

Chapter 1: Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

Race & Ethnicity, Income, Age, Marital Status, Employment

Introduction

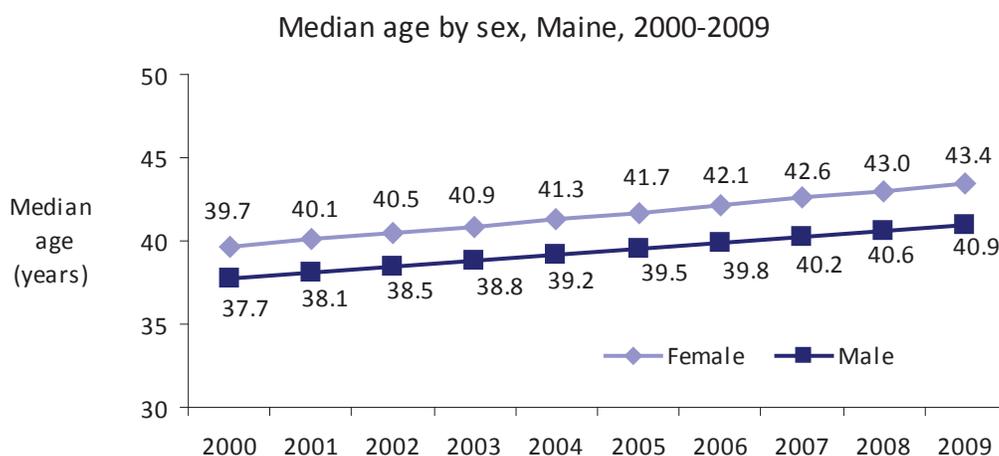
Approximately half of Maine’s population (51.2%) is composed of women.¹ In this chapter we describe the major demographic characteristics that can affect the health of women in Maine, such as age, geographical location, income, household composition, and education. As a group, women face a unique set of threats to their health and well-being which stem from their collective and individual conditions, be they physical, social, and economic.

Demographic Profile

Age

As women age, they are more likely to experience chronic health problems and report fair or poor health.² The median age of Maine’s population (for both men and women) has been increasing over the last decade; however women have consistently had a higher median age than men (Figure 1.1).³

Figure 1.1.



Source: US Census Bureau³

In 2009, Maine’s median age was 42.2 years, the oldest in the country.^{3, 4} The median ages for women and men in Maine were 43.4 and 40.9 years, respectively.³ That same year, 15% of the state’s population was 65 years and older, compared to 12.9% nationally. Among women, 17.2% were 65 years and older; among men, 13.8% were age 65 years or older. Maine is predicted to become the “oldest state in the nation” by 2020, as defined by percentage of the population older than 65.^{1, 4}

