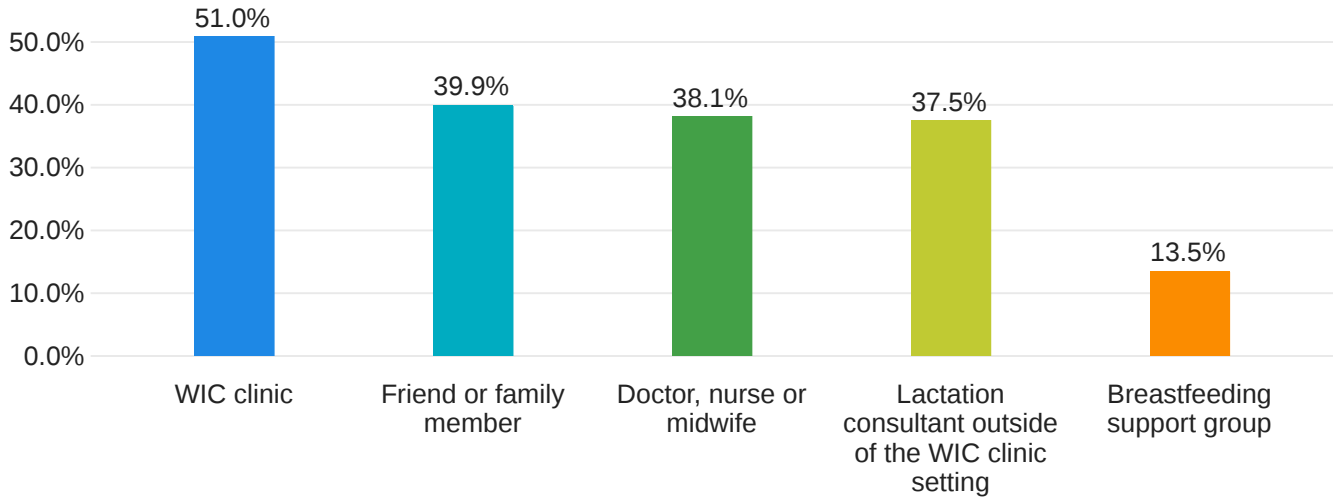
8508 Responses



The following question was asked of mothers who reported asking for help with breastfeeding problems.

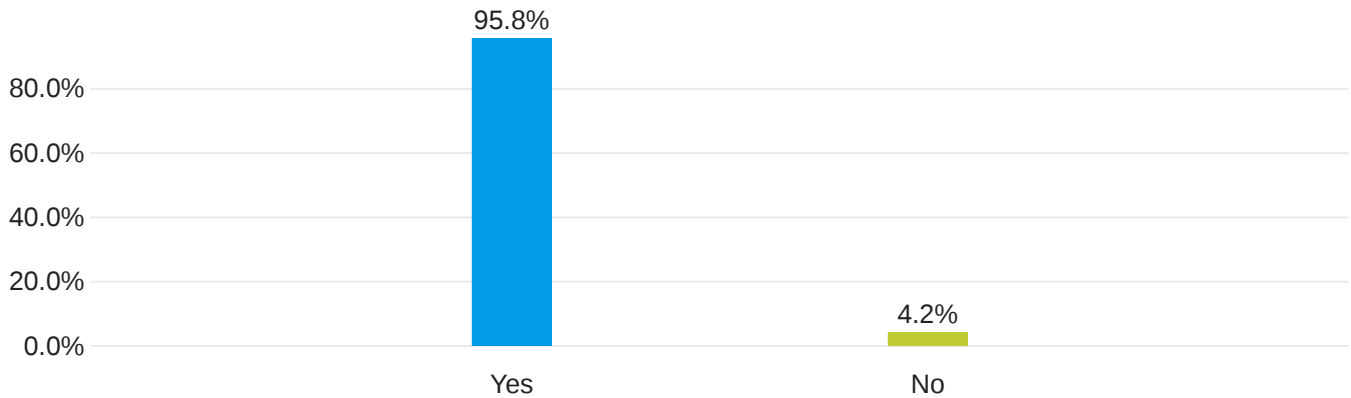
Q48 - Who did you ask for help from? (Mark all that apply)

2589 Responses



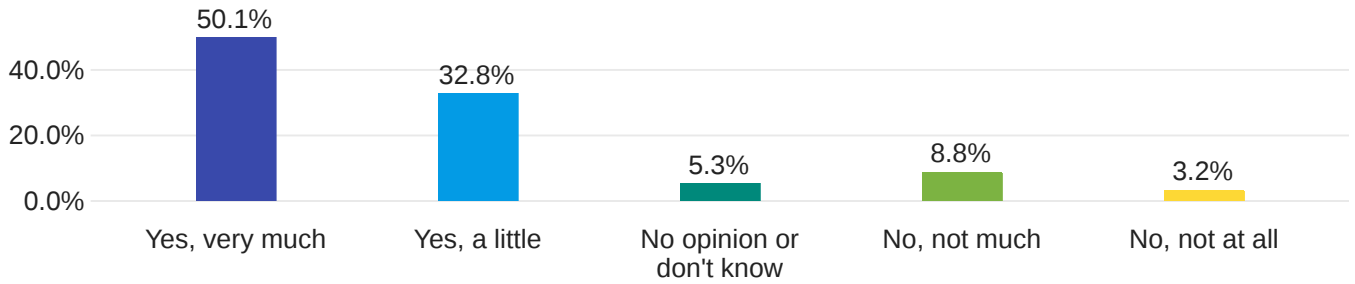
Q49 - Did the **WIC clinic** try to help you with the breastfeeding problem(s)?

