

# Women's FOUNDATION *of Lincoln & Lancaster County*

## 2012 WOMEN'S VOICES PROJECT

"It takes a thousand **voices**  
to tell a single story."

Native American Proverb

### 2011-2013 Mayor's Commission on Women

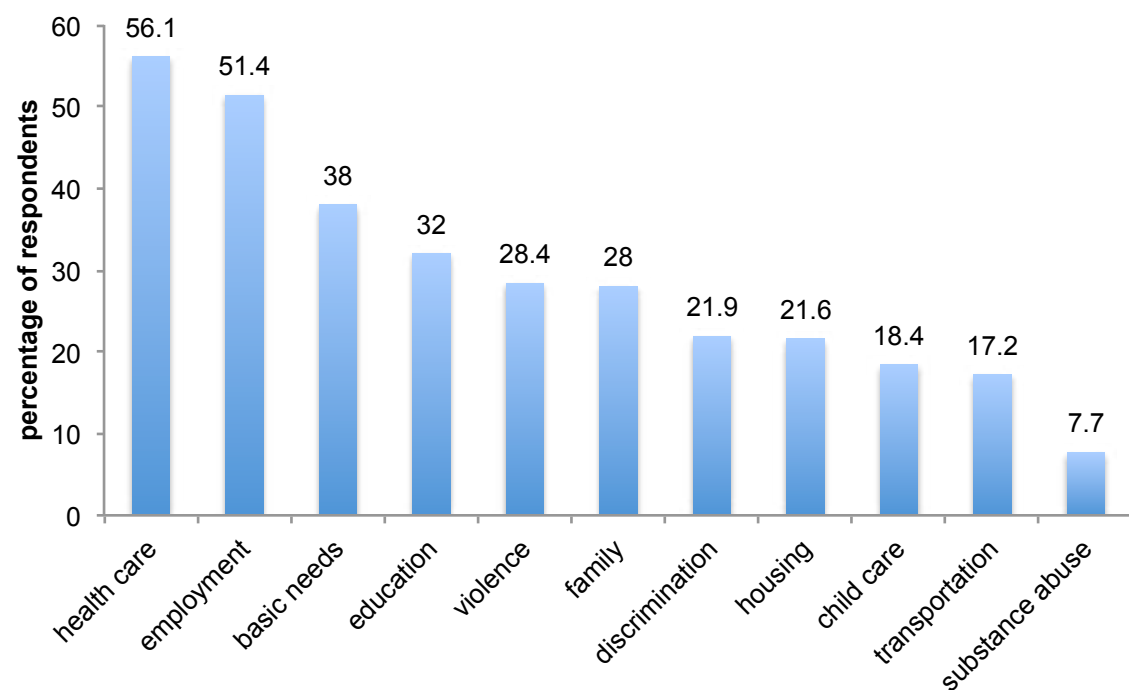
Gloria Aron  
Connie Benjamin  
Bridget Christensen  
Su Eells  
Gerise Herndon  
Mary Herres  
Lisa Latimer  
Ann Lott  
Lyndie Christensen Nader

Mahe Naseem  
Josie Rodriguez  
Morgan Rogers  
Connie Schmidt  
Lisa Schulze  
Pat Shepard  
Sonja Smith  
Kathie Uhrmacher