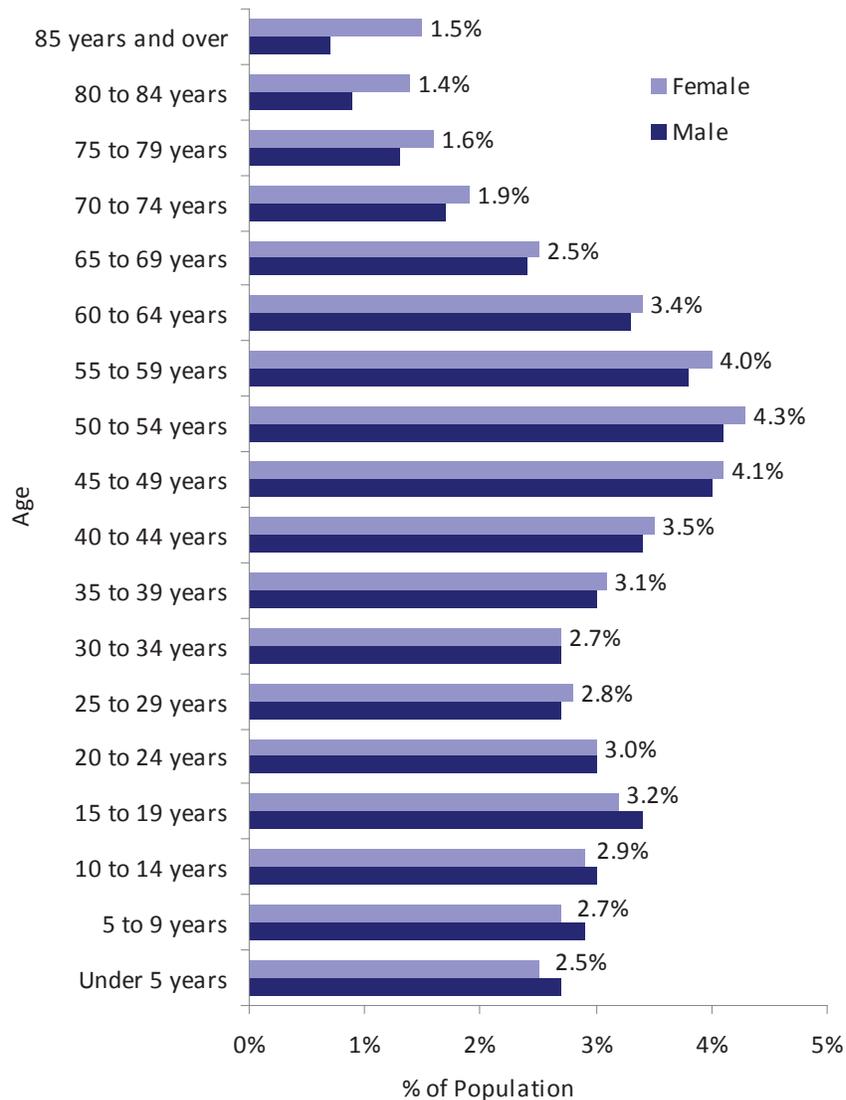
Maine had the second-smallest percentage of the population under the age of 18 in the country (20.6%) in 2010.^{1, 4} Maine’s younger population is comprised of more males than females in each

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age group younger than 20 years. This trend is reversed at the other end of the lifespan with females comprising a larger percentage of the population in each age group older than 35 years (Figure 1.2).⁵ Women live about five years longer than men on average. According to U.S. data from 2007, the average life expectancy for women born in 2007 in the U.S. is 80.4 years; men born in 2007 are expected to live 75.4 years on average.⁶

Figure 1.2.

Age distribution of population by sex, Maine, 2010



Source: US Census Bureau⁵

Geographic Distribution of Maine's Population

Although 80% of American residents reside in metropolitan areas, the majority of Maine's population resides in rural towns and small cities. Statewide, 59.8% live in rural areas, compared to 21.0% of the U.S. population.⁷ Rural life makes many women geographically isolated, meaning

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they live in areas of the state where there are fewer numbers of services such as medical care providers.

Maine has 16 counties with vastly different population densities. More than one third (36.3%) of Maine's population lives in the two southernmost counties of Cumberland and York.

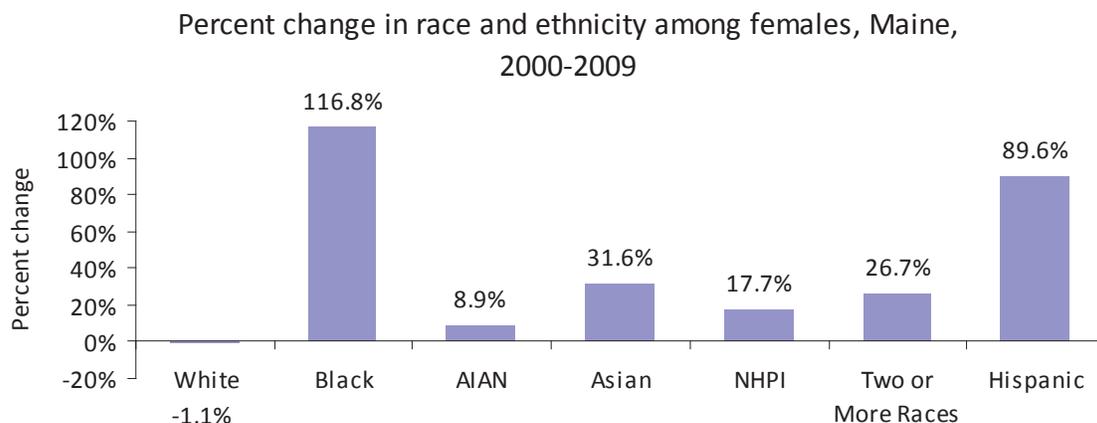
Approximately 34%-54% of the residents of these counties live in a rural area. In comparison, six of Maine's counties have 75% or more of their residents living in rural areas, and two counties (Piscataquis and Lincoln) have 100% of residents living in rural areas.⁷ Unfortunately, sex-specific data on Maine's rural population are not currently available.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Compared to the rest of the U.S., Maine has a relatively homogeneous population in terms of racial and ethnic diversity. However, the state is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse over time. This diversity brings new health challenges in terms of access to care, unmet health needs and the need to provide culturally-competent care.

