

WOMEN AT MIDLIFE: CROSSROADS OR CRISIS?

How Are Women 35+ Coping With The Challenges and Issues They Face As They Age?...

Three In Ten (27%) Have Done Extremely Well, Almost Without A Scratch; Two-Thirds (64%) Think That They Have Done Pretty Well, But Found It Tough; But 9% Are Just Surviving

Fear of Alzheimer's (44%), Breast Cancer (56%) and Osteoporosis (61%) Pervade

83% Say Kids More Aggressive Nowadays - 41% Fear Kids Will Have Alcohol Or Drug Problems



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Toronto, ON – The results of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of Dr. Jean Marmoreo, author of *The New Middle Ages: Women in Midlife* (published by Prentice Hall Canada), and released today indicate that two-thirds (64%) of Canadian women age 35 or older think that they have done pretty well coping with the challenges and issues that women face as they age, but have found it tough. Three in ten (27%) think they have done extremely well, almost without a scratch. However, one in ten (9%) say they haven't done well and have just survived.

Health is a key concern for women in midlife. Nearly all women 35+ surveyed (96%) agree that their personal health is a high priority today, including seven in ten (72%) who "strongly agree". As well, six in ten (61%) women 35+ say that getting osteoporosis is a serious concern for them, while almost as many (56%) say they worry that they'll get breast cancer. Forty-four percent of women 35+ fear getting Alzheimer's disease.

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Eight in ten (83%) women 35+ agree (a full 61% “strongly”) that kids are more aggressive nowadays than when they were young. And, four in ten (41%) agree that they fear for the younger kids in their family that they will develop a drug or alcohol problem.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of Dr. Jean Marmoreo, author of **The New Middle Ages: Women in Midlife** published by Prentice Hall Canada. The survey was conducted on two consecutive waves of Ipsos-Reid’s weekly national omnibus survey with data collected between March 19th and 21st and March 26th and 28th, 2002. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 687 Canadian women aged 35 or older. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire Canadian population of women aged 35 or older had been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample’s regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 1996 Census data.*

How Are Women 35+ Coping With The Challenges They Face As They Age?...

Two-Thirds (64%) Think That They Have Done Pretty Well, But Found it Tough; Three in ten (27%) Have Done Extremely Well, Almost Without a Scratch; And, One in Ten (9%) Are Just Surviving

When women age 35 or older are asked to think about all the things they’ve had to cope with so far, given the many challenges and issues that women face as they age, such as their health, job changes or job losses, moving residences, relationship issues or financial concerns,



two-thirds (64%) say that they have done pretty well, but have found it tough. Three in ten (27%) think they have done extremely well, almost without a scratch. However, one in ten (9%) say they haven't done well and have just survived.

Personal Health: Fear of Alzheimer's (44%), Breast Cancer (56%) and Osteoporosis (61%) Pervade

Personal Health...

Overall, personal health is a key concern for women 35 or older. Nearly all of the women surveyed (96%) agree that their personal health is a high priority today. This includes 72% who "strongly" agree.

- Women without children (75%) are more likely to "strongly agree" than those who do have children (65%).

Alzheimer's...

Forty-four percent of women surveyed say that they fear getting Alzheimer's disease.

- Women living in Eastern Canada (50% Quebec; 46% Atlantic provinces; 46% Ontario) are generally more likely to fear getting Alzheimer's disease than those living in the West (BC 38%; Saskatchewan/Manitoba 34%; and Alberta 27%).
- However, women 55+ (49%) are more likely to fear getting Alzheimer's disease than women 35 to 54 (40%).



Osteoporosis...

As well, six in ten (61%) women 35+ say that getting osteoporosis is a serious concern for them.

- Women who have children (64%) appear more likely to agree that getting osteoporosis is a serious concern for them than women who don't have kids (59%).

Breast Cancer...

Almost as many women 35+ (56%) say they worry that they'll get breast cancer.

- The concern about getting breast cancer is more prevalent among women living in Eastern Canada (Ontario 59%, Quebec, 58%, Atlantic provinces 57%) than women living in the West, and is lowest in British Columbia (49%).
- Women 35 to 54 (66%) are more likely to be worried about getting breast cancer than women 55 and older (44%).
- Women with children (66%) are more likely to be worried about getting breast cancer than those without (52%).

Anorexia or Bulimia...

Four percent of women 35+ say that they have suffered from anorexia or bulimia, and more than 3 times as many (13%) say that they know of someone in their family who has had anorexia or bulimia.



- Women 35+ from Quebec appear to be more likely to have suffered from anorexia or bulimia (5%), as well as more likely know of someone in their familiar who have had anorexia or bulimia (17%), than women from any other region.

HRT...

And, nearly two-thirds (63%) of women 35+ agree (28% “strongly”) that Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is a good choice for women when menopause occurs.

83% Say Kids More Aggressive Nowadays – 41% Fear Kids Will Have Alcohol Or Drug Problems

Eight in ten (83%) women 35+ agree (a full 61% “strongly”) that kids are more aggressive nowadays than when they were young. Just 16% disagree with this statement, including 7% who “strongly” disagree.

- Women who do not have children (86%) are more likely to agree that kids are more aggressive nowadays than when they were young than those who have children (77%).

Four in ten (41%) women 35+ agree that they fear for the younger kids in their family that they will develop a drug and alcohol problem. Of the 58% who disagree, 35% “strongly disagree”.

- This fear is more common among women living in Eastern Canada (43% Atlantic provinces; 45% Quebec; 41% Ontario) than in the West (37% Alberta; 37% Saskatchewan/Manitoba; 34% BC).



For Four in Ten There Isn't Enough Time...

Six in ten (60%) women 35+ agree (35% “strongly”) that they have enough time in the day to do what needs to get done, four in ten (40%) disagree (26% “strongly”).

- The proportion of women who agree that they have enough time in the day to do what needs to get done is significantly higher among those 55+ (76% versus 46% of those 35 to 54). And, again this is more common among women living in Eastern Canada than Western Canada (for example, 63% Atlantic Canada versus 54% in Alberta).
- Not surprisingly, women with children are significantly less likely to agree that they have enough time in the day to do what needs to get done than women without children (45% versus 66%).

Future Parental Care...

Women 35+ are divided about whether they will have to look after their parents either financially or as a primary caregiver in the future (49% agree; 45% disagree).

- Women 35+ from Quebec (64%) are significantly more likely to believe that at some point in the future they will have to look after their parents either financially or as a primary caregiver than women from any other region of Canada. Women 35+ from Saskatchewan/Manitoba (33%) and Alberta (33%) are least likely to agree with this.
- Women in the 35 to 54 age bracket (57%) are more likely than women 55 or older (40%) to agree that they will have to look after their parents in the future.
- Women with children (62%) are more likely than those without children (44%) to believe that they will have to look after their parents in the future.



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Having a Personal Plan for the Future...

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of women 35+ agree (41% “strongly”) that they have a plan for the future so they know they will be cared for when the time comes.

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