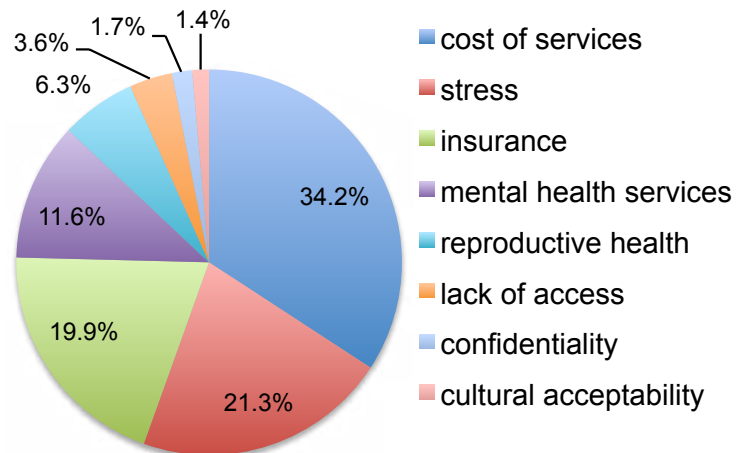
In Lincoln and Lancaster County, women make up 50% of the population, earn 80 cents for every dollar made by men, own 28% of local firms and are the head of 13,072 family households.

A total of 1,245 women lent their voices to this project to tell the "story" of women in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

### Ranking of Issues

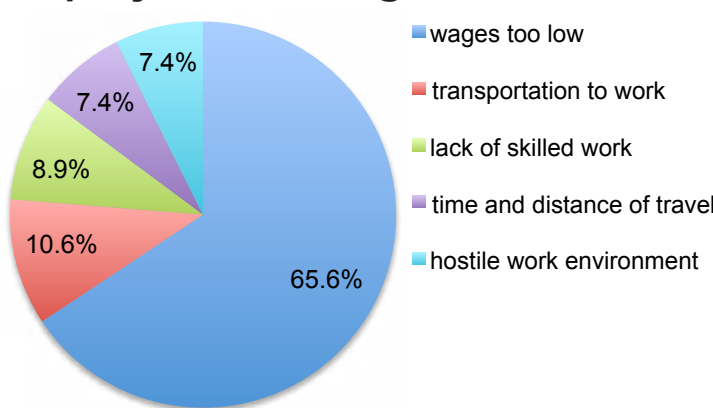


### Health Care (n=1065)



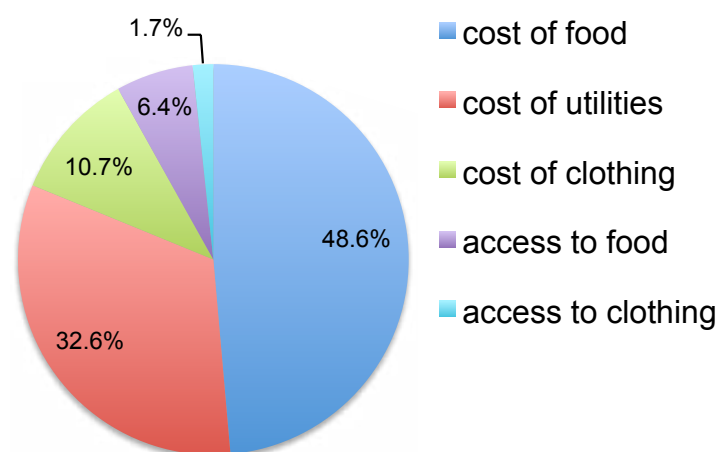
Insurance Coverage	
Employer	56.90%
Medicare	14.50%
Medicaid	7.90%
Self-insured	7.40%
BCBS	2.30%
Parental	2.80%
Uninsured	12%

### Employment / Wages (n=739)



Employment Status	
Full-time	50.0%
Part-time	19.4%
In school	10.9%
Self-employed	1.4%
Homemaker	7.9%
Looking for work	5.0%
Unemployed	6.3%
Volunteer	1.2%
Retired	12.4%
Disability	0.9%