In 2009, females in Maine were 96.2% White, 1.0% Black, 0.6% American Indian and Alaska Native, 1.1% Asian, and 1.1% were more than one race; 1.4% of the population was Hispanic.³ The total percentage of White females in Maine fell slightly from 97.3% in 2000 to 96.2% in 2009, a 1.1% decrease. During this same period, all other racial and ethnic groups increased substantially. For example, the percentage of Black females increased from 0.45% in 2000 to 0.99% in 2009, a 117% increase. Similarly, the population of American Indian females increased 8.9%, Asian females increased 31.6%, and Hispanics increased 89.6% (Figure 1.3).¹

Figure 1.3.



Source: US Census Bureau¹

There are five federally recognized Indian tribes in Maine today: Aroostook Band of Micmacs, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township, Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point, and Penobscot Indian Nation.⁸ The majority of Maine's native American population resides in or near the five small, rural communities of Indian Island (Penobscot Nation), Pleasant Point (Passamaquoddy Tribe), Indian Township (Passamaquoddy Tribe), Houlton (Houlton Band of Maliseet) and Presque Isle (Aroostook Band of Micmac).⁹

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In 2009, the American Community Survey estimated that 8,067 Mainers identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native alone and 14,811 identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native alone or in combination with one or more other race. Of these, 51.5% were female.¹⁰ A total of 3,369 Passamaquoddy tribal members are listed on the tribal census rolls with 1,364 on the Indian Township census and 2,005 listed on Pleasant Point census. The Aroostook Band of Micmacs is estimated at 1,000 members. The Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians is comprised of approximately 800 members. The Penobscot Nation population is estimated at 2,365 members.¹¹⁻¹⁴

The increase in racial and ethnic diversity in recent years is driven in part by the successful resettlement of refugees in Maine. In fiscal year 2010, Catholic Charities of Maine Refugee and Immigrant Services (RIS) resettled approximately 229 primary refugees, 246 secondary migrants and assisted 27 asylees in Maine. Both males and females were equally served in resettlement: 49% of the clients were male and 51% were female. Catholic Charities resettled these men and women primarily in the Portland and Lewiston areas. RIS is projected to resettle approximately 275 primary refugees in FY2011.^{15, 16} A primary refugee is one who arrives directly from a refugee camp outside of the U.S. to Maine. A secondary migrant entered the U.S. as a refugee, settled in one state, but then chose to move to Maine. Refugee women arriving in Maine may bring with them complex maternal and reproductive health histories which often includes exposure to sexual and gender-based violence.¹⁷

Women's Marital and Household Status in Maine

Whether as a result of choosing not to marry, choosing to get divorced, or being widowed, many Maine women are living alone today. Women who live alone have the lowest median income of any type of household, including men who live alone.¹⁸ Women living in poverty are less likely than their higher-income counterparts to have health insurance and use preventive services, and more likely to have health care access problems, suffer from chronic illnesses, and report lower overall health scores.¹⁹ Many single women are raising children on their own and are more likely to be living in poverty. Poverty rates for unmarried female householders with children have consistently been two or three times higher than overall male and female poverty rates in the U.S. since 1966.¹⁸ In 2009, 28% of working women in the U.S. who were unmarried with children had incomes below the poverty level, compared to 8% among all female workers and 6% among male workers.¹⁸

Women who are heads of households include: single mothers, single women with a parent or other close relative living in their home, and women with other household compositions. Nationally, more households are headed by a single woman (14%) than single men (6%).¹⁸ Similarly, in Maine 15% of households are headed by single women and 6% are headed by single men.¹⁰ Of Maine's households, 0.8% are same sex households.¹⁰ Of same-sex households in 2006, more were composed of females (56%) than males (44%).²⁰

In the U.S. and in Maine, more women are widowed and divorced than men.^{10, 18} In 2005-2009, slightly more Maine men older than 15 years were married than women (54.7% vs. 50.7%; Table 1.1).¹⁰ During the same time period, 10.3% of women older than 15 in Maine were widowed; this was almost four times more than the percentage of widowed men (2.8%).¹⁰ Among women over

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age 65 years, only 41.9% were married compared to 71.9% of men. This is likely because women's life expectancy is longer than men's.

