

Bridgeport MOMS PartnershipSM Pilot Evaluation Report

Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

Launched in New Haven in 2011, the Mental Health Outreach for MotherS (MOMS) Partnership is a program model and package of principles and approaches that, when brought together, have the potential to significantly reduce depressive symptoms among under-resourced, over-burdened pregnant women and mothers, and increase the social and economic mobility of their families. The focus of MOMS programming is on directly strengthening maternal mental health in order to bolster family stability, economic, and social mobility.

The Bridgeport MOMS PartnershipSM (Bridgeport MOMS) is a partnership with the Alliance for Community Empowerment (Alliance), the Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program (GBAPP), and Southwest Community Health Centers (Southwest CHC). The partnership offers the MOMS Stress Management (MOMS SM) course, a manualized, evidence-based intervention that is delivered in a closed group setting over eight weeks, to mothers and women caregivers living in the greater Bridgeport area. MOMS SM is co-delivered by a mental health clinician and a Community Mental Health Ambassador (CMHA), a paid staff member who is also a parent or caregiver from the local community and shares lived experience with program participants. In establishing Bridgeport MOMS, partners aimed to expand the local offerings available to address maternal mental health.

Bridgeport MOMS delivered eight virtual cohorts of MOMS SM during the pilot between May 2021 and April 2023. Over the course of the pilot, 111 individuals attended at least one MOMS SM class.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of Bridgeport MOMS utilized self-report data collected from participants as well as data provided by staff. Participants completed assessment surveys at three time points: Baseline, Endpoint (i.e., course completion) and Follow-up (i.e., three months after course completion). The assessments contained questions about participants' mental health, wellbeing, and social support.

KEY FINDINGS

Participants in Bridgeport MOMS

Over 40% of individuals screened heard about Bridgeport MOMS from a professional referral. The majority of the individuals screened for Bridgeport MOMS (86%) were eligible to participate in the program. In addition, 80% of eligible individuals attended at least one MOMS SM class.

Most participants in Bridgeport MOMS identified as “Black or African-American, Non-Hispanic,” had never been married and had at least a high school education or GED, and had experienced financial or material hardship in the past year.

While about 30% of participants received outpatient treatment or counseling for mental health in the past year, 40% indicated there was a time when they wanted mental health treatment and were not able to get it.

Participant Engagement and Satisfaction

- Participants attended most classes: the median attendance was 7 out of 8 classes.
- Most participants (91%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the MOMS SM course.
- Participants reported frequently utilizing skills or strategies from the MOMS SM course.

Improvements in Measures of Mental Health

- Overall, participants reported improvements in mental health indicators.
- Significant improvement was seen on measures of **depressive symptoms, depressive severity, perceived stress, and anxiety** between Baseline and Endpoint and remained improved at Follow-up.
- After engagement in MOMS SM, almost 40% of participants had **depressive symptoms** that were below the threshold for at risk for clinical depression.
- Improvements were also seen with **emotion regulation, feelings of self-efficacy and competence in parenting.**
- Participants indicated an overall increase in **positive attitudes towards seeking mental health treatment** from the beginning to end of the course.

Increased Social Support

Participants indicated more social support after the course: **overall social support** as well as **emotional / informational support** and **positive social interaction** significantly increased from Baseline to Endpoint to Follow-up.

Summary

Evaluation findings suggest that participation in Bridgeport MOMS was associated with positive changes in participants' self-reported mental health and wellbeing indicators. The findings from the pilot evaluation suggest that, as intended, participants generally reported improvements in indicators of mental health and social support.

Excerpted from:

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For the full Bridgeport MOMS PartnershipSM Pilot Evaluation Report, please contact Elevate Policy Lab at elevate@yale.edu.

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