

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) National Participant Outcome Study (2025)

Summary Results Report

What was the 2025 CPNP Participant Outcome Study?

The CPNP Participant Outcome Study examined the following questions:

- Who participates in CPNP across Canada?
- Does the program help participants gain knowledge, skills, positive health practices and/or improve health and wellbeing?
- Do program participants have a positive experience with the CPNP overall (i.e., do they feel welcome and accepted)?

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program

CPNP is a national community-based program funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

Launched in 1995, CPNP aims to promote the health of pregnant women and people, and their infants, who face challenges that may put their health at risk.

Approximately **41,000 pregnant women and people, parents and caregivers** participate in the program each year at approximately 230 projects across Canada.

How was the data collected?

To answer these questions, CPNP participants were invited to complete an online survey during a six-week period in January and February 2025. CPNP projects invited participants to complete the survey by way of e-mail and/or by distributing a promotional poster providing access to the survey. Project staff were encouraged to promote the completion of the survey during programming so that they could provide access to an electronic device and/or provide assistance to those in need.

Since this was the first time CPNP has implemented an online survey to collect this type of information, this study is considered a “pilot”. Lessons learned will help inform future iterations of studies of this nature. For example, not all program participants had access to a personal device and access to Wi-Fi or internet in order to complete the online survey. In addition, not all project sites had devices for participant use and access to internet or Wi-Fi. This was of particular concern for program participants living in rural or remote areas and particularly for those receiving home visits.

How many surveys were completed?

- A total of **1,585 surveys** were completed by program participants across Canada.
- Surveys were completed in each of the provinces/territories except for Quebec as projects in Quebec did not participate in the study.
- In most provinces and territories, the proportion of completed surveys was similar to the proportion of participants served annually (within 4% or less) as reported on the Annual Reporting Tool (2022-23). The proportion of surveys completed in Alberta was underrepresented compared to annual participation (11% less) and the proportion of surveys from Ontario was overrepresented when compared to annual participation numbers (11% more).



Who responded to the survey?

Respondents to the survey were from diverse social and demographic backgrounds.

Demographic Profile of Respondents:

- **Gender:** Almost all respondents to the survey were female (98%), while 1.5% were male and 0.5% identified as another gender.
- **Age:** Only 2% of respondents to the survey were 19 years of age or younger, while 36% were between 22 and 29 years, and 55% were between 30 and 39 years of age. An additional 7% were 40 years of age or older.
- **Education:** When asked about their highest level of education, 8% of respondents had obtained less than highschool, 18% had finished highschool, 16% had obtained a certificate or diploma after highschool and 58% had obtained a college or university degree.
- **Lone Parent:** 22% of respondents to the survey were lone parents/caregivers.
- **Indigenous Identity:** 14% of respondents to the survey identified as First Nations, 5% identified as Métis and 1% as Inuit.
- **Newcomers to Canada:** 41% of all respondents were not born in Canada. Of these, 67% had lived in Canada for 5 years or less, 17% had lived in Canada for 6 to 10 years and 17% had lived in Canada for 11 years or more.
- **Languages:** Respondents were asked to identify the languages that they speak and understand. Responses were as follows: 94% selected English, 12% selected French, 2.5% selected Indigenous languages, and 33% reported other languages.
- **Race/Ethnic Background:** Respondents were asked which race/racial/ethnic backgrounds best describe them. Responses were as follows: Black (12%); East Asian (4%); Latin American (7%); Middle Eastern/West Asian (5%); South Asian (14%); Southeast Asian (6%); White (54%); Another race (1%).
- **Income:** Approximately 23% of respondents reported having a total household income of less than \$20,000, 23% had an income between \$20,000 and \$43,000, 14% had an income between \$43,001 and \$60,800 and 40% had a household income of \$60,801,00 or more.¹ To place this in context, according to Statistics Canada the Low Income Measure threshold for a three-person household (before taxes) is \$60,282 and is \$69,608 for a four- person household.²

¹ 21% of respondents answered “don’t know”, “prefer not to answer” or did not answer the question on household income.

² Low-Income Measure thresholds are available at <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110023201>.

Many respondents to the survey experienced challenges that may put their health and wellbeing at risk.