Table 1.1. Marital status of adults by age and sex, Maine, 2005-2009

Age	Married		Widowed		Divorced		Separated		Never married	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total 15+	52.6%		6.7%		12.6%		1.2%		26.9%	
All Ages										
15+	54.7%	50.7%	2.8%	10.3%	11.4%	13.7%	1.0%	1.3%	30.1%	23.9%
15 to 19	0.8%	1.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	99.0%	98.6%
20 to 34	31.7%	39.7%	0.1%	0.3%	4.6%	7.3%	0.8%	1.2%	62.7%	51.4%
35 to 44	63.5%	64.8%	0.2%	1.0%	14.7%	18.1%	1.6%	2.5%	20.1%	13.6%
45 to 54	67.5%	66.8%	0.9%	2.8%	18.7%	20.2%	1.3%	2.0%	11.5%	8.3%
55 to 64	73.4%	66.1%	2.0%	7.3%	16.4%	19.5%	1.1%	1.2%	7.0%	6.0%
65+	71.9%	41.9%	13.7%	42.3%	9.4%	11.0%	0.6%	0.5%	4.4%	4.4%

Source: American Community Survey¹⁰

Socio-Economic Status

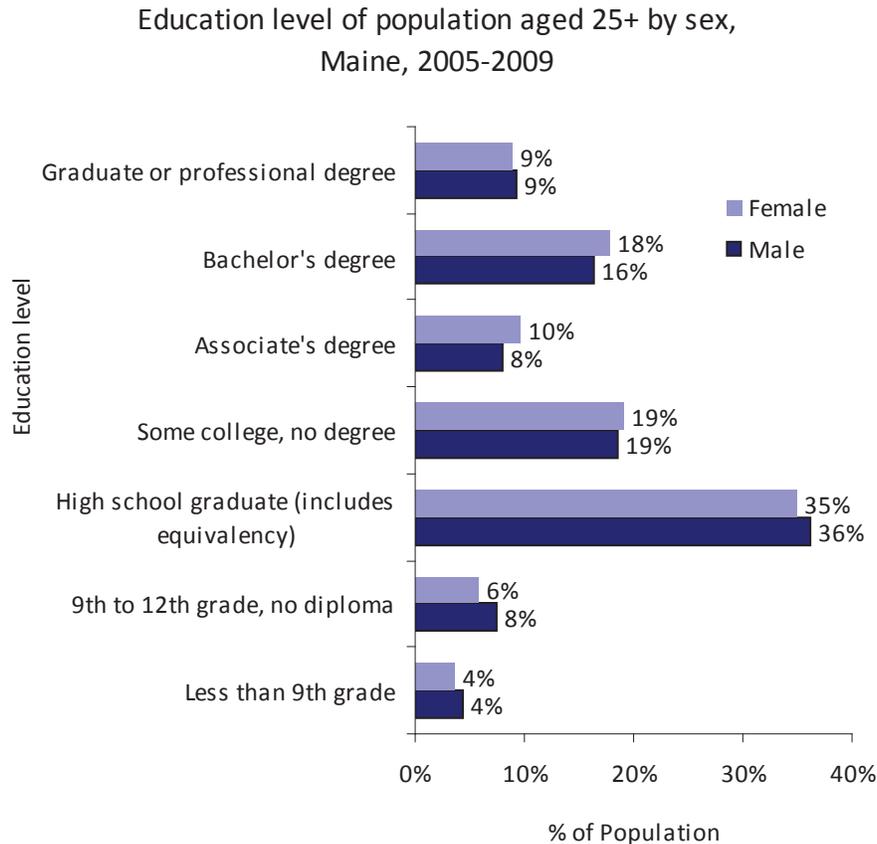
Education

Several studies have documented a relationship between higher education and better health.^{21, 22} Individuals with more years of education have a longer life expectancy, are less likely to be diagnosed with an acute or chronic disease, and are less likely to report anxiety or depression.²¹ Nationally and in Maine, younger women are more likely than younger men to have a college or a master's degree.²³ Education enhances women's ability to make positive choices about their health and reproduction, but in order to pursue higher education and career opportunities, more women are getting married and having their first child at older ages.¹⁸ This demographic shift may have implications for women's health in terms of higher-risk pregnancies, riskier operative deliveries and possibly even longer term health risks such as hypertension, diabetes, and congestive heart failure.²⁴