1311 Responses



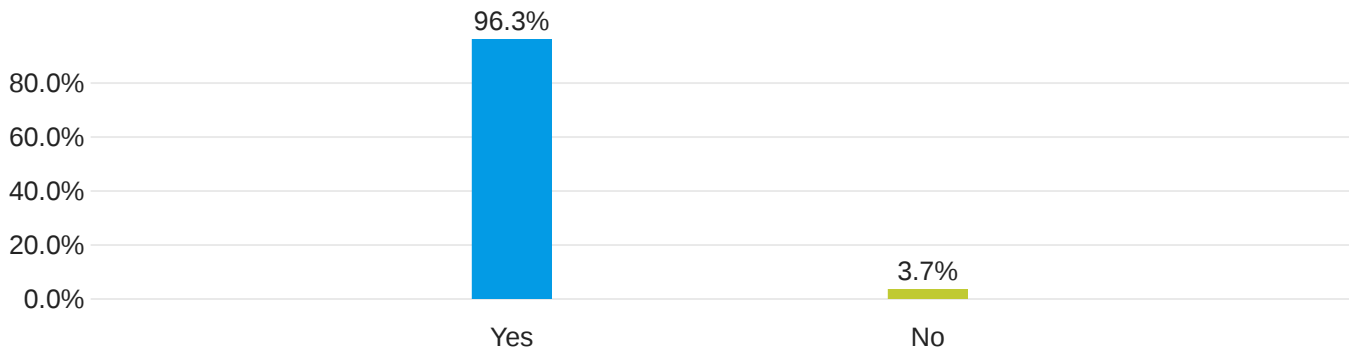
Q50 - Did the help you received from the **WIC clinic** solve the problem(s) or make them better?

1254 Responses



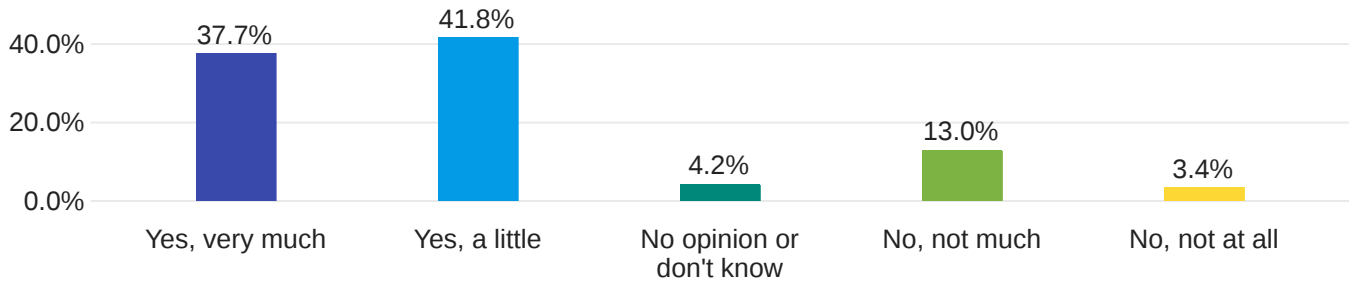
Q51 - Did the **friend or family member** try to help you with the breastfeeding problem(s)?

1042 Responses



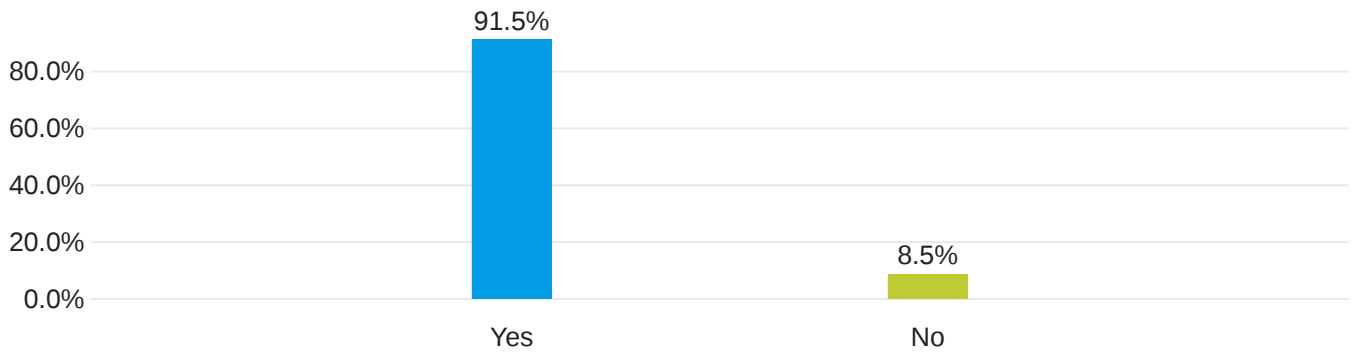
Q52 - Did the help you received from the friend or family member solve the problem(s) or make them better?

