Closing the Gender Gap: Women and Addictions

Adrienne Miller, President/CEO
Women for Sobriety, Inc.
Acknowledgement: American society is starting to awaken to the fact that there are more than the two discreet gender categories of “male” and “female”. Unfortunately, the western research tradition is slow to catch up. Research is extremely limited in the area of addiction and non-binary gender identities. Therefore, most of the data presented in today’s webinar are similarly limited to these two generalized gender categories. Researchers are implored to increase attention this neglected area.
Gender Gap

For every $1.00 earned by a male, a female earned...

1968 - $0.582

2017 - $0.805

The Gender Gap also applies to…

Poverty Rates

Poverty Rates by Age Group

% Living Above Poverty Line

The Gender Gap also applies to...

**Medicaid Coverage, ages 18-64**

- **Females**
- **Males**

**United States Congress**

- **Male**
- **Female**

**Representation in Congress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:**
- United States Congress: https://cawp.rutgers.edu/history-women-us-congress
Any Substance Use Disorder, 2002 to 2013
National Survey on Drug Use and Health

SOURCE: Substance Abuse & Mental Health Data Archive, https://pdas.samhsa.gov; Data collected/reported as Illicit Drug and/or Alcohol Abuse and Dependence consistent with diagnostic manual during this period
Alcohol Use – 2002 to 2012
National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Consumed Any Alcohol in Past 30 days

- Males 2002: 40%
  2012: 48.3%
- Females 2002: 44%
  2012: 56.1%

Average # of Drinking Days – Previous 30 days

- Male 2002: 6.5
  2012: 7.0
- Female 2002: 5.5
  2012: 6.0

Alcohol Use, 2001-2 to 2012-3
National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions

Alcohol Use in Past 12 Months

Alcohol Use Disorder Diagnosis Among High-Risk Drinkers

SOURCE: Grant et al; Prevalence of 12-Month Alcohol Use, High-Risk Drinking, and DSM-IV Alcohol Use Disorder in the United States, 2001-2002 to 2012-2013; JAMA Psychiatry. 2017
Any Substance Use Disorder, Age 18-25
National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Any Drug or Alcohol Use Disorder - Past Year

Gender Gap

**Alcohol, Age 50+**

**National Survey on Drug Use and Health**

% Change 2005-2006 to 2013-2014

- Past month binge alcohol use: 9.7% (Male) & 44.4% (Female)
- Past year alcohol use disorder: 2% (Male) & 84.6% (Female)

**Past-Year Alcohol Use Disorder**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Han et al; Demographic Trends of Binge Alcohol Use and Alcohol Use Disorders among Older Adults in the United States, 2005-2014; Drug Alcohol Depend. 2017
# Alcohol Use & Alcohol-Related Harms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males born in 1910’s</th>
<th>Males born in 1990’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drink Alcohol</td>
<td>2.2x more likely</td>
<td>1.1x more likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems from Drinking</td>
<td>3.0x more likely</td>
<td>1.2x more likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmed by Alcohol</td>
<td>3.6x more likely</td>
<td>1.3x more likely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Slade et al; Birth cohort trends in the global epidemiology of alcohol use and alcohol-related harms in men and women: systematic review and metaregression; BJ Open; 2016
Women and Alcohol Use Disorder

Alcohol affects women more quickly and more dangerously:

- Less water in our bodies
- Higher concentration
- More toxic
- Causes more damage
- Higher death rate

• Among heaviest drinkers, women have more problems than men
• More likely in later life
• In elderly women, hospital admissions for alcohol is the same as for heart attacks
• Heavy drinking reduces your life by 30 years on average
Gender-Specific Treatment

More satisfied with treatment
More connected to people in their treatment group

For residential treatment:
• Stayed in treatment longer
• More likely to complete full treatment

Improved long-term outcomes:
• Used/Drank fewer days
• Fewer number of drinks per drinking day
• Improved Addiction Severity Index scores
• Decreased criminal activity
Predictors of Long Term Recovery

• Being a woman
• More education
• Stable employment
• Positive life events

• Being in a self-help group
• High self-efficacy
• Approach recovery head-on
• Support from friend/family
Women for Sobriety

WFS New Life Program

• 13 Acceptance Statements
• 6 Levels of Growth
• Peer-facilitated online and in-person meetings
• Online peer-support forum
• Full catalog of program literature and workbooks

Women for Sobriety, Inc.

• 501(c)(3) charitable organization
• Administers online bookstore and annual national conference
• Screening and training of peer facilitators
• Ensures fidelity to mission in meetings and outreach
Promotes Behavioral Change By:

1. **Positive reinforcement** (approval and encouragement)
2. **Cognitive strategies** (positive thinking)
3. **Letting the body help** (diet, meditation, physical exercise, and relaxation techniques)
4. **Dynamic group involvement**
Acceptance Statements

1. I have a life-threatening problem that once had me. Now I take charge of my life and my well-being. I accept the responsibility.

2. Negative thoughts destroy only myself. My first conscious sober act must be to reduce negativity in my life.

3. Happiness is a habit I will develop. Happiness is created, not waited for.

4. Problems bother me only to the degree I permit them to. I now better understand my problems. I do not permit problems to overwhelm me.

5. I am what I think. I am a capable, competent, caring, compassionate woman.

6. Life can be ordinary or it can be great. Greatness is mine by a conscious effort.

7. Love can change the course of my world. Caring is all-important.

8. The fundamental object of life is emotional and spiritual growth. Daily I put my life into a proper order, knowing which are the priorities.

9. The past is gone forever. No longer am I victimized by the past. I am a new woman.

10. All love given returns. I am learning to know that I am loved.

11. Enthusiasm is my daily exercise. I treasure all moments of my new life.

12. I am a competent woman, and I have much to give life. This is what I am, and I shall know it always.

13. I am responsible for myself and for my actions. I am in charge of my mind, my thoughts, and my life.
Levels of Growth

Level 6: Continued growth (8,13)

Level 5: Improving relationships (7,10)

Level 4: Positive new attitudes (3,6,11)

Level 3: Practicing a new self image (5,12)

Level 2: Releasing negativity (2,4,9)

Level 1: Acceptance of physical disorder (1)

Peer Support

• Phone Support Volunteers*
• In Person Meetings*
• Online Message Board**
• Live Online Text Chats**

* (215) 536-8026 or contact@womenforsobriety.org
** www.womenforsobrietyonline.com
Online Inspirations

- **Facebook** - [www.facebook.com/WomenForSobriety](http://www.facebook.com/WomenForSobriety)
- **Twitter** - [@WFS4C](http://twitter.com/WFS4C)
- **Blog** - [http://wfsorg.blogspot.com/](http://wfsorg.blogspot.com/)
- **Email List** – sign up at [womenforsobriety.org](http://womenforsobriety.org)
We are capable and competent, caring and compassionate, always willing to help another, bonded together in overcoming our addictions.
Cigna Behavioral Health Awareness

If you are a Cigna customer and have questions about Substance Use treatment or about your benefits and how to use them, please contact:

Chantelle Hoogland – 888.244.6293 x 329159
Lisa Osborne – 770.779.2023