

Executive Summary

General Characteristics

- Women make up 51.8% of the total population. Nearly all (90.9%) of the female population is white, 7.8% is Hispanic, and 2.7% is African American.
- The median age of women in Porter County is 38.6. A little over one-fourth of Porter County's female population is under 19 (26.3%), almost 26% (25.9%) is between the ages of 20 and 39, 34.0% is between 40 and 64, and 13.7% is age 65 or older,
- 56.7% of women 16 and older participate in the labor force.

The Economic Position of Women in Porter County

- There is a gap between the incomes of men and women in Porter County. The median income of men in Porter County is \$56,027 and for women it is \$39,636, a gap of \$16,391.
- This gap is larger than both the gap nation-wide and the gap in Indiana. However, the gap in Porter County is smaller than it was in 2000.
- Women make up over 75% of workforce in life, physical, and social science occupations (100%), arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations (75.9%), health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other technical occupations (80.9%), health technologists and technicians, healthcare support occupations (75%), personal care and service occupations (87.2%), and office and administrative support occupations (81.1%).
- The fields in which the discrepancy between the incomes of men and women are the greatest are health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other technical occupations (difference of \$52,208), installation, maintenance, and repair occupations (difference of \$39,521), and computer and mathematical occupations (difference of \$44,618).
- Unemployment rates in Porter County are lower than both state unemployment rates and national unemployment rates.
- The poverty rate in Porter County is 10.9% for women and 8% for men.
- Poverty rates in Porter County are lower than in Indiana and the rest of the country. Poverty rates for men and women vary across the townships in Porter County, but they never exceed national rates.
- In Porter County the poverty rate for married-couple families is 2.7%. For female-headed households it is 31.9%. For female-headed households with children, the poverty rate is 37.4%.
- Of all the households in poverty in Porter County, 58.7% are female-headed, and 54.5% of the total is made up of female-headed households with children under 18.
- Female-headed households are likely to occupy positions right above the poverty line, putting them at risk of falling into poverty. Over 35% of female-headed households have an income that is less than 1.3 times the poverty line.

Homelessness in Porter County

- In Porter County over 100 women and an additional 130 children were homeless in both 2011 and 2012.
- In both 2011 and 2012, over 75% of the homeless persons in Porter County were female.
- From October 15, 2011 to April 15, 2012, twenty-three different women stayed at the Open Arms Women's Shelter. An average of five women stayed at the shelter each night. However, in the last month an average of eight women stayed at the shelter each night.
- Compared to 2011 the age of homeless persons is decreasing and they are encountering more episodes of homelessness.

Women and Education in Porter County

- There is no substantial difference between the levels of educational attainment of men and women in Porter County.
- Women in Porter County tend to have slightly higher levels of educational attainment than women at the state and national level.
- Girls generally score higher than boys on the language arts section of the ISTEP, but there is no substantial difference between the mathematics scores of boys and girls in Porter County.

Women's Health

- Women are more likely to have health insurance than men.
- From 2004 to 2008, there has been an increase in the number of cases of pregnancy related hypertension and diabetes.
- Overall women in Porter County have lower mortality rates than men.
- Although overall women have lower death rates than men, women generally have higher mortality rates than men for Alzheimer's disease, hypertension, mental disorders, and strokes.
- Women in Porter County have significantly higher mortality rates for Alzheimer's disease, cancer, hypertension, and mental disorder than women in the state of Indiana.
- Overall the cancer incident rates of women in Porter County are similar to those of both the state of Indiana and the US, but Porter County females have slightly higher incident rates of uterine and breast cancer.

Women and Drugs

- Generally, female students in Porter County are less likely to use alcohol or drugs than male students. The rates of reported use by male and female students are usually similar during middle school years, but during high school, the reported use of alcohol and drugs by male students exceeds the reported consumption and use of female students.