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More than half of women in Maine over the age of 25 have at least some college education (Figure 1.4).^{10, 23} However, close to ten percent (9.6%) of all Maine women have not obtained a high school diploma. The number of Maine women older than age 25 without a high school diploma has not changed in the past five years.^{10, 23}

Figure 1.4.



Source: American Community Survey¹⁰

Employment Status and Labor Force Participation

In the ten years since the last profile of women's health in Maine was published, the nation's economy has experienced significant shifts, including multiple recessions, growing unemployment and increasing poverty. During the past four national recessions, men experienced large increases in unemployment, which was attributed to their dominance in cyclically sensitive occupations, such as manufacturing production and construction. Women are traditionally more concentrated in less cyclically sensitive and more rapidly growing occupations, such as health care, which has kept their unemployment rates lower than those of men.¹⁸

During the most recent recession, the national unemployment rate among women (age 20 and older) rose from 4.4% to 7.7%; by comparison, the rate for men (age 20 and older) more than doubled, from 4.4% to 9.9%.¹⁸ In 2009, the Maine unemployment rate for women aged 20-64 was 4.9%; for men it was 7.9%.¹⁰

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After decreasing between 2004 and 2007, women’s participation rate in the labor force in Maine did not change significantly between 2008 and 2009.²⁵ Younger women aged 16-24 outnumbered their male counterparts in Maine’s labor force in both 2008 and 2009. In all other age groups, there were more men than women working in Maine (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Labor force participation by age and sex, U.S. and Maine, 2008-2009.

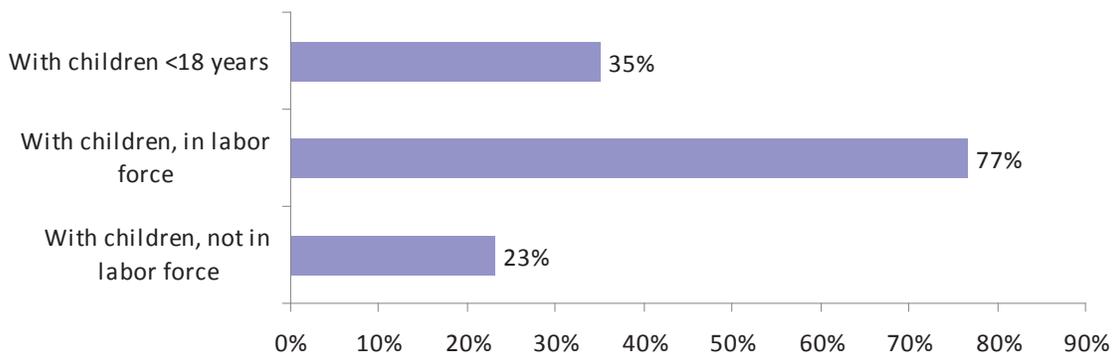
Age	Sex	2008		2009	
		Maine	US	Maine	US
16-24	Female	65.4%	60.4%	66.9%	58.7%
	Male	63.0%	61.5%	64.6%	59.2%
24-54	Female	80.5%	77.0%	79.9%	77.1%
	Male	87.9%	88.5%	87.9%	87.9%
55+	Female	34.7%	32.8%	33.7%	33.2%
	Male	45.1%	45.2%	44.8%	45.2%

Source: US Census Bureau²⁵

According to data from the 2005-2009 American Community Surveys, 35% of Maine women aged 20-64 years had children less than 18 years of age at home. More than three-quarters (76.8%) of these women reported that they were currently working (Figure 1.5).¹⁰

Figure 1.5.

