

Health Indicator Report

Awareness of the Benefits of Breast Milk

Background

The purpose of this health indicator report is to provide information on the level of public awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding/breast milk for babies and mothers.

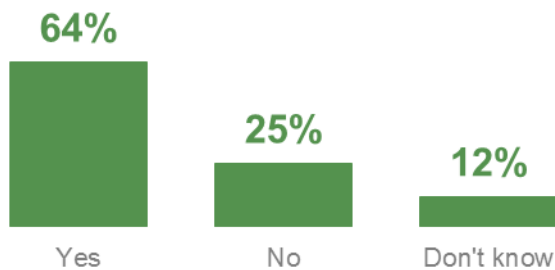
Breastfeeding is the recommended method of feeding for infants.¹ Health Canada guidelines promote breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months after birth, and sustained for up to two years or longer in conjunction with appropriate complementary feeding.¹ This optimizes the nutrition, growth and development of infants and toddlers.¹ Additionally, breastfeeding can benefit the mother’s health by helping the mother gradually lose weight gained during pregnancy, and providing protection against breast cancer, ovarian cancer and weak bones later in life.² For more information about breastfeeding in Halton, please visit halton.ca.³

This health indicator report uses data from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS).

Benefits of Breast Milk for the Baby—Nutritional Requirements

Overall Findings

In 2016, 64% of Halton adults reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, 25% were not aware and 12% did not know.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported on whether they thought that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, Halton Region, 2016

Sex

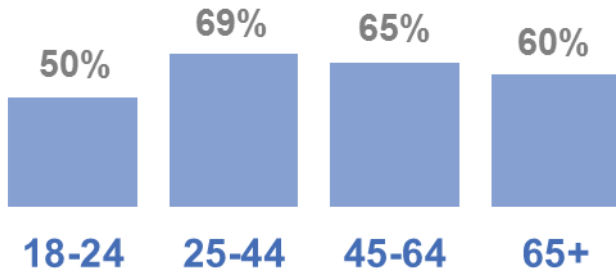
In 2016, there was no statistically significant difference by sex in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, by sex, Halton Region, 2016

Age

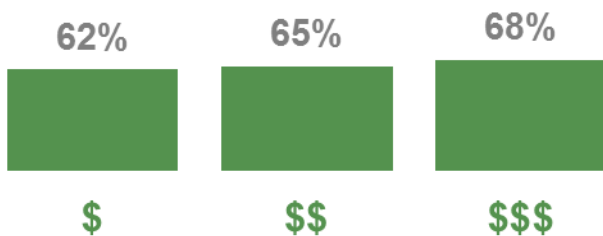
In 2016, Halton adults aged 18-24 were less likely than all other age groups to report that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing adults aged 18-24 to adults aged 25-44.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, by age, Halton Region, 2016

Income

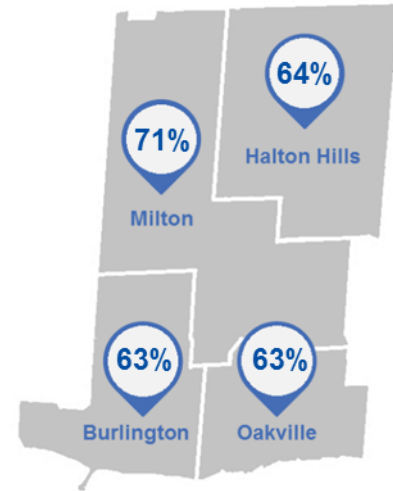
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by income in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, by income, Halton Region, 2016

Municipality

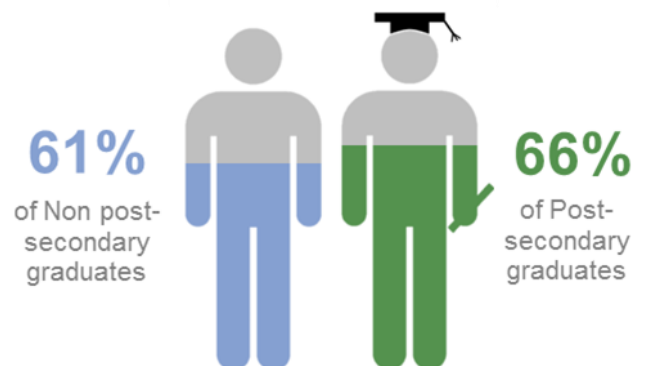
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, by municipality, Halton Region, 2016

Education

In 2016, there was no statistically significant difference by education in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth.

