



# moving what matters

## GET INVOLVED.

The Women's Fund of Greater Fort Wayne is funded by individuals and organizations that are passionate about a more equitable future for girls and women in Allen County. We need your help to keep moving what matters.

Help us create change by becoming a member today. You can make a one-time contribution or a recurring contribution on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.

Learn more at [womensfundfw.org](http://womensfundfw.org)



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**ALLEN COUNTY WOMEN  
AND GIRLS STUDY OVERVIEW**

**At the Women's Fund of Greater Fort Wayne, we're committed to understanding—and overcoming—the challenges facing women and girls in our community.**

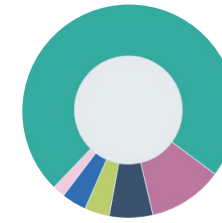
We believe that families and communities truly thrive when women are economically and physically secure, safe and healthy.

That's why, through research, education and collaboration, we're working to uncover and address the most important issues, to reach our ultimate goal of a thriving community for all.

The Women's Fund is about a brighter future for women, and for our entire community. And it all starts with **Moving What Matters.**

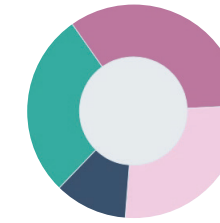
**About women and girls in Allen County in 2018:**

**POPULATION BY RACE**



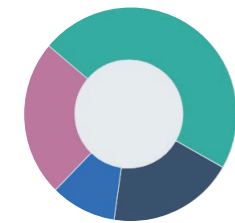
- White: 78%
- Black: 12%
- Hispanic: 7%
- Asian: 4%
- Two or more races: 4%
- Some other race: 2%

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**



- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 28%
- Some college or associate's degree: 34%
- High school graduate: 27% (includes equivalency)
- Not a high school graduate: 11%

**ANNUAL INCOME**



- Under \$25,000: 24%
- \$25,000-\$49,999: 47%
- \$50,000-\$74,999: 19%
- \$75,000+: 10%

**Women and girls in Allen County matter.**

Women and girls in Allen County are **resilient**, educated, talented and responsible. Yet, many feel they don't receive enough support. **And they're not wrong.** In fact, most girls seem to excel early in life and into their career, only to have their economic and physical health inequitably challenged later on.

Our women and girls aren't fearless, and why should they be? They face hardships, but in the face of fear, they are strong, independent and resourceful. Nonetheless, these obstacles impact how women take care of *themselves*. And if women don't take care of themselves first, they're not in the best position to take care of others.

While the journeys of each individual woman and girl in our county is unique, **this study reveals their predominant story.** Understanding the overarching story provides a place for investment and partnership to begin.

**About women and girls in Allen County in 2018:**

**191,335**  
TOTAL POPULATION

**6%**  
UNDER 5 YEARS OLD

**18%**  
5-17 YEARS OLD

**9%**  
18-24 YEARS OLD

**20%**  
25-39 YEARS OLD

**31%**  
40-64 YEARS OLD

**16%**  
65+ YEARS OLD

**In Allen County, we're doing some things *right*.**



**Girls perform well academically.**

Girls earn more high school honors diplomas and pass 3rd grade reading proficiency tests at higher levels than boys.



**Younger women are more than twice as likely to have a bachelor's degree than their mothers or grandmothers.**

16% of women ages 65 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 35% of women ages 25 to 34.

**But we still have work to do.**



**Women's median earnings are \$15,590 less than men's.**

24% of women working full time earned less than \$25,000 a year compared to 15% of their male counterparts.



**26% of women did not access healthcare because of cost.**

Women said that the cost of care and prescription drugs can be an obstacle in managing or improving their health.



**70% of women have experienced crime in their lifetime.**

39% of women have experienced burglary, robbery, theft or breaking and entering. 35% of women have experienced domestic violence, and 30% sexual assault or harassment.

# DEFINING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

## Four key issues drive women's economic security:



1. **Employment, education and training**



2. **Access to resources for physical and emotional health and well-being**



3. **Caregiving responsibilities**



4. **Personal safety**

## Putting in the work.

Allen County women *put in the work*. They're more likely to have jobs than women in the State of Indiana as a whole or in the United States. And they prepare for it, too—being more likely to have attended college—yet they're not compensated at the same level as men.