1004 Responses



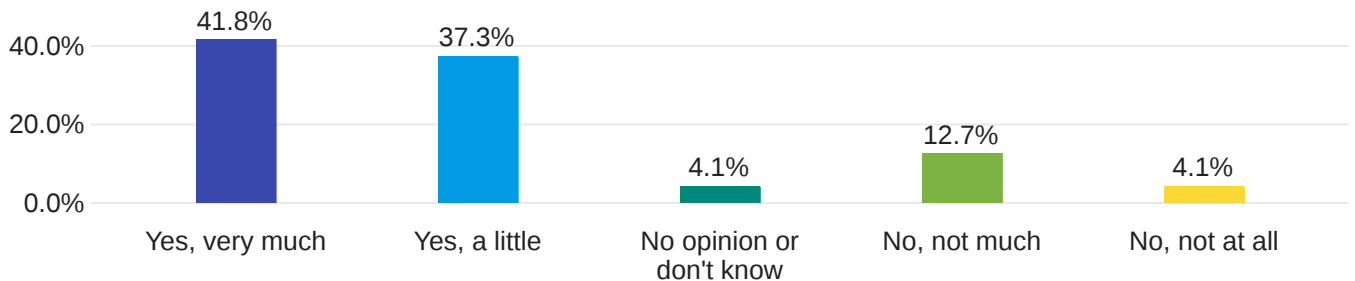
Q53 - Did the doctor, nurse or midwife try to help you with the breastfeeding problem(s)?

979 Responses



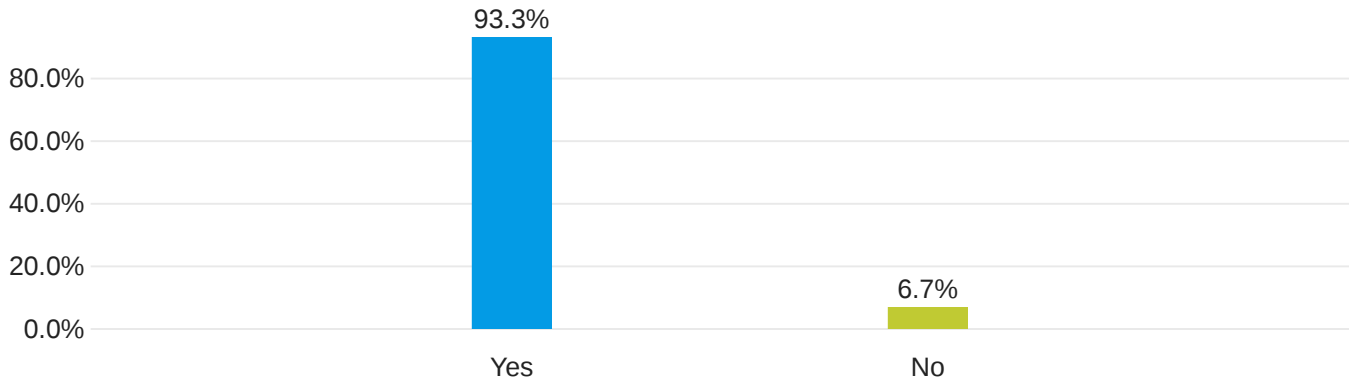
Q54 - Did the help you received from the doctor, nurse or midwife solve the problem(s) or make them better?

895 Responses



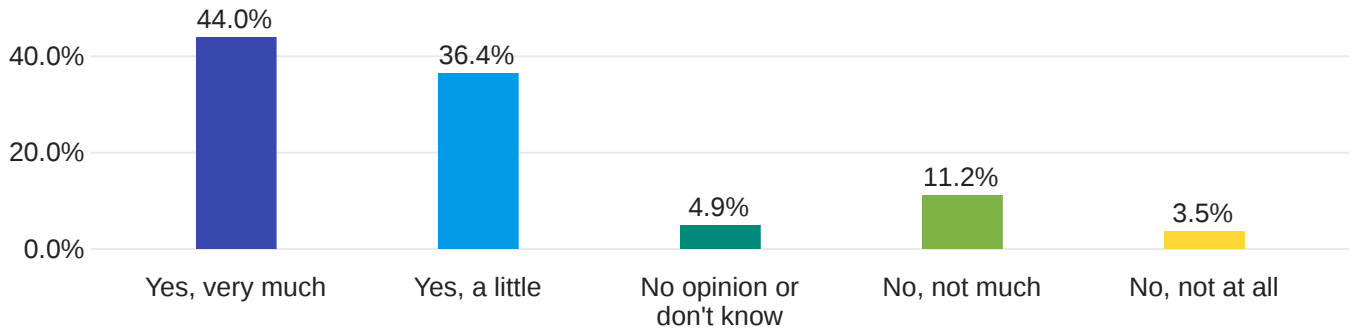
Q55 - Did the **lactation consultant outside of the WIC clinic setting** try to help you with the breastfeeding problem(s)?

