Stress, Love & Money:
A survey of Millennial women's attitudes toward fertility and family planning, conducted and presented by Celmatix
Survey methodology & demographics
Survey requirements

• Survey enrolled 1,003 women between the ages of 25 and 33 with a minimum of a 4 year college degree and a $50,000 household income

• Survey participants were required to either want children in the future, or to be unsure of wanting children. Women who do not want children, already had children, were pregnant, were trying to get pregnant, or were planning to get pregnant in the immediate future were screened out of the survey

Plans and experience for family building

- 32% I am planning on having a child in the next few years
- 16% I am not sure I want children
- 30% I am certain that I want children, but that’s a few years out for me
- 23% I might want children, but that’s a few years out for me
- 16% I am not sure I want children
Survey demographics

Household income
45% of women have a household income between $50,000 and $75,000, an additional 26% have an income between $75,000 and $100,000. 26% have an income between $100,000 and $200,000; 3% have an income about $200,000

Highest level of education:
56% of women have completed an undergraduate degree, 33% are enrolled in or have completed a master's degree, and 11% are enrolled in or have completed a doctorate degree

Employment status:
81% of women are employed full time, 8% part time. 7% are looking for work. 3% are active students.

Community:
41% of participants live in a city, 51% in a suburban environment and 8% in a rural environment

Reproductive health history:
11% of participants have been diagnosed with a reproductive condition; 16% have a family history of a condition

Relationship status
31% of women are single, 29% married and 40% in a serious relationship or a domestic partnership

Sexual orientation
91% of participants identify as heterosexual; 9% identify as bisexual, homosexual, unsure, or other
Reproductive health knowledge & understanding
Despite the high prevalence of endometriosis, which affects one in 10 women, and primary ovarian insufficiency (POI), a condition that affects up to 3% of women and causes menopause before age 40, few women are very familiar with these conditions.

The majority of respondents reported being unaware of egg quality, or not understanding what it meant. Egg quality is a significant contributor to infertility, especially for older women hoping to conceive.
What do you think impacts a woman’s fertility?

We asked women what they think impacts fertility from a list that included known factors as well as common misconceptions. These are the results.
What do you think impacts a woman’s fertility?

- Most women are aware that a family history of reproductive conditions and genetics can affect a woman’s fertility.

**Survey Question**

Most women are aware that a family history of reproductive conditions and genetics can affect a woman’s fertility.
**SURVEY QUESTION**

What do you think impacts a woman’s fertility?

- Most women are aware that a family history of reproductive conditions and genetics can affect a woman’s fertility.
- The majority of women correctly identified that factors like smoking, age, and drug/alcohol use can impact fertility.
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The majority of women correctly identified that factors like smoking, age, and drug/alcohol use can impact fertility.

Many women incorrectly identified contraception (birth control pills, IUD, or plan B), terminating a pregnancy, or multiple sexual partners as affecting fertility.

The majority of women (more than 70%) believe mental health conditions, including stress and anxiety, affect fertility, which is unproven.
Many women are concerned that age, and genetics may affect their fertility.

Women who are older are more concerned about age impacting their fertility than younger women; women who are younger have greater concern about genetics.

Women with a personal history or family history of a reproductive condition were more concerned about their genetics and family history of fertility difficulties.

What are you personally concerned about affecting your fertility?
What are you personally concerned about affecting your fertility?

- Stress and anxiety have not been known to affect fertility; Despite this, nearly 40% of women are concerned about its impact.

- Using hormonal birth control does not impact long-term fertility, yet more than 20% of women are worried about its effect on their fertility.

- Younger women are more concerned than older women about the impact of birth control on fertility.
Where do you get information about your health?

• 83% of women rely primarily on websites for information about their health

Health resources & publications

- Where is a recent place you went to for information about your health?
- Where is a recent place you went to for information about your reproductive health?

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<th>Google search</th>
<th>Women's Health</th>
<th>Mayo clinic website</th>
<th>Planned parenthood</th>
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83% of women rely primarily on websites for information about their health

WebMD, Google searches, Women's Health magazine, and the Mayo Clinic website are the most popular resources for health information for women surveyed.

What type of resource do you use most often for information about your health?
Family building plans
How important is it to you to have biological children?

- The majority of women feel that having children/biological children is either somewhat or very important to them.
- Few women feel that having children or having biological children is essential.

How important to you is it that you have children?

- 8% There is nothing more important
- 13% Not important
- 47% Very important
- 32% Somewhat important

How important to you is it that you your children be biologically yours?