- ▶ **75% of working-age women are in the workforce.** In 2018, that's higher than the participation rate for the State of Indiana (74%) and the United States (73%).
- ▶ **84% of mothers in single-parent households are in the labor force.** "In the labor force" is defined as either working or actively looking for work.
- ▶ **24% of full-time employed women make less than \$25,000.** A single mom with three kids, working full time for \$12 an hour is below the federal poverty line. 71% made less than \$50,000.
- ▶ **Single-mother households with children under the age of 18 have a median income of \$22,879.** Single-mother families with at least one child under five have a poverty rate of nearly 60%.
- ▶ **10% of Allen County women make \$75,000 or more a year, compared to 23% of men.** There is disparity even with high-wage earners.
- ▶ **23% of working women don't have paid time off—including personal time, vacation, sick time and bereavement leave.** That means they are put into a tough situation any time they are sick, need to take care of family members, etc. 29% of respondents living in the urban ZIP codes have no paid time off, compared to 13% of rural respondents.

## Making health a priority.

Women are making strides toward their emotional and physical well-being. They feel confident and had positive experiences with healthcare providers. But while we see more women securing healthcare for themselves and their families, that doesn't necessarily mean that they're prioritizing their health in their day-to-day lives. In fact, they're less likely to access healthcare for themselves than they are for their families.

- ▶ **More women are insured.** The percentage of uninsured women decreased from 15% in 2013 to 7% in 2017.
- ▶ **Cost is a barrier to women accessing care.** 26% of women did not access healthcare because of cost.
- ▶ **Schedules are also a barrier.** Daytime office hours are a barrier for 28% of women accessing healthcare.
- ▶ **65% of women feel confident about handling life's ups and downs most of the time.** Women generally feel confident in their well-being, but 8% of women report having no one for emotional support.
- ▶ **In 2017, 50.5% of deaths from major cardiovascular diseases were female.** Cardiovascular disease is the largest cause of mortality for women and girls at 29.6% of deaths.

Women in our community are checked for female cancers less often. They tend to have lower rates of mammograms and pap smears than statewide and national peers.

25% FORT WAYNE, IN

25% INDIANA

20% UNITED STATES

Women aged 21-65 who did not have a pap smear in the last three years

40% FORT WAYNE, IN

35% INDIANA

28% UNITED STATES

Women aged 40+ who did not have a mammogram in the last two years

## Caregiving with balance.

Women are called upon to be caregivers—and some find it intrinsic to who they are. But being able to do it can be threatened by inflexible work schedules or lack of paid time off. Ultimately, many women are able to balance their job responsibilities and their caregiving responsibilities.

### In Allen County:



**50% of women have caregiving responsibilities.**

But 23% have no paid time off for when caregiving duties may—and do—arise.



**13% of women with caregiving responsibilities are not in the workforce.**

15% of women left the workforce in the past.



**18% of women paid for caregiver services outside the home and 14% paid for at-home care.**

Most women don't pay for additional caregiving services, which means they rely on others.



**With longer life expectancies, women continue to be caretakers through all phases of life, caring for their own children, an aging parent, disabled spouse or other family members.**

47% of respondents cared for a child between the ages of 5 and 18. 17% cared for an elderly or disabled parent. 7% cared for a special needs adult child. 17% cared for another family member or non-family member.

**59%**

**59% of women with caregiving responsibilities said caregiving affects their paid employment in one or more of the following ways:**

- Can only work when caregiving is available.
- Working less than full-time to provide caregiving.
- Left workforce in the past to focus on caregiving.
- Caregiving affects paid employment in another way.
- Not currently in the workforce to provide caregiving.
- Caregiving responsibilities prevented a promotion.

## Taking safety seriously.

Women experience a range of safety threats in Allen County. Their response to them has been proactive, but that doesn't guarantee safety. Updating security settings and locking doors may not protect women against domestic violence, just as authorities can't protect women from danger if the crimes aren't reported.

- ▶ **70% of women have experienced violent or nonviolent crime in their lifetime.** This includes robbery, domestic violence, sexual assault and more.
- ▶ **41% of African American survey respondents indicated being a victim of domestic violence.** 38% of White and 30% of Hispanic experienced domestic violence.
- ▶ **62% of women avoid certain places or areas of town because of concerns about crime.**
- ▶ **42% of women who experienced crime did not report the incidents to authorities.** Half of those who didn't report thought there was nothing police could do about the crime.