975 Responses



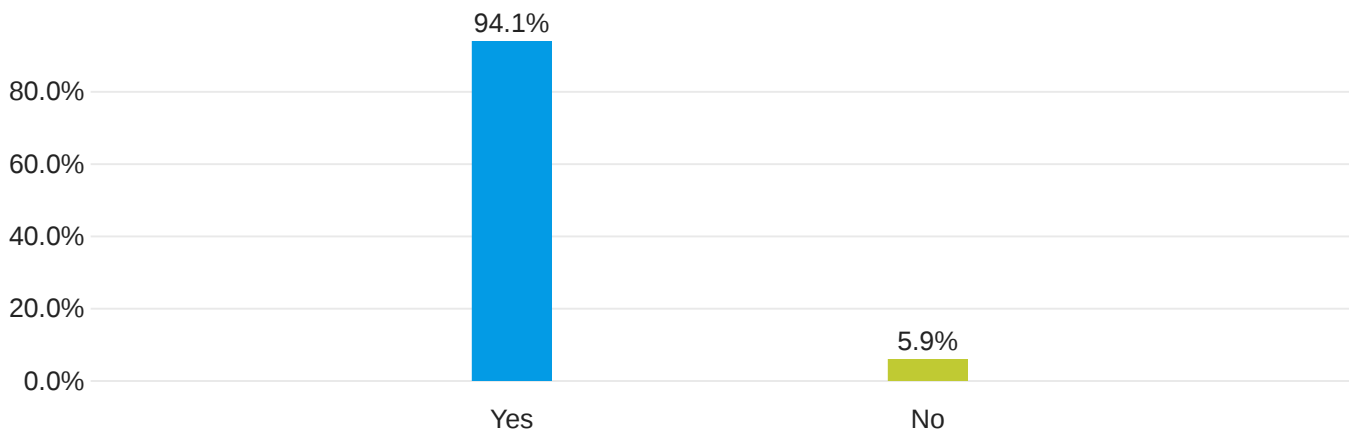
Q56 - Did the help you received from the **lactation consultant outside of the WIC clinic setting** solve the problem(s) or make them better?

908 Responses



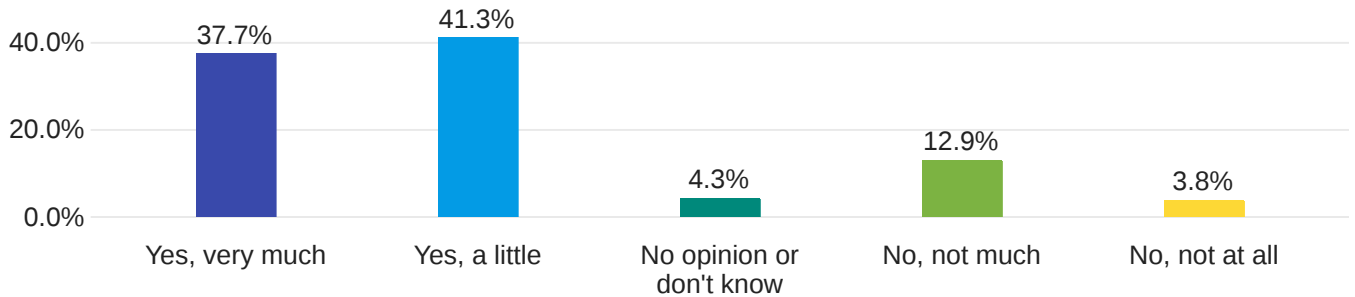
Q57 - Did the **breastfeeding support group** try to help you with the breastfeeding problem(s)?

341 Responses



Q58 - Did the help you received from the **breastfeeding support group** solve the problem(s) or make them better?