- 7% Essential
- 36% Very important
- 39% Somewhat important
- 19% Not important
How often do you think about your plans for having children?

- Women who are single think about their plans for having children far less often than women in relationships; 82% of them think about it several times per month or less. 11% never think about it.
- Married women think about their plans the most often. Nearly half think about it several times per week or more.
- Women in a serious relationship or domestic partnership fall between single and married women in how often they think about their plans for having children.
• Women who are single think about their plans for having children far less often than women in relationships; 82% of them think about it several times per month or less. 11% never think about it.

• Married women think about their plans the most often. Nearly half think about it several times per week or more.

• Women in a serious relationship or domestic partnership fall between single and married women in how often they think about their plans for having children.

• Additionally, women with a personal or family history of a reproductive health condition or fertility issue think about their plans more often than women who do not.
When would you ideally like to start having children?

- The majority of women surveyed would ideally have children in the next 3 or 3-5 years. Very few women are waiting 8 years or more to start a family.
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When broken down by age, older participants tend to have shorter timelines, but are also more likely to have no timeline in mind. The majority of younger (ages 25-27) participants are waiting at least 3 years to start a family.

By age:

- Within the next year (25-27): 6%
- Within the next 3 years (25-27): 10%
- In 3-5 years (25-27): 11%
- In 5-8 years (25-27): 22%
- In 8+ years (25-27): 23%
- No timeline in mind (25-27): 18%
- Within the next year (28-30): 46%
- Within the next 3 years (28-30): 40%
- In 3-5 years (28-30): 22%
- In 5-8 years (28-30): 23%
- In 8+ years (28-30): 18%
- No timeline in mind (28-30): 12%

- Within the next year (31-33): 41%
- Within the next 3 years (31-33): 32%
- In 3-5 years (31-33): 23%
- In 5-8 years (31-33): 18%
- In 8+ years (31-33): 7%
- No timeline in mind (31-33): 3%

- Within the next year (31-33): 7%
- Within the next 3 years (31-33): 3%
- In 3-5 years (31-33): 1%
- In 5-8 years (31-33): 0%
- In 8+ years (31-33): 0%
- No timeline in mind (31-33): 0%

- No timeline in mind (31-33): 0%
• The majority of women do not have concrete plans in mind for starting a family, indicating instead that they have a general plan, or that they will start planning once they reach certain milestones like marriage or financial readiness.

• Single women were most likely to indicate that they are waiting to plan until they get married or meet the person they want to have children with.

• Married women are more likely to have a concrete plan, but the majority of married women indicated having a more flexible plan.

• Younger participants were more likely to indicate that they know they will have children in the future, but that they don’t worry about it too much.

How do you think about when you’ll start having children?

- I know that I will need medical assistance to get pregnant, so I plan to seek assistance when I am ready
- I know I want to start as soon as I can
- I will start planning once I reach a certain age
- I want to start now, but cannot because of various factors, like my relationship status or my job
- I will start planning once I reach a certain point in my career or education
- I’ve planned out the age when I’ll start having children, taking into account various factors like my job or finances
- I know I don’t want to have children now, so I haven’t planned very much for when I do
- I will start planning once I am able to financially afford children
- I will start planning once I get married or meet the person I want to have children with
- I prefer to just see what happens
- I know I will have children in the future, but I don’t worry about it too much
- I have a general idea when I will start having children, but it could change
Finances were identified by the most women as one of the most important factors in deciding when to have children – this was the case across household incomes. Finances are particularly important to younger survey participants.

In addition, age, career, and relationship status are key decision making factors for the majority of women.

Older women are more likely to consider health risks for themselves and potential health issues for their child in deciding when to have children.

Most women do not factor in how many children they want to have into their decision making.

When siblings or friends are having children is not a factor for most women in deciding when to start a family.

**SURVEY QUESTION**

**What factors do you consider in deciding when to have children?**

- Finances for raising children
- My age
- My career
- My relationship status
- My partner’s career
- My lifestyle
- Where I am living
- Health risks for me
- My partner’s age
- Potential health issues for my child
- How many children I ultimately want to have
- Finishing my education
- Finances for medical assistance with my fertility
- My parents’ ages
- When my friends are starting to have children
- The age that my mom had her first child
- When my siblings are starting to have children

[Bar chart showing factors considered and most important]
If you found out that starting to have children at the age you want would be difficult or impossible due to fertility difficulties, what would you consider doing?

- Women are less willing to change their timelines for having children than they are to consider other options, like adopting, seeing a fertility specialist, reevaluating their decision to have children, or freezing their eggs.