### Basic Needs (n=815)



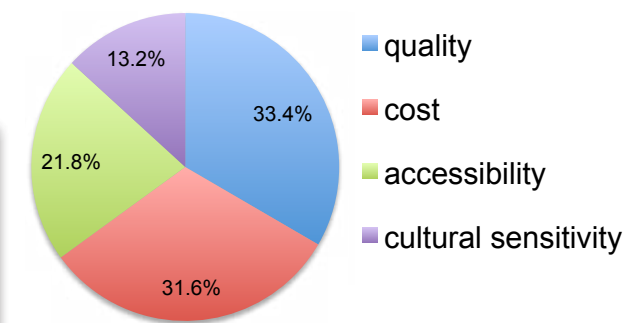
Statistics provide a valuable tool for understanding women in our community, but statistics alone cannot tell their "story." The complexities of being a single mother caring for school-aged children, or an elderly woman on a fixed income or a refugee navigating life in a new city require more than numbers. In an effort to learn more about the current status of women in Lincoln and Lancaster County, the Women's Commission wanted to hear their voices.

Modeled on a survey done ten years ago by the Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission, the project was created with the objective of identifying the most pressing concerns of women in the community. The twenty-eight question survey sought to gain both demographic information (age, employment status, etc.) and issue-related data such as health care, work, discrimination, education.

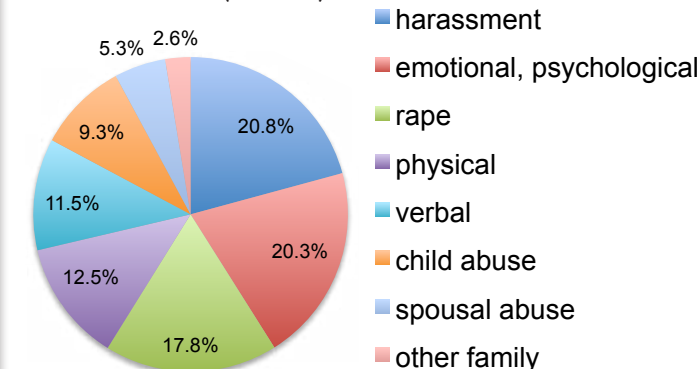
The survey was distributed to various groups including work sites, professional organizations, cultural community centers and service agencies from August 2011 to July 2012. In an effort to include as many women as possible, the questions were translated into Spanish, Arabic and Vietnamese. Respondents were able to take the survey on paper or online at lincolnwomen.org. It was a non-scientific survey with convenience sampling; data collection was supported by the Bureau of Sociological Research at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Lyndie Christensen Nader, a doctoral student in Sociology, served as the research intern. Her guidance, direction and assistance were invaluable. To all of the women who shared their voices, we are truly grateful.

Kathie Uhrmacher, Chair  
Mayor's Commission on Women

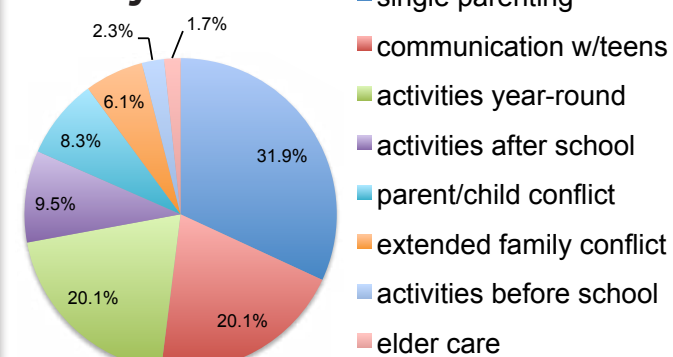
### Education (n=500)



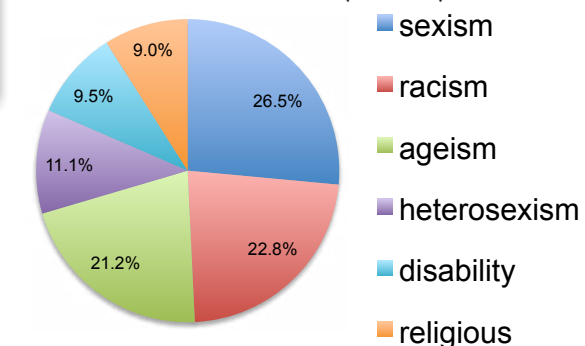
### Violence (n=843)