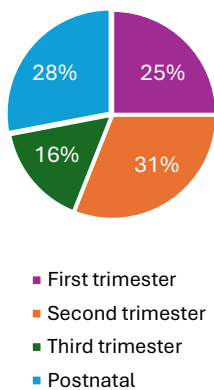
Challenges Experienced by Survey Respondents	
Stress	69%
Mental health	51%
Feeling isolated	41%
Having enough food for their family	31%
Physical health	26%
Housing	25%
Access to health professionals and/or prenatal care	21%
Parenting a child with developmental or physical challenges or special needs	13%
Drug/alcohol use in the family	5%
Family violence	5%
Other (i.e., Financial/employment)	4%

What did the study find?

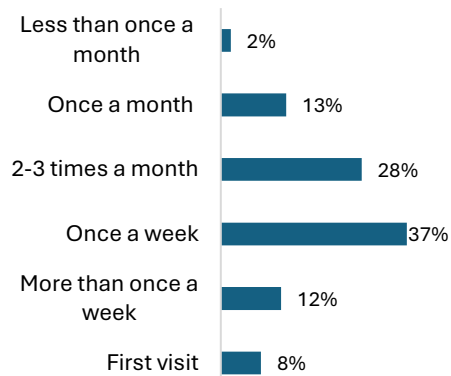
A. Program Participation

Respondents to the survey started participating in CPNP at various stages of their pregnancy. Respondents reported participating frequently and attended several types of programs with the majority attending group programs/classes.

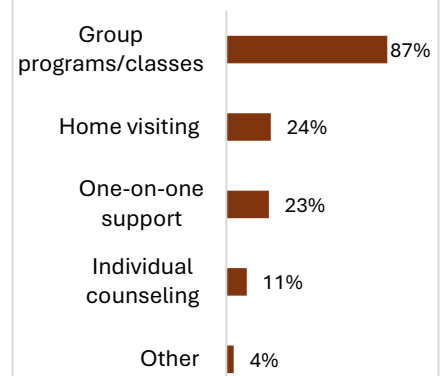
Stage of Pregnancy when Participation Began



Frequency of Participation



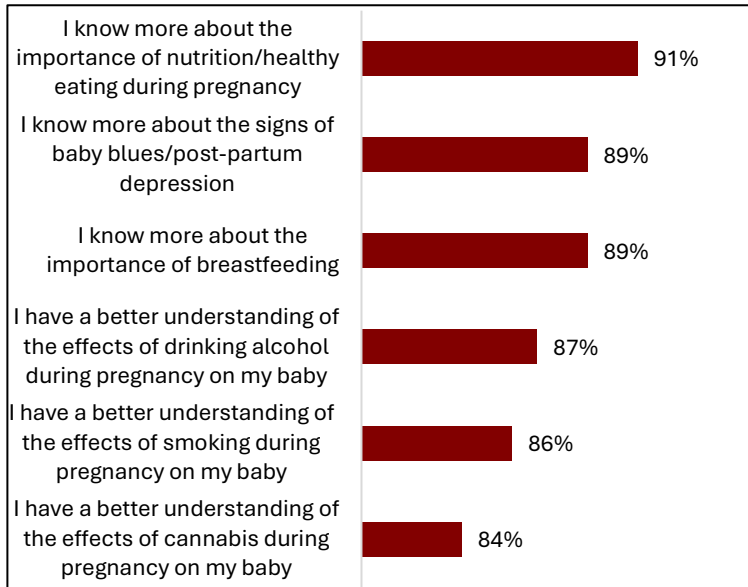
Type of Programs Attended



B. Participant Outcomes

Respondents to the survey reported gaining knowledge and skills regarding prenatal and postnatal health and well-being as a result of coming to the program.

Respondents who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with the following as a result of coming to the program



CPNP PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

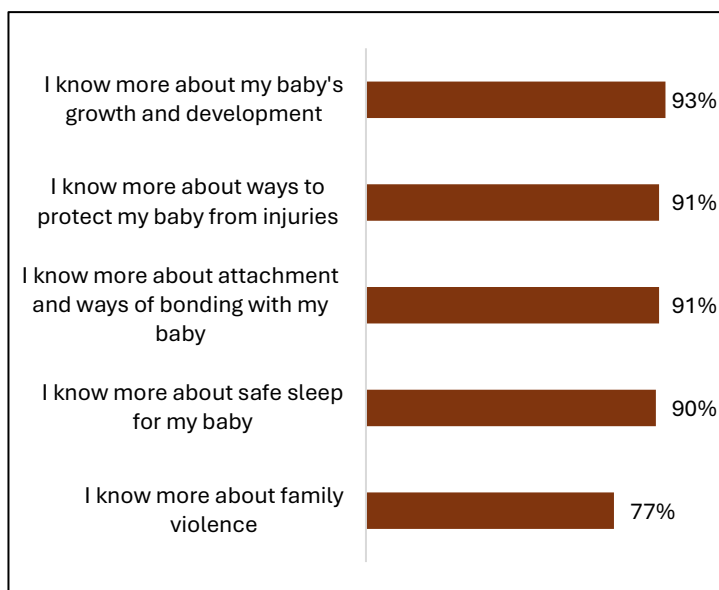
"....I also enjoy nutrition classes because I learn a lot about how to eat healthy. This has made a difference for me because prior to this I was eating really bad and now I have learned better."