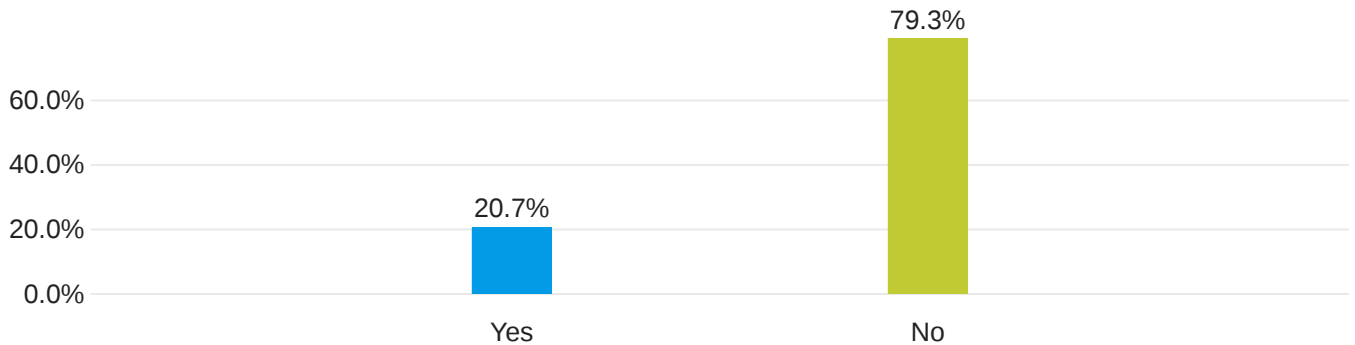
322 Responses



Section 8: Work After Birth

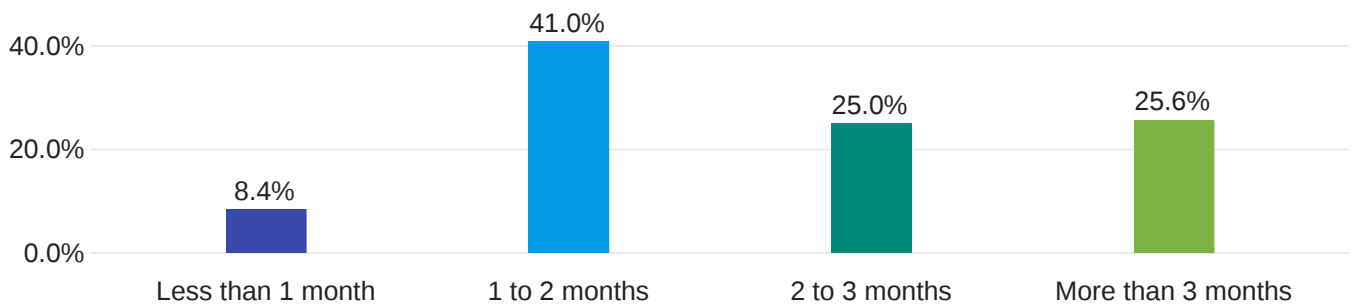
Q59 - Did you work for pay at any time after your baby was born?

9350 Responses



Q60 - How old was your baby when you started working after your delivery? (If you are not sure, please provide your best guess.)

1907 Responses



Section 9: Breastfeeding Knowledge

Q61 - Do you believe the following statements about breastfeeding are true or false?

9350 Responses

Statement	True	False	I don't know
Breastfed babies are less likely to die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).	35.8%	18.9%	45.3%
Breastfeeding benefits children even after they stop nursing (lower risk of asthma, diabetes, obesity etc.).	56.0%	8.6%	35.4%
Mothers who breastfeed are less likely to get breast or ovarian cancer.	44.8%	11.7%	43.5%
In Texas, there is a law that gives women the right to breastfeed their babies in public.	52.5%	1.8%	45.7%
There is a law that requires employers to give their breastfeeding employees enough break time and a clean, private place to pump milk during the work day.	54.8%	2.6%	42.6%