- Female students in Porter County are more likely to use alcohol or drugs than female students in the rest of the state of Indiana. Porter County females are more likely to use alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, prescription drugs, and over the counter drugs than females in the rest of the state.
- Women in Porter County are less likely to receive treatments for alcohol than men. Women between the ages of 35 and 54 receive the most treatments for alcohol among women in Porter County.
- Significantly fewer women are arrested for DUI than men. While the number of men each year arrested for drunk driving in Porter County is around 900, the number of women arrested for drunk driving is less than 300.
- More men are arrested for public intoxication than women.
- More men than women are treated for marijuana. However, there was an increase in both the number of men and the number of women who received treatments for marijuana between 2007 and 2008. The most common age group receiving marijuana treatments is 18 to 25 year-olds. Fewer women are arrested for marijuana-related offenses than men.
- Between 2004 and 2006 more men received treatment for cocaine than women. However, in 2007 and 2008, more women received cocaine treatments than men. The majority of people receiving cocaine treatments are between the ages of 26 and 44.
- More men are arrested for cocaine-related offenses than women, but the number of both men and women arrested for cocaine-related offenses has decreased in recent years.
- More men than women are treated for heroin, but the difference in the number of men and women treated is significantly smaller for heroin than for the other drugs examined in this report. Many people receiving heroine treatments are in 18 to 25 or the 26 to 35 age bracket.
- More men than women on probation tested positive for opiates (includes heroin).

Minority Women in Porter County

- Porter County as a whole is 87.94% Caucasian and 87.86% of the female population is Caucasian. African Americans make up 2.75% of the total population, and African American females make up 2.73% of the female population. Asian persons make up 1.26% of the total population and 1.46% of the female population. Hispanic persons make up 7.85% of the total population, and Hispanic women make up 7.77% of the female population.
- With the exception of African Americans, men earn significantly more than women of the same race or ethnicity.
- African American women have a slightly higher median income than African American men. The median income for African American men is \$26,719, and the median income of African American women is \$31,761.

- Minority women continue to have higher poverty rates than Caucasians in Porter County. A total of 8.9% of Caucasian women live below the poverty line, while 24.7% of African American and 15.6% of Hispanic women are beneath the poverty line.
- African American women and Asian women in Porter County surpass both state and national averages for women with bachelor's degrees by over 10%. Caucasian women exceed Indiana state average, but fail to meet national levels. Native American and Hispanic women fail to meet the educational attainment of either the state of Indiana or the US.

Women with Disabilities in Porter County

- Overall, males and females in Porter County have similar disability rates (10.31% for men and 9.49% for women), but as they age, women tend to have higher disability rates than men.
- Men are more likely to have vision difficulty or hearing difficulty than women, but women are more likely to have cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty, especially as they age.
- Men with disabilities earn more than women with disabilities and the difference between the amount a person without a disability and a person with a disability makes is greater for females with a disability than for males with a disability.

Senior Women

- The poverty rate for senior women (women over 65) in Porter County is slightly higher than the poverty rate for senior men. Senior women have a poverty rate of 5.8% and senior men have a poverty rate of 4.22%. The poverty rate for both senior men and senior women is less than the poverty rate for seniors in Indiana and the nation.
- 29.46% of senior women live alone in Porter County. This is more than twice the percent of senior men in Porter County who live alone but less than the rate for Indiana and the US.

Violence against Women in Porter County

- The crime index for rape in Porter County is 39. The index is based around the US value of 100 and numbers above or below it are the probability of being a victim of that crime relative to the national average. The index for the state of Indiana is 89.
- According to data from the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the number of domestic violence victims staying at domestic violence shelters has increased. In 2011, 99 adults and 99 children stayed at The Caring Place domestic violence shelter in Valparaiso.

Women and Housing

- Reliable data on the specific housing needs of women is not readily available but there is a good deal of circumstantial evidence that supports the conclusion that women, particularly single head of households, are most likely to be impacted by housing problems in Porter County.

- 94.6% of persons making less than \$20,000 living in renter-occupied housing spend over 30% of their income on housing. 79.4% of persons making less than \$20,000 and living in owner-occupied housing spend over 30% of their income on housing.
- 77.1% of persons living in renter-occupied housing and making between \$20,000 and \$34,999 spend over 30% of their income on housing. 79.4% of persons living in owner-occupied housing and making between \$20,000 and \$34,999 spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- Since women are more likely to live in poverty than men and a large percentage of female-headed households and female-headed households with children live in poverty, the higher poverty rates for women increase the likelihood that the housing issues of Porter County apply to women at a greater rate than to men.