"I have learned and am still learning a lot about pregnancy, labor, baby and parenting as a first time mother to be."

"Through the program, I have learned to recognize the signs of post-partum depression in myself and seek help and support early."

Respondents to the survey reported gaining parenting knowledge and skills as a result of coming to the program.

Respondents who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with the following as a result of coming to the program



CPNP PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

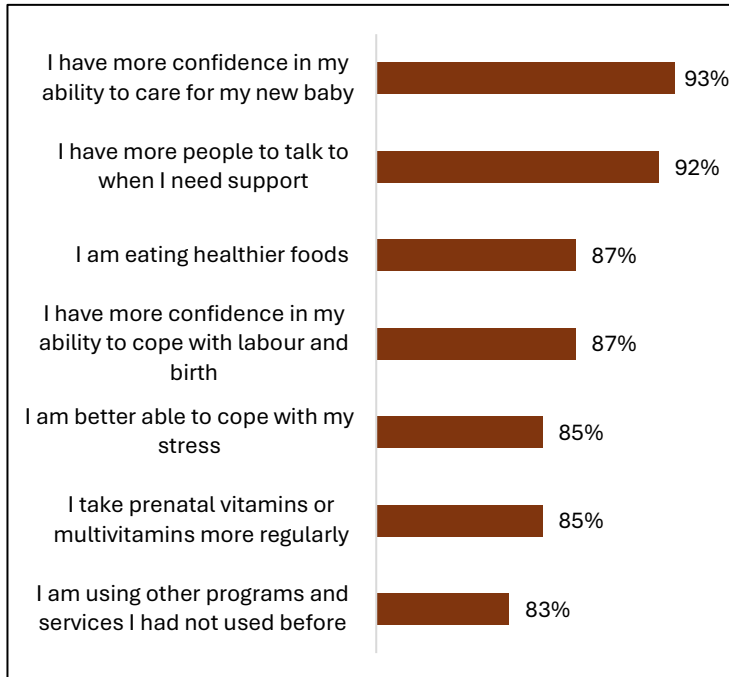
"I have been learning about my growing baby and I am better prepared to look after him now that I am part of this program. I am learning that it is important to look after my health so that I can look after my child."

"One particular highlight for me was when I needed guidance on installing a baby/infant car seat. [Name of staff] walked me through the process step by step, and I even practiced installing the seat in front of her. This hands-on approach gave me the confidence I needed to do it correctly."

"I have learned more about attachment and how me and my baby have an amazing bond and have had that since birth."

Respondents to the survey reported gaining positive health practices important to prenatal and postnatal health and wellbeing as a result of coming to the program.

Respondents who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with the following as a result of coming to the program



CPNP PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

"Great way to get out of the house, meet other parents and for baby to meet others. Gained lots of knowledge about baby development and other resources available."

"I had gestational diabetes and they helped me navigate prenatal nutrition in an isolated town with limited access to fresh food."

"The program has helped me find a lot of good resources for parenting and prenatal, and helped me find programs so I could continue school after I have my baby.."

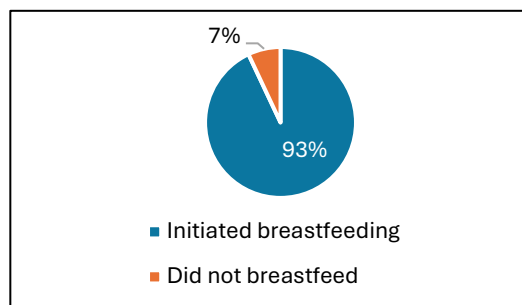
"This is huge for me because I am able to make better decisions now and to purchase healthier foods for my family, I learned this from the nutrition classes."