### ALLEN COUNTY WOMENS' EXPERIENCE WITH CRIME IN THEIR LIFETIME:

<b>39%</b>	Burglary, robbery, vehicle theft, or someone breaking and entering their house, garage or vehicle
<b>35%</b>	Domestic violence, including physical and emotional abuse
<b>30%</b>	Sexual assault, harassment, or rape
<b>15%</b>	Any other violent crime
<b>27%</b>	Any other nonviolent crime

## REASONS FOR NOT REPORTING CRIME



**44% fear how the perpetrator would respond.**



**37% don't want others to find out what happened.**



**18% didn't think the police would believe them.**

## HOW WOMEN PROTECT THEMSELVES:

- Pay attention to surroundings.
- Keep doors locked.
- Avoid certain locations.
- Adjust social media privacy settings.
- Do not go outside alone in the dark.
- Keep a weapon, other than firearm, at home.

# UNDERSTANDING GIRLS' FUTURES

Four major indicators that influence girls' lives:

1. Academic performance
2. Emotional well-being
3. Teenage pregnancy
4. Involvement with the juvenile justice system

## Assessing girls' academic achievements.

Allen County girls achieve academically, but their confidence in those achievements is low.

- ▶ **Girls get better grades.** Most students believe their grades are better than their peers', but even more so, more girls report getting mostly As.
- ▶ **Girls have a higher graduation rate.** Girls do well in school, starting with third grade reading proficiency testing. From the 2013-2014 school year through the 2017-2018 school year, 45% of girls earned an honors diploma. Honors diploma holders are more likely to graduate from college and have lower rates of remedial measures in college.
- ▶ **Girls don't see postsecondary education as valuable.** In 2018, 48% of high school senior girls thought school was slightly or not at all important to later in life, compared to 41.4% of boys.

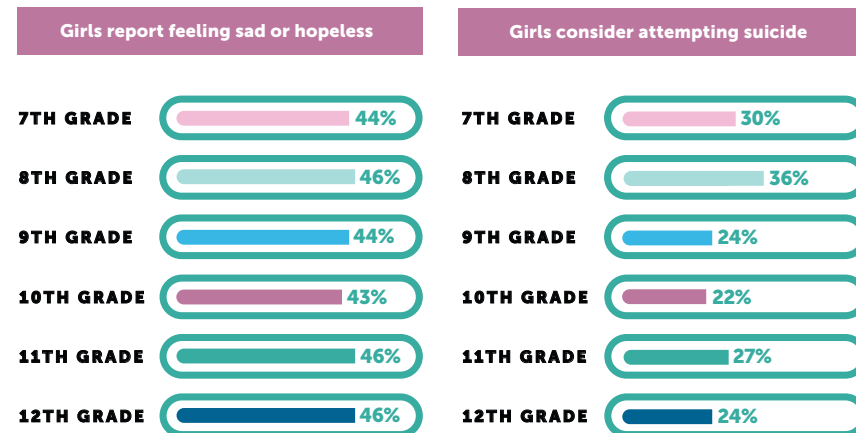
## Figuring out girls' feelings.

As middle and high school years are trying times in any person's life, our girls reflect a need for more emotional support in coping with their challenges.

- ▶ **Girls report feeling sad.** Middle and high school girls report feeling sad and hopeless, and had higher rates of contemplating suicide than boys.

- ▶ **More girls make a plan for suicide than boys.** Girls in grades 7-10 were more than twice as likely to have made a plan for suicide than boys.

- ▶ According to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, family conflict, relationships, grades, sexual identity and the loss of important people are major causes of suicidal thoughts in young people.

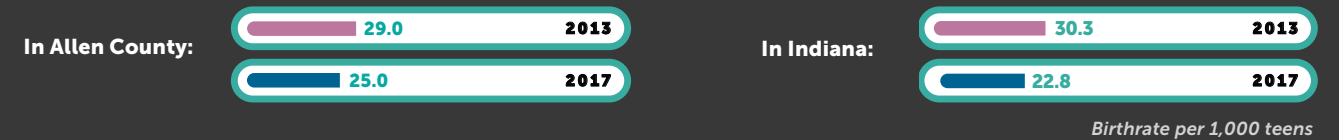


## Reducing teen pregnancy.

Unplanned pregnancies put girls and their babies at risk for health complications and greater health and financial challenges later in life.

- ▶ **Fewer teens get pregnant.** From 2013 to 2017, the teen birthrate dropped by 14%.

THE FIGURES BELOW COMPARE TEEN BIRTHRATES IN ALLEN COUNTY TO THE STATE OF INDIANA (AGES 15-19).