### Family (n=577)

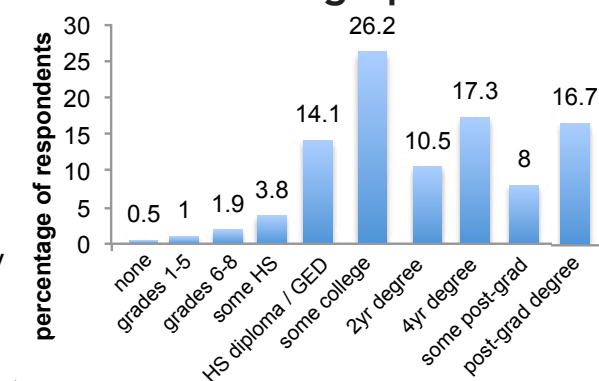


### Discrimination (n=756)



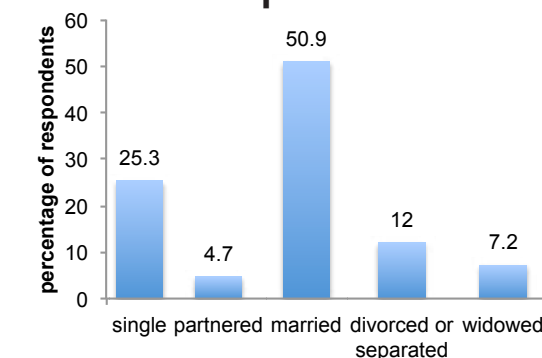
Discrimination, by R/E	percentage (rank)	within issue
African American	55.3% (#1)	racism; sexism
American Indian	31.8% (#5)	sexism; disability
Asian American	20% (#8)	racism; disability
Latina/Hispanic	27% (#8)	racism; sexism
Middle Eastern	15.8% (#9)	racism; religious
White	21.3% (#6)	sexism; ageism

### Education Demographics

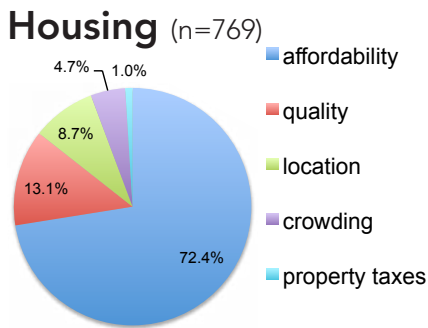


Violence, by Age	percentage (rank)
19yr	46.7% (#2)
20-29yr	39.3% (#4)
30-39yr	25.6% (#7)
40-49yr	27.6% (#6)
50-59yr	29.7% (#4)
60-69yr	24.5% (#4)
70-79yr	16.4% (#5)
80+yr	7.4% (#5)