Section 10: Reasons Why Mother Did Not Breastfeed

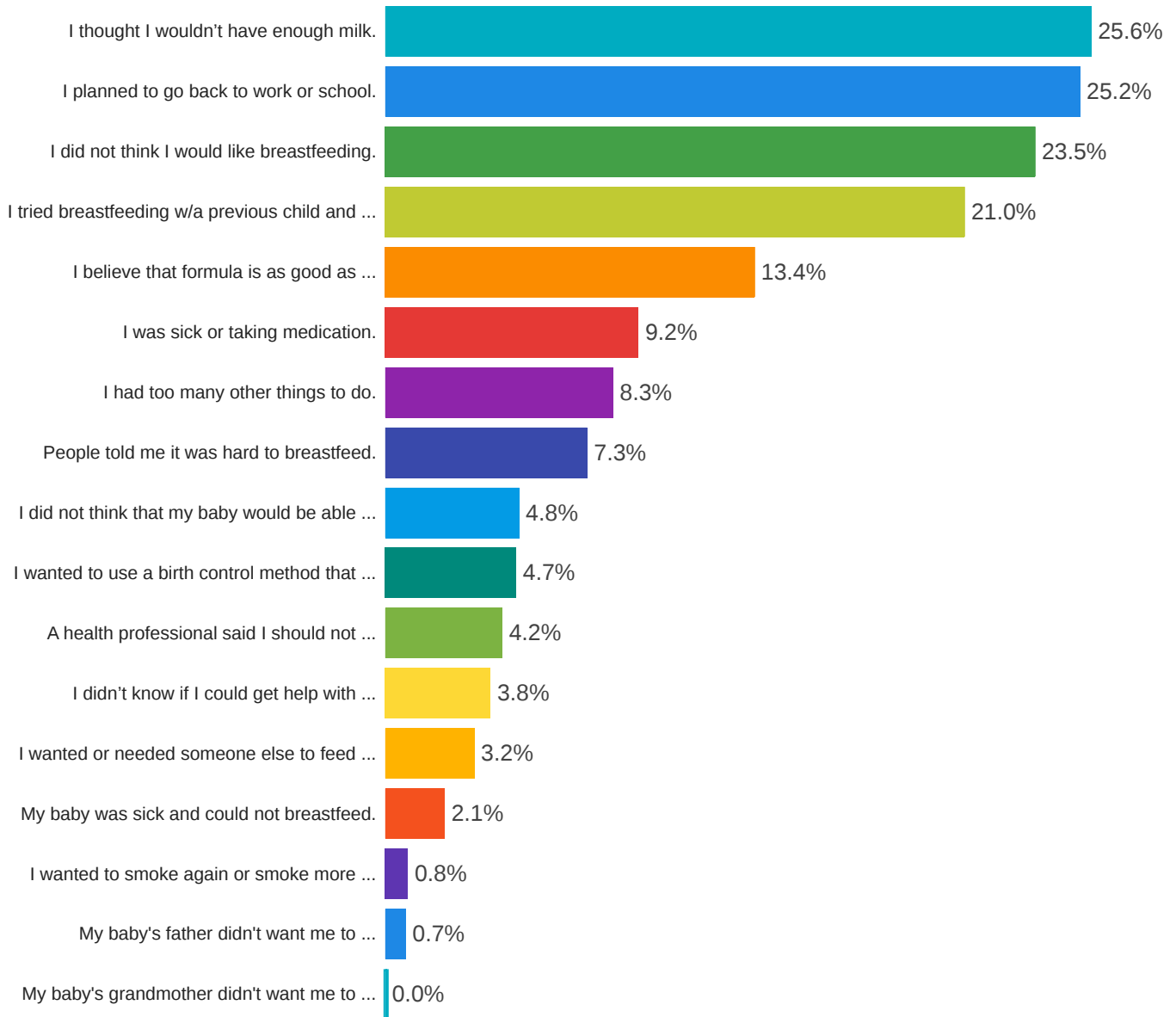
The following question was asked of mothers who reported their child was not breastfed or fed breastmilk even if only once.

Q62 - Below is a list of reasons why women do not breastfeed their babies. Please select the reason(s) why you did not breastfeed. I did not breastfeed because... (Mark all that apply)

842 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
I thought I wouldn't have enough milk.	25.6%
I planned to go back to work or school.	25.2%
I did not think I would like breastfeeding.	23.5%
I tried breastfeeding with a previous child and didn't like it or it didn't work out.	21.0%
I believe that formula is as good as breastfeeding or that formula is better.	13.4%
I was sick or taking medication.	9.2%
I had too many other things to do.	8.3%
People told me it was hard to breastfeed.	7.3%
I did not think that my baby would be able to breastfeed.	4.8%
I wanted to use a birth control method that can't be used while breastfeeding.	4.7%
A health professional said I should not breastfeed for medical reasons.	4.2%
I didn't know if I could get help with breastfeeding.	3.8%
I wanted or needed someone else to feed my baby.	3.2%
My baby was sick and could not breastfeed.	2.1%
I wanted to smoke again or smoke more than I should while breastfeeding.	0.8%
My baby's father didn't want me to breastfeed.	0.7%
My baby's grandmother didn't want me to breastfeed.	0.0%

842 Responses



Section 12: Local WIC Agency Weighted Percentage of Responses

9350 Responses

Texas WIC Local Agency	Percentage of Responses
001 Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department	3.701%
003 Cameron County Department of Health and Human Services	2.901%
004 Su Clinica Familiar	0.128%
005 Driscoll Children's Hospital	0.872%
007 City of Dallas Office of Community Care	9.634%
010 Grayson County Health Department	0.394%
011 Galveston County Health District	0.613%
012 Hidalgo County Health and Human Services	7.581%
013 City of Laredo Health Department	2.833%
017 UT Health Science Center/Houston	4.056%
019 Vida Y Salud-Health Systems Inc	0.310%
020 Regence Health Network Inc.	0.535%
021 Wichita Falls - Wichita County Public Health District	0.451%
022 Waco-McLennan County Public Health District	0.863%
024 United Medical Centers	0.476%
026 City of Houston Department of Health and Human Services	7.528%
028 Centro De Salud Familiar La Fe, Inc.	0.190%
029 Fort Bend Family Health Center Inc dba Accesshealth	2.091%
030 City of Port Arthur	0.402%
031 Bell County Public Health District	2.270%
033 City of El Paso	3.625%
034 Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District	0.496%
035 Denton County Health Department	1.330%
036 City of San Marcos	1.154%
037 Victoria City-County Health Department	0.482%
038 Corpus Christi-Nueces County Public Health District	0.634%
039 Northeast Texas Public Health District	3.422%
040 Beaumont Public Health Department	0.484%
041 San Antonio Metropolitan Health District	4.534%
042 Williamson County and Cities Health District	0.832%
043 Community Health Center of South Central Texas	0.152%
044 City of Del Rio	0.299%
046 Brazoria County Health Department	0.913%
048 Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services	5.926%
049 Frio County	0.106%