Females aged 20-64 by household composition and employment status, Maine, 2005-2009



Source: American Community Survey¹⁰

Working mothers often pay a financial price for being the primary coordinators of health care for their children. In the Kaiser Family Foundation’s nationally-representative telephone survey of 2,015 women aged 18 to 64, almost half (48%) of working mothers report having to take unpaid time off when their children are sick. Lower-income women are even less likely to have workplace benefits such as paid sick leave (45%) and disability insurance (42%), an important financial protection in the event of an injury that prevents a worker from being able to work.²

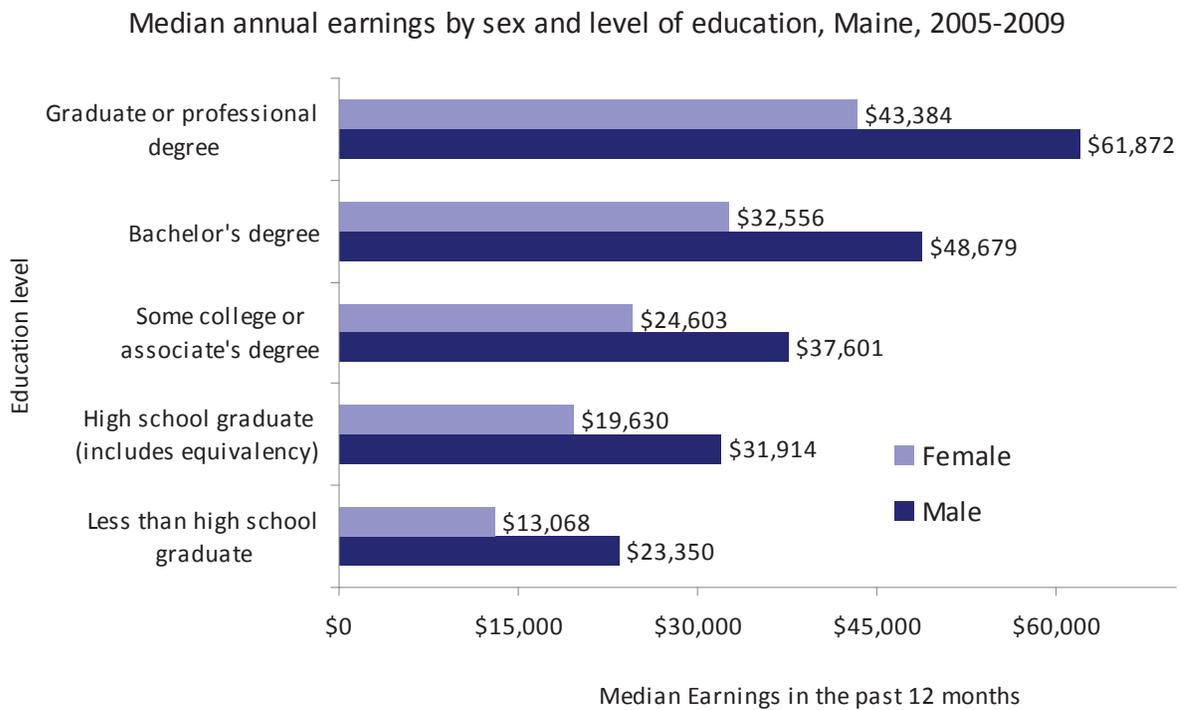
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Income and the “Wage Gap”

A woman’s level of education is linked to both her ability to find a higher-paying job and to her level of health.¹⁸ In uncertain economic times, many women turn to education as a way to increase their likelihood of finding employment and financial stability. While educational gains can help many women earn more, increased education and labor force participation have not eliminated wage inequities for women nationally or in Maine. In 2009, the median income for all ages and occupations was \$32,314 for females and \$42,156 for males—a ratio of .77.¹⁰

At all levels of education, U.S. women earned about 75% of what their male counterparts earned in 2009.¹⁸ Maine has a similar gap, with the largest earning differences observed between men and women with graduate degrees, a difference of \$18,848 in annual median earnings (Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6.