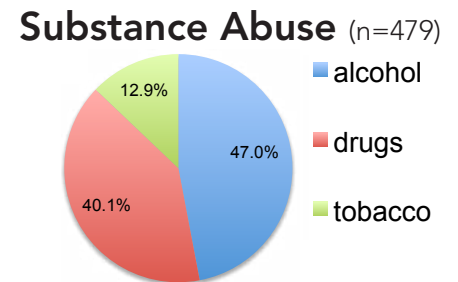
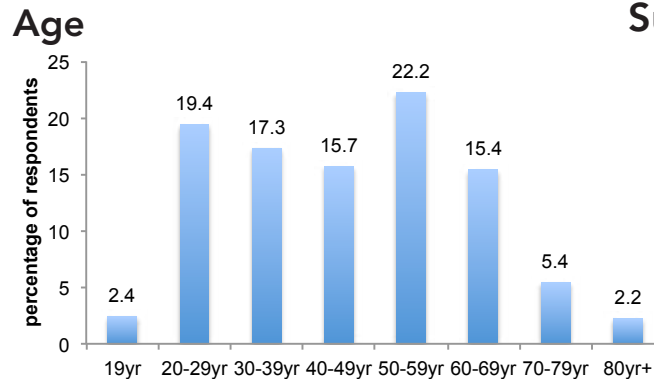
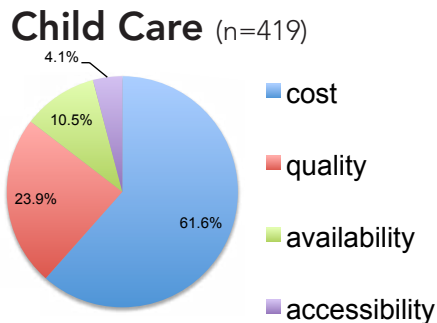
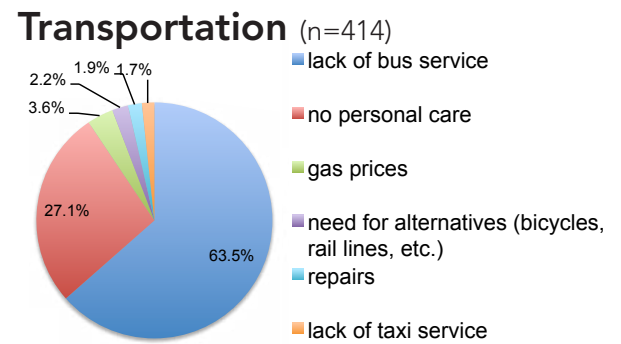
### Relationship Status



Race/Ethnicity	
African American	3.9%
African newcomer	0.6%
American Indian	1.8%
Asian Pacific Islander	2.3%
South Asian	0.9%
European newcomer	0.5%
Latina/Hispanic	5.9%
Middle Eastern	3.1%
Multiracial	1.8%
White	78.9%



Housing	
House	66.4%
Apartment	17.5%
Mobile home	2.0%
Townhouse	5.5%
Duplex	4.2%
Share complex	0.8%
Dormitory	1.0%
Treatment center	1.0%
Homeless	0.2%



The survey shows that women living in Lincoln and Lancaster County place a high value on 1) health care, 2) employment, 3) basic needs, 4) education, 5) violence, and 6) family. These are the top six issues for women.

## Key Findings

- 55.4% of women ranked health care as one of their primary concerns, with cost, stress, and mental health services as their chief reasons for giving it the top ranking.
- Approximately one half of the women surveyed were employed full time. 19.4% of women reported they were working part-time, 10.9% were in school, and 11.3% were unemployed or looking for work.
- 50.7% of women noted that employment was a top concern, with low wages, lack of skilled work, hostile work environments, and work/family balance as the major issues.
- Basic needs for over a third of women (37.5%) were the high costs of food and utilities.
- Ranked at number four was education, with cost and access topping the list of concerns. Of those who responded, 52.5% indicated a post-secondary degree, 14.1% indicated high school completion and 7.2% had less than 12 years of education.
- The fifth most-cited concern for 28% of women was violence. For their primary concerns within violence, 20.8% of respondents identified harassment, 20.4% identified emotional and psychological abuse, 17.8% identified rape and sexual assault, 12.5% identified physical abuse, and 11.5% identified verbal abuse.
- Family rounded out the top six at 27.6%. Reasons cited were single parenting, the need for year-round youth activities and caring for adult parents. Of the respondents, 55.6% were in a relationship (married or partnered) and 44.4% were single, separated, divorced or widowed.

## Conclusions and Implications

The rankings of health care, employment, and basic needs as the top three concerns likely reflect the national economic crisis and rising cost of health care.

Economic insecurity has increased as the cost of living has risen, including health care expenses and the costs of food and utilities.

Although Lincoln has relatively low unemployment compared to other cities in the US, this survey shows that underemployment and lack of work opportunities affect the status of women in our community.