## Measuring the number of offenses.

Keeping our girls out of the juvenile justice system gives them a better chance of having a successful future. According to youth.gov, young people are more likely to follow a path of increasing delinquent and criminal behavior, rather than commit criminal acts at random.

- ▶ **More girls are committing status offenses—like truancy, running away, and curfew violations.** Status offenses are not crimes, but they are prohibited under the law because of a youth's status as a minor. 48% of status offense referrals in 2019 were committed by girls.
- ▶ **More than 40% of junior and senior girls thought smoking marijuana once or twice a week wasn't risky.** 20% of these same girls thought there was little risk of smoking a pack of cigarettes a day.
- ▶ **More than 20% of 17- and 18-year-old girls said they have been in a car driven by someone who had been using drugs or alcohol.** This includes themselves as the driver.

SELF-REPORTED SUBSTANCE USE FOR GIRLS IN THE PAST 30 DAYS.

	ALCOHOL USE	CIGARETTE USE	ELECTRONIC VAPOR PRODUCT USE	MARIJUANA USE
7TH GRADE	5%	1%	4%	2%
8TH GRADE	21%	8%	11%	12%
9TH GRADE	21%	5%	14%	9%
10TH GRADE	18%	5%	14%	9%
11TH GRADE	24%	8%	21%	11%
12TH GRADE	25%	8%	16%	14%

## What's next, and why?

The data allows us to know and understand where we are as a community and a path forward. It played a vital part in the formation of the Women's Fund of Greater Fort Wayne and will inform the strategies—both program and policy—that will guide the organization in the months and years to come.

The Women's Fund looks forward to engaging and educating all on the opportunities to improve the lives of women and girls—strengthening families and communities within Allen County. Moving them closer to equity and creating more access. Truly moving what matters.

The Women's Fund of Greater Fort Wayne, in partnership with the Advisory Committee and the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne have identified three key priorities as levers to shift the paradigm for women and girls.

<b>1</b>	<b>ECONOMIC SECURITY:</b>	Address the issues that impeded women and girls from reaching their full economic potential.
<b>2</b>	<b>PERSONAL SAFETY:</b>	Promote programs, policies and systems that ensure women and girls safety.
<b>3</b>	<b>YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS:</b>	Listen to and amplify the voices of young women and girls so they know they are supported and celebrated.

## How we'll move forward.

This work is ever evolving, and we intend to treat it so. We pledge to keep the Women's Fund on track by following these mandates:

- ▶ **Conduct meaningful, community-centered research.**
- ▶ **Convene and collaborate on solutions with the experts in our community.**
- ▶ **Steward community resources responsibly.**
- ▶ **Evaluate, reflect, and adapt our solutions based on what we learn.**

## About the study.

The economic health of women and future success of girls is crucial to our community's success. Knowing that, The Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne stepped back and asked, what is the current state of women and girls' well-being in Allen County? We realized we couldn't answer that meaningfully.

The last time our community took a comprehensive look at the economic health of women and girls in our society was in 1974. And we think more than 45 years is too long to go without assessing more than half of our population, as women and girls make up 51% of Allen County residents.

As Allen County continues to grow and becomes a community of choice, we have the opportunity to ensure all residents have the ability to thrive and reach their full potential.

*Here's how we did it:* ▼ ▼ ▼

### WE PARTNERED WITH CRI.

The Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne commissioned Purdue University Fort Wayne Community Research Institute (CRI) to conduct the study.

### WE COLLECTED QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE INFORMATION.

We used quantitative data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Indiana Youth Survey, Indiana Department of Education, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Indiana State Department of Health, Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee and Allen County Juvenile Center. We also contracted with SurveyUSA to conduct the Allen County Women and Girls Study Survey, in addition to CRI-led interviews.

### WE AIMED FOR EQUAL REPRESENTATION.

The Allen County Women and Girls Study Survey was intentionally carried out to include women and girls in urban and rural zip codes.

## About the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne.

The Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne is a catalyst for community improvement, promoting philanthropic and strategic partnerships that enhance the quality of life in Allen County.

Our mission is to serve as a community leader to improve the quality of life by building permanent endowments, promoting effective grantmaking, fostering philanthropy, stimulating community dialogue, and helping donors achieve their charitable goals. Together, we are powering generosity and maximizing impact in our community.

*Note: Survey conducted from January 2020 through February 2020.*