

# Maternal Alcohol and Drug Use

## Why Is This Important?

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause low birth weight and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). Evidence shows a strong association between alcohol and other substance use during pregnancy and negative health and development outcomes later on in life. There is insufficient evidence to determine a safe or harmful level of alcohol use during pregnancy which is why abstinence is recommended. The IHBQ screens mothers for whether they used alcohol or drugs during pregnancy.

## What Is Being Done?

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse [low risk drinking guidelines](#)

Saskatchewan Prevention Institute [alcohol information](#)

[Choices](#) program

## To Learn More:

[What is Health Equity?](#) A Primer for the Health Care System

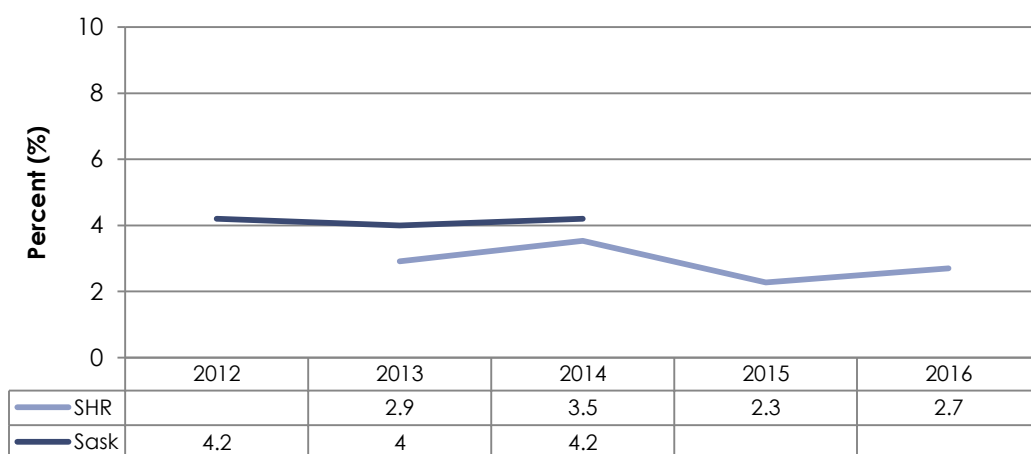
Chief Medical Health Officer's [Call to Action](#)

## Highlights

### Disparity exists in mothers' alcohol or drug use during pregnancy.

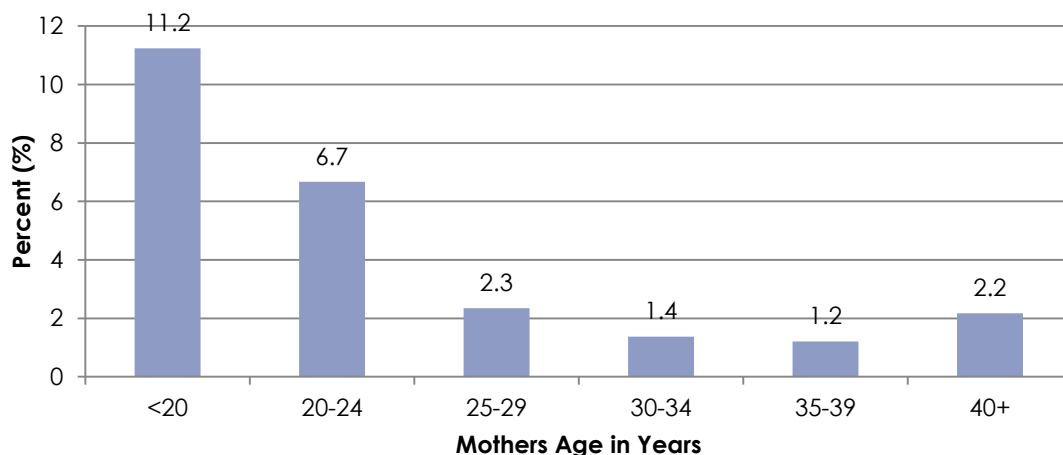
- Almost 3% of mothers reported alcohol or drug use (Figure 1) in 2016. The provincial average was just over 4% (in 2014).
- Mothers less than 20 years of age were more likely to report alcohol and drug use (11.2%) compared to mothers from other age groups (Figure 2).
- Mothers' alcohol and drug use by rural areas and socio-economic status is shown [here](#).

**Figure 1: Percent of Mothers Reporting Alcohol and Drug Use, Saskatoon Health Region and Saskatchewan, 2012 to 2016**



Source: KidsFirst, Ministry of Education

**Figure 2: Percent of Mothers Reporting Alcohol and Drug Use, by Age Group, Saskatoon Health Region, 2013 to 2016 Combined**



Source: KidsFirst, Ministry of Education