

The Wealth Gap for Women

is an even greater concern than the wage gap.

“Women are most confident in taking care of short-term financial goals, including paying bills and setting household budgets, but struggle with long term goals, and feel they don’t have as much influence in picking advisors, choosing a mortgage, and managing investments.”

**2022 BofA and Financial
HEALTH NETWORK REPORT**

For every \$1 owned by a single man, single women own \$0.82.

For every \$1 owned by a single white man, single Latina and Black women own \$0.09.

For every \$1 owned by a white household, Black households own \$0.13, and Latinx households own \$0.19.

“Concentrating excessive wealth in the hands of the few—who are disproportionately white and male—not only exacerbates gender and racial inequities but slows economic growth, and undermines the economic security of women and people of color, and damages democracy.”

**GENDER AND RACIAL WEALTH GAPS AND WHY THEY MATTER,
National Women’s Law Center**

WE NEED TO NARROW THE WEALTH GAP and FUND OUR FUTURES



Your Power

CONNECT, SHARE, MOBILIZE & ACT

Visit our website to learn more, make your voice heard and find resources to drive change



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

San Mateo County (SMC)

Snapshot of our Community

Single mothers and women of color particularly struggle to make ends meet and build wealth in San Mateo County. Of the 737,888 people who live in this county, 386,376 are women. Due to the high cost of living, nearly 69,919 live below the real cost measure and 79,927 are rent burdened. There are over 18,000 single parent households. Living wage for San Mateo County for 2 children and 1 adult working full-time is \$61.62 per hour.

Drivers

Key themes of the financial wealth gap for women in the county



LOW WAGES

Women are concentrated in low-paying jobs earning less than men. The mindset that women will make less and that certain sectors are dominated by men leads to lack in living and livable wages.



CAREGIVER PENALTY

Women focus on family obligations leading to breaks in their career as well as part time jobs. The assumption that women are the primary caretakers for parents and children also leads to them leaving careers, such as during the covid pandemic.



LACKING KNOWLEDGE & CONFIDENCE

Women are more risk averse and less likely to invest and build wealth. They also tend to lack an understanding and literacy around investing and retirement planning which leads to a lack of confidence.

81% of Caregivers are women

WHAT IS WEALTH?

Wealth is considered the total value of assets that individuals or families have accumulated (such as savings, stock, house, 401k) minus debts (such as loans or credit cards).

Quote from an interview

“Traditional women’s professions are undervalued (teaching, nursing, caregiving, etc.). If we are paid less, it makes more sense for us to take more time off for family caregiving, which just exacerbates the gap because we lose advancement opportunities.”

Research Nuggets

Our contact at Edward Jones Investments has research on the wealth gap indicating that “nationwide, there is a \$700,000 difference in lifetime earnings between women and men. And due to leaving the workforce at times results in a \$2 million difference.”

An Ellevest Financial Wellness Survey in 2022 indicated that women invest far less in retirement than men, 36% vs 66% yet they out-perform men when they do.

Some of our survey statistics

- 36% of survey respondents said they were not well prepared for retirement
- 52% of survey respondents have a retirement savings option at work and ...
- 48% are saving regularly ... and
- Only 33% are taking advantage of the matching program



Knowledge is Power

and confidence supports learning and growth.

“I don't feel there is enough emphasis to explain retirement. In my case, I was married almost 30 years, worked for the family business, didn't take a paycheck to help the business, assumed I would stay in this marriage, and looked towards retirement as a point when the business assets would be sold to cover it. I also worked under the guise that the "family" business would be in my name as well. Everything stayed with my ex and his family! I lost out on Social Security, and didn't add to a retirement, because I wasn't taking a salary. These were all very naive decisions on my part. I'm now 30 years behind in saving for myself and my future. **Women should be told to fund their futures on their own, regardless of marital status.**”

—From one of our survey respondents



**For Women,
the Unexpected
Can Happen**

What now?

Ideas for what you can do ...

TODAY

- **Contribute to a 401K/retirement plan, and max if possible, or inquire about a CalSavers plan**

TOMORROW

- **Start or join a women's finance circle to learn and talk about money, building confidence**

ONGOING

- **Sign up for free webinars on financial planning**
- **Seek recurring financial education throughout your life such as when graduating, at tax time, when applying for marriage license, etc.**
- **Check our website for resources**



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What Women Want

A Financial Health Network and BofA 2022 Report indicated that **7/10 women say they would like to talk with a financial advisor**, "over half of them would find it **easier to talk with other women**." Also, "**women feel insufficiently understood** by banks financial advisors." Women want different retirement planning objectives than men. According to an article in *The Financial Brand*, "**2 out of 3 say financial services do not meet their specific needs**, the biggest stumbling block being a **lack of financial products** protecting and preserving the wealth of their families." And "they more often require investment products with longer investment horizons and are more interested than high net worth men in sustainable investments with a positive social impact."

Starter Resources

FINANCIAL HEALTH

A composite framework that considers the totality of people's financial lives: whether they are spending, saving, borrowing and planning their finances in ways that will enable them to be resilient and pursue opportunities.

Ellevest (ellevest.com)
investment platform for women,
coaching, goal setting guidance

Monterra Credit Union
(monterra.org)
SMC focus, bank, classes, products

AARP
(aarp.org/money)
financial tools, webinars, resources

IFB (investforbetter.org)
community of women talking about
money, values-aligned investing

Women report lower financial health across all indicators:

- Spend less than income
- Pay bills on time
- Have sufficient emergency savings (3 months)
- Have either no debt or manageable amount of debt
- Have a prime credit score
- Have sufficient insurance policies for emergencies
- Household plans ahead for financial security