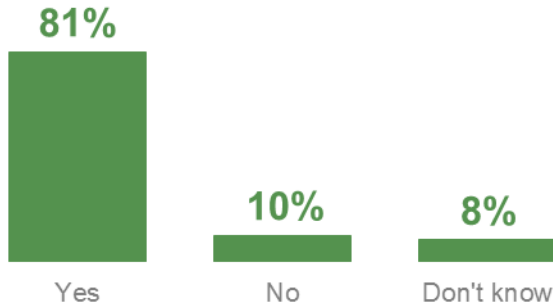


Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported that they were aware that a baby who is fed only breast milk for the first six months of life gets all the food they need for growth, by education, Halton Region, 2016

Benefits of Breast Milk for the Baby—Illness Prevention

Overall Findings

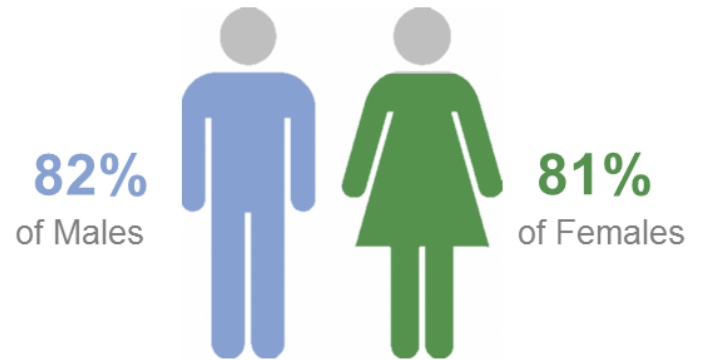
In 2016, 81% of Halton adults reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, 10% were not aware and 8% did not know.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported on whether they thought that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, Halton Region, 2016

Sex

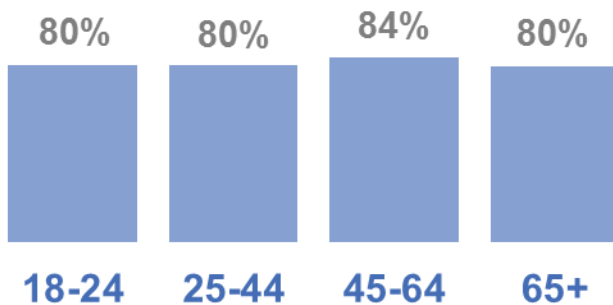
In 2016, there was no statistically significant difference by sex in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, by sex, Halton Region, 2016

Age

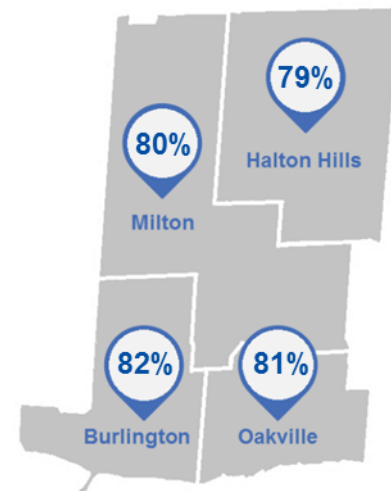
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by age in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, by age, Halton Region, 2016

Municipality

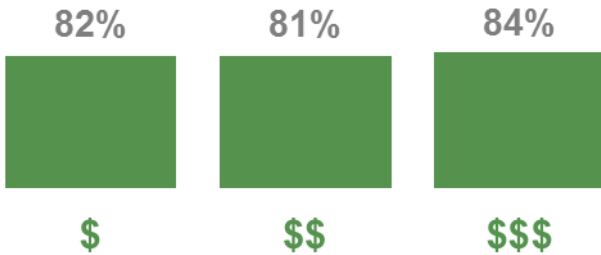
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, by municipality, Halton Region, 2016

Income

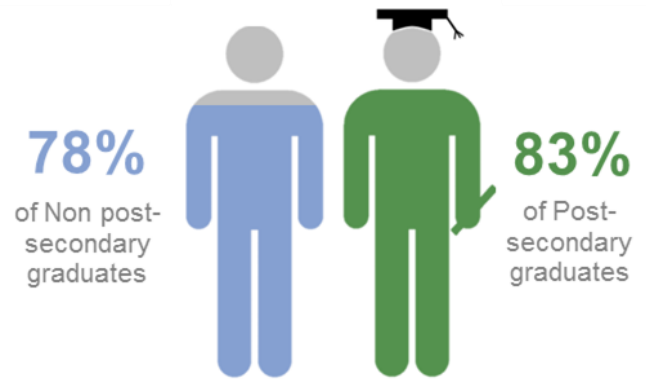
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by income in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, by income, Halton Region, 2016

Education

In 2016, there was no statistically significant difference by education in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick.

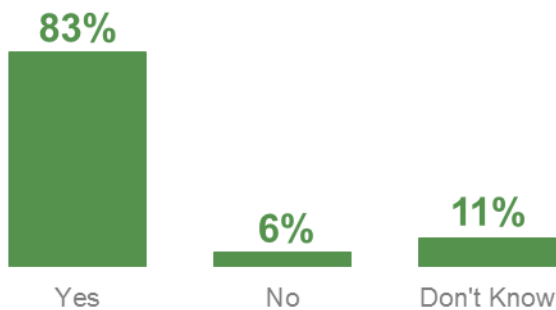


Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported that they were aware that breast milk helps to keep babies from getting sick, by education, Halton Region, 2016