Respondents to the survey reported that the information and advice they received at CPNP helped them to adopt healthier practices related to smoking and alcohol use during pregnancy.

SMOKING DURING PREGNANCY	ALCOHOL USE DURING PREGNANCY
<p>Of the respondents who reported smoking since learning they were pregnant (8%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 66% reported that the information or support received from CPNP helped them to reduce their smoking ; and 19% reported that the information or support received from CPNP helped them to quit smoking. 15% reported the information or support they received from CPNP did not help them to quit or reduce their smoking. 	<p>Of the respondents who reported drinking alcohol since learning they were pregnant (2%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% reported that the information or support received from CPNP helped them to reduce drinking alcohol; and 29% reported that the information or support received from CPNP helped them to quit drinking alcohol. 21% reported the information or support they received from CPNP did not help them to quit or reduce their alcohol use.

The majority of respondents to the survey reported initiating breastfeeding.

Respondents who initiated breastfeeding



- Of respondents who had their baby while participating in CPNP (51%), **93%** initiated breastfeeding.
- Approximately **82%** of these respondents reported that they received help or advice from CPNP staff about breastfeeding.

The majority of respondents to the survey reported that their health and wellbeing as well as the health and wellbeing of their child improved as a result of coming to the program.

More specifically, responses to the health and wellbeing questions on the survey were as follows:

- **94%** of respondents reported that **their health and wellbeing improved** because of coming to the program;
- **86%** of respondents reported that **their mental health has improved** because of coming to the program; and
- **93%** of respondents reported that the **health and wellbeing of their baby improved** as a result of coming to the program.

CPNP PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

"Having someone who comes to your house regularly to visit has been a huge help for my mental health. We live far from all family so having a visitor has been amazing."

"The staff are supportive and kind and help me to be healthy and grow a healthy baby."

"Attending prenatal and postnatal programs has been extremely helpful to my physical and mental health as a new mother."

C. Experience with the Program

The majority of respondents to the survey described their experience with the program as positive and supportive.

When asked about their experience with the program, respondents reported:

- Feeling **welcomed and accepted (97%)**;
- That staff help them to learn how to get **valuable information and resources** needed for their children (**95%**); and
- That their **personal and cultural beliefs** were respected (**96%**).

These findings are important because:

"Parent support programs can have important positive effects on both parenting behaviours and the social and emotional development of young children. One of the key features of these programs is not only what is offered, but how supports are provided. Capacity-building help giving practices that form the basis of the interactions between staff and families ensure the enhancement of parents' capacities which in turn gives them the competence and confidence necessary to interact with and promote the social and emotional development of their children" (Trivette & Dunst, 2014, P. 7)

In Summary

- Based on the results of this study, the CPNP program is having a positive impact on knowledge, skills and health behaviours of program participants who responded to the survey. The majority of survey respondents reported that the program improved their knowledge and skills related to prenatal, postnatal and infant health, promoted health behaviours, such as healthy eating and breastfeeding, and expanded their social support networks. In addition, the majority of respondents reported that the program helped to improve their overall health and wellbeing as well as the health and wellbeing of their baby.
- The program is also being delivered in a family friendly manner with the vast majority of survey respondents reporting feeling welcomed and respected and learning about ways to obtain the information and resources needed for their children.
- This was the first time CPNP collected data from program participants using an online survey and in doing so many lessons were learned. Many of these lessons will inform future data collection efforts with the intent to reach as many program participants as possible.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the CPNP participants and CPNP project coordinators and staff who actively took part in the implementation of this study. We thank you for your commitment.

The survey used in this study was informed by the following surveys:

1. Benzies, K, Clarke, D, Barker, L & Mychasiuk, R. (2012). Upstart Parent Survey: A psychometrically valid tool for the evaluation of prevention-focussed parenting programs. *Maternal Child Health Journal*.
2. BC Early Childhood Development Project. The ECD Evaluation Project: Parent Survey Rationale. (March 2013).
3. FRP Canada: E-Valuation. Participant Survey.

Kelly Sears Consulting Group and **Narrative Research** were contracted to implement the online survey and conduct the data analysis on which this report is based.

References:

Trivette CM, Dunst CJ. Community-Based Parent Support Programs. In: Tremblay RE, Boivin M, Peters RDeV, eds. Tremblay RE, topic ed. *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development* [online]. <https://www.child-encyclopedia.com/parenting-skills/according-experts/community-based-parent-support-programs>. Updated: December 2014. Accessed June 25, 2025.