051 San Patricio County	0.416%
054 Tarrant County Health Department	4.904%
056 City of San Angelo	0.483%
058 Angelina County and Cities Health District	0.326%
059 CommuniCare	0.887%
060 Matagorda County Hospital District	0.145%
061 Jasper-Newton County Public Health District	0.200%
062 Paris-Lamar County Health Department	0.187%
063 Hardin County Health Services	0.116%
064 Medina County Health Department	0.361%
065 Texarkana-Bowie County Family Health Center	0.203%
067 Corsicana-Navarro Public Health District	0.233%
069 Community Council of South Central Texas Inc.	0.335%
070 Chambers County Health Department	0.049%
071 Collin County Health Care Services	1.091%
073 El Centro Del Barrio Inc.	1.420%
074 Brownwood-Brown County Health Department	0.137%
077 UT Medical Branch at Galveston	5.332%
089 Children's Hospital of San Antonio	0.804%
090 Los Barrios Unidos Community Clinic	0.748%
100 City of Amarillo	0.760%
105 Milam County Health Department	0.127%
108 Longview Wellness Center, Inc. dba Wellness Pointe	0.472%
110 Tejas Health Care Center	0.099%
126 Faith Mission and Help Center	0.133%
130 South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.	3.112%
131 South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.	3.844%
133 Brazos Valley Council of Governments	0.861%

Section 13: Report Highlights - WIC

Feeding Intention: Page 5; Question 6

Nearly half (46.8%) of the moms in our survey reported intending to mixed feed during the first weeks of their baby's life. This is followed by women who planned to exclusively breastfeed (39.4%). Less than 10 percent of respondents planned to exclusively formula feed. While it is encouraging that 86 percent of women planned to breastfeed to some extent, it is worth exploring why combination feeding was the most commonly cited feeding intention. Research studies have indicated that feeding intention is closely linked to duration, so affecting intention could be a promising strategy to increasing duration.

Breastfeeding Initiation: Page 6; Question 7

Nearly 92 percent of respondents reported breastfeeding at least once. This is notably higher than the current national average of 83.2% ([CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, 2022](#)).

Time Until First Breastfeed: Page 17; Question 26

While nearly half of respondents reported beginning breastfeeding within the first hour after birth, nearly 20 percent reported not having their first breastfeeding session until 2 or more days after delivery. This delay could be due to maternal-infant separation for health reasons, but would benefit from further exploration. An opportunity exists to ensure mothers are taught how to maintain lactation after birth if they are [separated from their infant](#), including [teaching hand expression](#) prenatally.

Attainment of Breastfeeding Goal: Page 8; Question 12

Just over 55 percent of respondents said they did not breastfeed as long as they wanted to. This represents an opportunity to ensure that women enrolled in WIC know that WIC has breastfeeding experts who are there to support them every step of the way. If help is needed outside of clinic and peer counselor hours, the Texas Lactation Support Hotline and [BreastmilkCounts.com](#) can be accessed 24/7 at no cost.

WIC Infant Feeding Support

Page 16; Question 23: Just over 90 percent of respondents said that the infant feeding support they received from WIC was either very good or good.

Page 27; Question 48: WIC was also cited as the place respondents were most likely to have sought breastfeeding help, with just over half of respondents saying they contacted WIC for assistance.

Page 28; Question 50: In comparison to friends/family, health care providers, private practice

lactation consultants or breastfeeding support groups, WIC was the most frequently reported as solving the breastfeeding problem (82.9%).

Work After Birth: Page 31; Question 60

Of respondents who returned to the workplace after birth, nearly half returned less than 2 months after their baby was born. An opportunity exists to ensure that mothers have WIC resources for [combining work and breastfeeding](#), as well as knowledge of their [rights to express milk in the workplace](#).

Breastfeeding Knowledge: Page 32; Question 61

Nearly half of the respondents were unaware of their rights to [breastfeed in public or express milk in the workplace](#). An opportunity exists to share resources informing pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers about their rights in these areas, including [the "License to Breastfeed" card](#) that mothers are able to print and keep with them.