Benefits of Breast Feeding for the Mother

Overall Findings

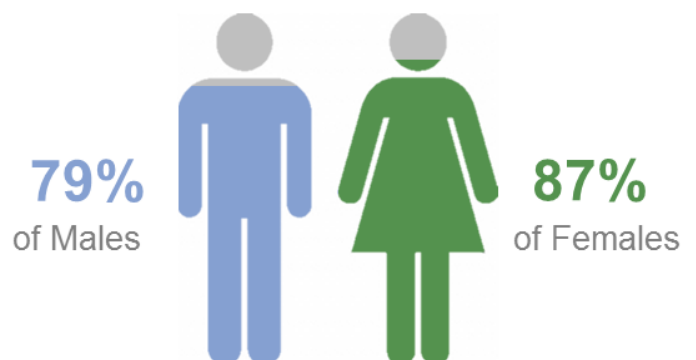
In 2016, 83% of Halton adults reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, 6% were not aware and 11% did not know.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported on whether they thought that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, Halton Region, 2016

Sex

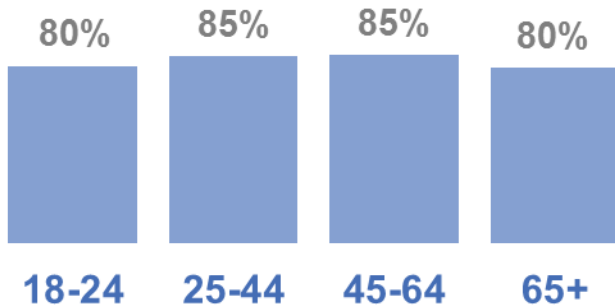
In 2016, Halton females were more likely to report that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, by sex, Halton Region, 2016

Age

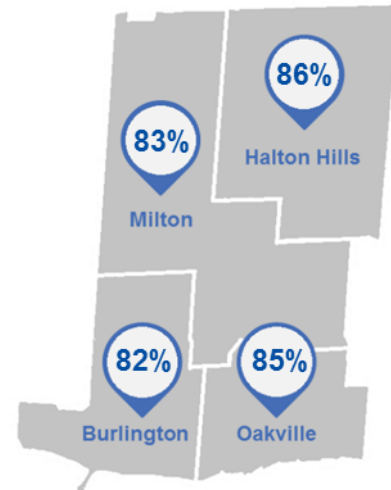
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by age in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, by age, Halton Region, 2016

Municipality

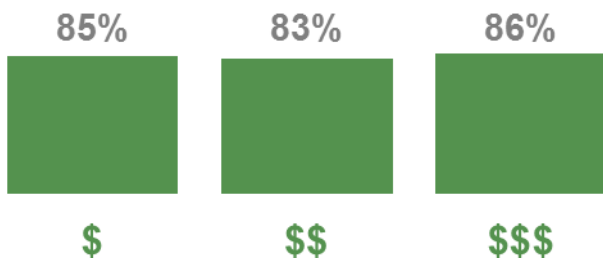
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, by municipality, Halton Region, 2016

Income

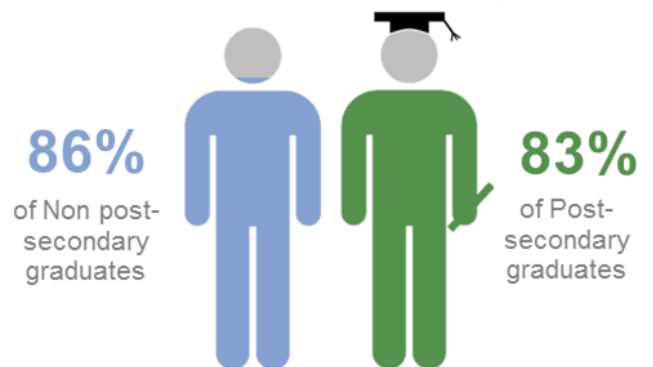
In 2016, there were no statistically significant differences by income in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, by income, Halton Region, 2016

Education

In 2016, there was no statistically significant difference by education in the percentage of Halton adults who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health.



Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported that they were aware that breastfeeding is good for the mother's health, by education, Halton Region, 2016

For more information on RRFSS, methods, statistical significance and limitations associated with health indicator reports, please see the Data Notes and Guide available at halton.ca

Definitions: Responses such as “I have heard that it is good, I think so, they say so—but I am not certain” etc., when asked if breastfeeding is good for the mother’s health were categorized as “yes”. “Don’t know” responses were included in analysis because this was a valid response option.

Data Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System [2016], Halton Region Health Department and Institute for Social Research, York University.

Estimates marked with an asterisk (*) should be interpreted with caution due to high variability.

References

1. Health Canada. 2015. Infant Feeding. Accessed June 2017 from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/index-eng.php>
2. Public Health Agency of Canada. 2015. Accessed June 2017 from http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/nutrition/reasons-raisons-eng.php
3. Halton Region. n.d. Breastfeeding. Accessed July 2017

For more health indicator and health status reports, visit the Halton Health Statistics website at halton.ca

*Last Revised: July 31, 2017
Expected Update: 2020*