Source: American Community Survey¹⁰

Wage gaps can add up to tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars over a woman’s lifetime and may result in increased rates of poverty in old age.²³ The wage gap between men and women can be partially explained by a range of factors, however, in one study of recent college graduates, after accounting for differences in college major, occupation, industry, sector, hours worked, workplace flexibility, experience, educational attainment, enrollment status, GPA, institution selectivity, age, race/ethnicity, region, marital status, and number of children, males still made 5% more than females. Another similar study of full-time workers 10 years after college graduation found that a 12% difference in earnings could not be fully explained.²⁶ Similar analyses have been done in Maine showing significant gaps between male and female wages even after accounting for work sector and age.²³

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Poverty

In 2009 the percentage living in poverty in Maine was higher among women compared to males (13.9% vs. 10.7%).¹⁰ National rates are somewhat higher; 15.6% of females and 13.1% of males lived in poverty in 2009.¹⁰

According to the 2005-2009 American Community Surveys, among all age groups, women were more likely to be living in poverty compared to men (Table 1.3). Among women of reproductive age (18-44 years), 17.5% were living in poverty compared to 11.5% of men. Among Mainers over age 65, 12.2% of women lived below the poverty level, compared to 6.7% of men.¹⁰ This is similar to the U.S. In 2009, almost 11% of U.S. women age 65 lived below the poverty level, compared to 7% of U.S. men age 65 and older.¹⁸

Table 1.3. Poverty level by age and sex, Maine, 2005-2009.

Total	Below Poverty		
	Maine	Females	Males
	11.4%	13.3%	9.4%
Age	Maine	Females	Males
<18	17.1%	17.9%	16.4%
18-24	23.2%	28.4%	18.2%
25-34	13.7%	16.7%	10.6%
35-44	10.4%	12.3%	8.4%
45-54	8.6%	8.8%	8.4%
55-64	8.8%	9.8%	7.7%
65-74	8.1%	9.5%	6.5%
75+	11.7%	14.9%	6.9%

Source: American Community Survey¹⁰

Women with children are at especially high risk of living in poverty. In Maine, between 2005 and 2009, an estimated 8.6% of families lived in poverty. Among female-headed single parent families with children, 39.3% were living in poverty compared to 20.6% of families with a single male head of household with children, and 5.5% of married couples with children (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. Percent living below poverty level by family type, Maine, 2005-2009

Family Type	% living below poverty level
Total families	8.6
Single parent families with female head of household with children	39.3
Single parent families with female head of household women without children	9.3
Single parent families with male head of household with children	20.6
Single parent families with male head of household men without children	5.8
Married couple (with or without children)	3.8
Married couple with children	5.5
Married couple without children	2.8

Source: American Community Survey¹⁰

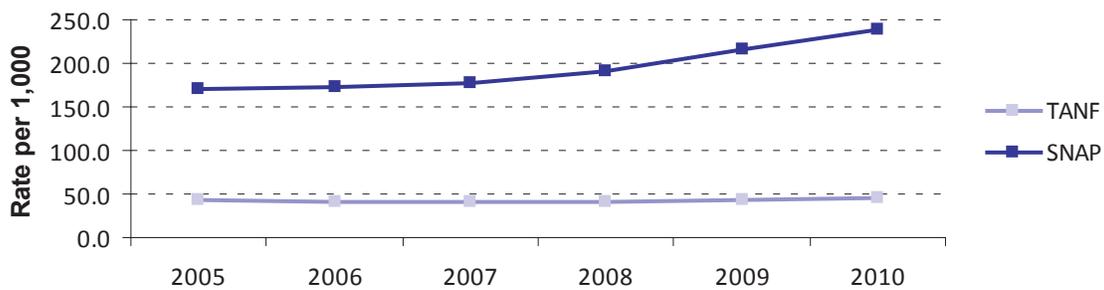
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Fortunately, there are programs in Maine designed to help women during times of economic hardship. Maine Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a program that provides financial assistance when a family is temporarily unable to support themselves. In order to qualify for this benefit program, an individual must be either pregnant or responsible for a child under 19 years of age, have low or very low income, and be either under-employed (working for very low wages), unemployed or about to become unemployed.²⁷ In 2010, there were 17,394 women over the age of 18 receiving TANF; 99% of these women were between the ages of 18-59 years and 93.5% had children. Nearly all women receiving TANF also receive assistance for food from Maine's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In 2010, SNAP assisted 107,191 women over the age of 18; 84.5% of these women were between 18-59 years and 52.3% had children.²⁸

Women's enrollment rates in SNAP over the past six years have not changed significantly, but enrollment in TANF has increased steadily since 2005 (Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.7.

Rate per 1,000 women aged 18-59 enrolled in TANF or SNAP, Maine,
2000-2009



Source: Maine DHHS Office of Integrated Access and Support²⁸

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