

Women's Well-Being Index, Greater Milwaukee

Executive Summary



The *Women's Well-Being Index* for Greater Milwaukee provides a data-driven snapshot of women's status across education, income, and equity. The findings highlight both areas of progress and persistent disparities that impact the lives of women and girls in our community.

Key Insights

- Women in Greater Milwaukee achieve higher levels of education than men, with 39% holding a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 37% of men. However, 7% of women lack a high school diploma, slightly higher than the state average.
- Income and education significantly impacts earning power for women.
 - A woman with a bachelor's degree earns about \$55,767 annually, while a woman without a high school diploma earns just \$24,189.
 - Despite higher education levels, women consistently earn less than men. For example, a male high school graduate earns \$45,301—more than a woman with an associate's degree (\$38,614).
- Across all education levels, women face persistent pay inequities. In Greater Milwaukee, a woman with a graduate degree earns only 67 cents for every dollar earned by an equally educated man.
- Girls outperform boys nationally in middle school test scores, high school graduation, and college completion—yet this advantage does not translate into equal economic outcomes in adulthood.

Implications

The data underscores a paradox: women and girls in Greater Milwaukee often exceed men in educational performance but still face systemic barriers to economic equity. Education alone is not enough to close the wage gap. Structural inequities, cultural norms, and employer practices continue to undervalue women's contributions.

Call to Action

To advance women's well-being, the Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee advocates for:

- Expanding access to education for women and girls at every level.
- Strengthening workforce pathways that turn degrees into equitable earnings.
- Addressing systemic inequities through policy, advocacy, and community action.

By investing in women's education and equity, Greater Milwaukee can build a future where achievement translates into opportunity, income, and influence for all.

About the Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee

The Women's Fund stands at the forefront of the women's movement locally. We are fostering gender equity by protecting rights, removing obstacles, and creating ripples of change for women, their families, and our community. We challenge the status quo through advocacy and policy work, relevant programming, strategic grant making, and scholarship awards.

Founded in 1986, and established as an independent organization in 2006, we remain committed to mobilizing philanthropy and fostering unity for gender equity, just as we've done for almost forty years. We are proud members of the Wisconsin Alliance of Women's Funds and the Women's Funding Network.

Use the QR code to access the dynamic online Index, the full narrative or information related to the State of Wisconsin. The narratives were co-curated by Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee and University of Wisconsin – Madison, Center for Nonprofit and Community Studies.