Reasons Why Mother Did Not Breastfeed: Page 33; Question 62

Among respondents who did not breastfeed at all, the most cited reasons were:

- Thinking she wouldn't have enough milk (25.6%)
- Planning to return to work/school (25.2%)
- Thinking she wouldn't like breastfeeding (23.5%)
- Prior negative breastfeeding experience (21.0%)
- Thinking that formula is equivalent/superior to breastfeeding (13.4%)

This information can assist us in targeting our prenatal education and counseling. We can ensure moms feel confident in their ability to [set their breastmilk supply](#) and [combine work and breastfeeding](#). We can reassure mom that even though breastfeeding may have been hard with previous children, every baby is brand new.

Section 14: Report Highlights - Hospitals and Birth Centers

Research shows that breastfeeding initiation and duration are closely tied to the practices mom and baby are exposed to while in the birthing facility. Survey questions in this section explored this experience to gauge alignment with the World Health Organization/UNICEF's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. The Ten Steps are a set of evidence-based practices that have been shown to increase breastfeeding initiation and duration.

Feeding Intention Versus Feeding Experience: Page 5 Question 6; Page 17 Question 25

Though fewer than 10 percent of mothers reported a prenatal intention to exclusively formula feed in the first few weeks, more than twice that number (21%) reported that their babies were exclusively formula fed while in the birthing facility. An opportunity exists to ensure that mothers who intend to breastfeed are supported in doing so, even in cases of mother-infant separation.

Infant's First Receipt of Formula: Page 24; Question 43

According to the Ten Steps, best practice indicates that babies receive only breastmilk at the birthing facility unless there is a medically indicated need or an informed parental decision to feed formula.

However, of the mothers who reported that their baby received formula in the hospital, only about 20 percent reported asking for the formula or giving the formula for a medical reason. The majority (73.7%) reported that the formula was offered or made available to them without their request. Of those, nearly 8 percent reported their baby was fed formula by staff without the mother asking for it. An opportunity exists to ensure that formula is only made available when requested by the mother or when medically indicated so that a mother's breastfeeding intention is not inadvertently undermined.

Receipt of Free Formula Samples: Page 25; Question 45

Among mothers who reported receiving free samples of infant formula, well over half (62.4%) reported receiving them in a "gift" bag or diaper bag from the hospital or birth center. The World Health Organization's *Code of International Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes* advises against birthing facilities providing free samples of infant formula to patients. Per the code, health care providers should support moms to make an informed feeding decision free from any commercial influence. Providing free samples can be viewed as a promotion or endorsement of a specific brand of formula by the health care worker and the birthing facility. In addition, research has shown these free gift bags are correlated with a decrease in the duration of breastfeeding and an undermining of the decision to breastfeed.

Receipt of Free Formula Samples from Hospital Among Breastfeeding Mothers: Page 26; Question 46

More than half of the mothers who reported that their baby had received only breastmilk at discharge reported also receiving free formula samples from the hospital. This could be viewed as an undermining of breastfeeding goals.

Skin-to-Skin: Page 22; Question 38

Nearly 88 percent of respondents reported they were encouraged to hold their baby skin-to-skin in the birthing facility, with 74 percent reporting their baby was placed skin-to-skin immediately after birth. While there are barriers to placing baby skin-to-skin immediately after birth (i.e. the separation of mom and baby for medical reasons), it's encouraging that most respondents were supported in doing this best practice.

Rooming-In: Page 23; Question 41

About 80 percent of respondents said their baby stayed in the same room with them at all times with the exception of surgical procedures. Hospital staff should be encouraged to continue educating all caregivers on the benefits of skin-to-skin and rooming-in due to the impact it has on breastfeeding and the many benefits it has for all newborns - regardless of infant feeding method.

Breastfeeding Education and Support in the Birthing Facility: Pages 18-19; Questions 28, 29, 30, 31

When asked about their experience in the birthing facility, nearly 88% of moms said they received help with breastfeeding. Most respondents also said they were taught to know when their baby was hungry (85%) and how to know when their baby was getting enough to eat (80.6%). Nearly three-quarters of moms (73%) also reported they were shown how to hand express their breastmilk — an important skill for all breastfeeding moms, especially for those who are separated from their newborns for medical reasons.

Support after Discharge and Community Partnerships: Pages 20-21; Questions 35 and 36

About 75 percent of mothers were given a telephone number to call for help with breastfeeding, and about 72 percent were provided information about breastfeeding support groups and services after discharge from the birthing facility.

WIC is a strong community partner for Texas birthing facilities, as they are able to step in with breastfeeding support right where the nursing staff leaves off. Birthing facilities are encouraged to build and strengthen partnerships with WIC and other community-based initiatives to ensure a warm handoff for all new moms.

WIC provides resources that are available to all moms regardless of WIC status, including [live](#)

online and self-paced classes, [BreastmilkCounts.com](https://www.breastmilkcounts.com) and the free, 24/7 Texas Lactation Support Hotline (855-550-6667). WIC also hosts the health care provider-facing breastfeeding website [HCPBreastfeeding.com](https://www.hcpbreastfeeding.com) that includes printable breastfeeding resources for mothers and an easy way to refer your patients to WIC using the "Refer-A-Mom" link at the bottom of each page.