- Single participants were more likely to consider freezing their eggs or having children without a partner. They were less likely to want to have children sooner.

- Married women are more likely to consider changing their plans to have children sooner.

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**Survey Question:**

If you found out that starting to have children at the age you want would be difficult or impossible due to fertility difficulties, what would you consider doing?

- Adopting a child, now or in the future
- Seeing a fertility specialist
- Reevaluating my decision to have children
- Freezing my eggs
- Reevaluating how many children I want to have
- Having children sooner, even though I would have to change my other life plans, like career or education
- Reprioritizing my finances so I can have children sooner
- Having children sooner, it wouldn't impact my career or education
- Nothing, my plan and timing for having children would remain the same
- Having children without a partner
- Focusing more now on finding a partner that I would want to have children with
- Reevaluating my pregnancy plans with my same sex (lesbian) partner
Concerns about fertility and the ability to have children
Are you concerned about your fertility or ability to have children?

- Over 40% of women are not concerned about their fertility. Nearly half are somewhat concerned. A minority of women—only 10%—are very concerned.
- Concern rises with age, starting around age 28.
Those who are very concerned about their fertility likely started becoming concerned when they reached a certain age, or when they were diagnosed with a health condition or after a conversation with their OB-GYN.

Those who are somewhat concerned cited reaching a certain age and when their friends started having children most commonly as the moment when they became concerned.

Those who are very concerned listed more reasons that they started becoming concerned than those who are somewhat concerned.

**Survey Question:**

When did you start becoming concerned about your fertility?

- When I reached a certain age: 38% (Very concerned), 24% (Somewhat concerned)
- When my friends started to have children: 26% (Very concerned), 14% (Somewhat concerned)
- When I was diagnosed with a health condition: 22% (Very concerned), 11% (Somewhat concerned)
- When I got married or met the person I want to have children with: 14% (Very concerned), 13% (Somewhat concerned)
- When a friend had trouble having children: 11% (Very concerned), 12% (Somewhat concerned)
- After a conversation with my OB-GYN: 24% (Very concerned), 10% (Somewhat concerned)
- When a family member had trouble having children: 10% (Very concerned), 13% (Somewhat concerned)
- After a conversation with a family member about fertility and having children: 8% (Very concerned), 8% (Somewhat concerned)
- When my siblings started to have children: 10% (Very concerned), 10% (Somewhat concerned)
- After not getting pregnant after having unprotected sex: 6% (Very concerned), 11% (Somewhat concerned)
- After learning about how my lifestyle choices can impact my fertility: 5% (Very concerned), 8% (Somewhat concerned)
- When my initial plans for starting a family didn’t work out: 4% (Very concerned), 9% (Somewhat concerned)
- When I knew that medical assistance would be needed for me to have children: 2% (Very concerned), 5% (Somewhat concerned)
Nearly half of those who are not concerned about their fertility believe that they are young and have plenty of time to have a family.

Many women also consider their lack of personal or family history of conditions as a reason to not be concerned.

One third of women think that their healthy lifestyle is a reason to not be concerned.

Only 14% of women think about the availability of fertility treatments in their level on concern about fertility.

Why aren’t you concerned about your fertility?

- I am young and have plenty of time
- I do not have a history of reproductive health issues
- My OB-GYN has not mentioned any concerns about my ability to conceive
- My mother, sister, or other female family member did not have trouble getting pregnant
- I am unsure if I want kids
- I have a healthy lifestyle
- I’ve never really thought about it
- There are so many innovative fertility treatments available today if I need them
- I plan to start having children at an age when my fertility shouldn’t be an issue
- I am planning to adopt children
- I had an unwanted pregnancy in the past, so I know that I can get pregnant
- I froze my eggs, so I know they will be available when I want to use them
Attitudes toward egg freezing
95% of women have heard of egg freezing. However, only 2% have spoken to a doctor about it. Of those that have spoken to a doctor, 89% found the conversations helpful, but only 37% were recommended to see a fertility specialist. Four women surveyed had frozen their eggs.

The majority of women correctly identified that a woman would ideally freeze her eggs when she is younger.
The majority of women haven't frozen their eggs because they haven't considered it, perhaps reflecting a lack of understanding of egg freezing.

Those who have considered it list not needing it yet and the cost as the top two reasons they haven't frozen their eggs.

Judgement from others or a feeling of giving up on finding a partner were not popular reasons for not freezing one's eggs.

**Survey Question:** Why haven’t you frozen your eggs?