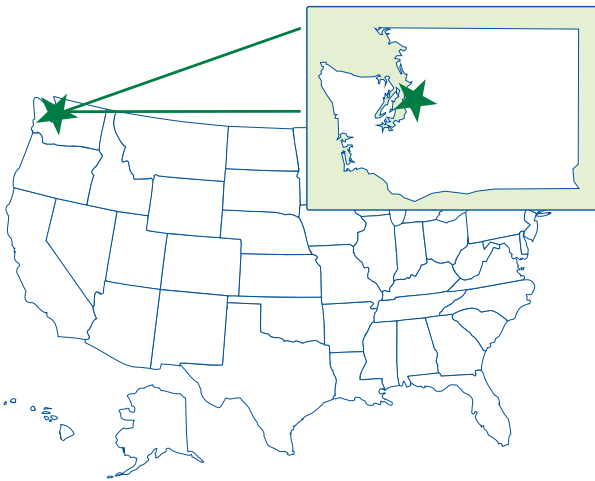




## STRESS IN SEATTLE



Managing stress is more of a priority for the rest of the nation than it is for people in Seattle\*, where the latest *Stress in America*™ survey results suggest stress levels are declining and people are more satisfied with their lives than the general population.

### Perception of Stress and Its Sources

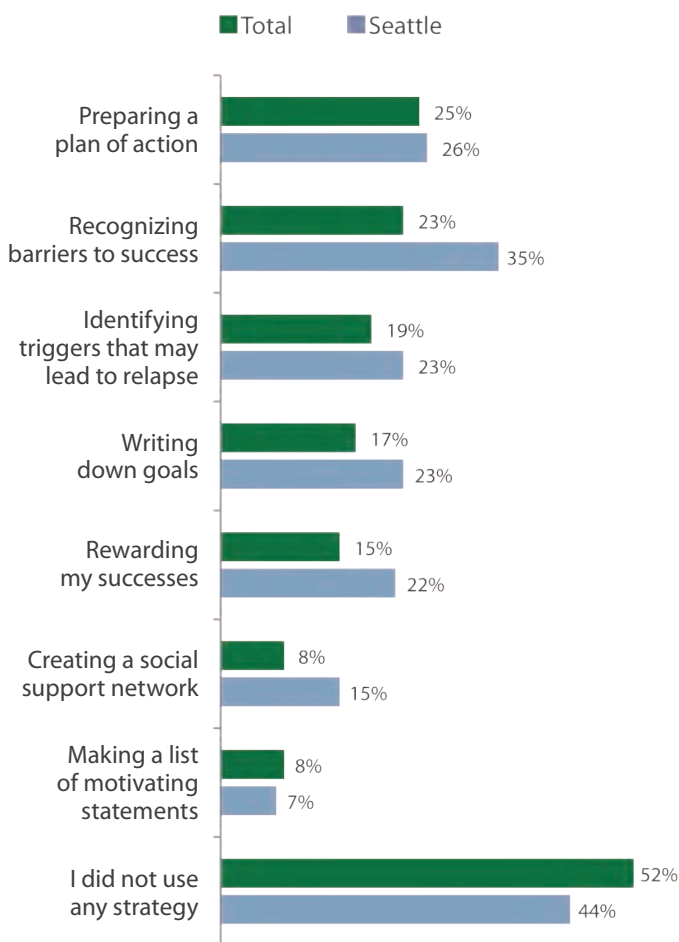
Though stress over job stability has increased significantly over the past year, stress levels overall have been declining in Seattle, and the vast majority of people are satisfied with their lives.

- Seattle residents are more satisfied with life in general than the general population (75 percent are somewhat/very satisfied in Seattle vs. 66 percent nationwide).
- On average, the reported overall stress levels of adults in Seattle have gone down over the last 4 years (6.1 in 2008 vs. 5.0 in 2011 on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is little or no stress and 10 is a great deal of stress).
- Many Seattle residents, however, report that their stress has increased over the past 5 years (41 percent), while only one in four (25 percent) say their stress has decreased.
- Like adults nationwide, work (73 percent), money (70 percent) and the economy (66 percent) are the top three stressors for adults in Seattle.
- Stress about job stability has increased in Seattle over the last year (50 percent somewhat/very significant vs. 39 percent in 2010).



On the whole, Seattle residents say that healthy eating has fallen somewhat since 2010.

## Strategies Used When Making a Change



BASE: Decided to Make a Change (n=1142); Seattle (n=206)  
Q7140 Have you used any of the following strategies when you tried to make the change(s) you mentioned?

## Stress and Well-Being

The negative impact of stress is felt regularly among Seattle adults; 3 in 4 report physical manifestations of stress in the past month. However, Seattle residents report that they exercise more.

- Seattle residents are more likely than the general population to experience muscle tension (33 percent vs. 24 percent nationwide).
- Seattle residents manifest non-physical symptoms of stress slightly differently than the general population. They are more likely to have negative thoughts (38 percent vs. 29 percent nationwide) and less likely to experience nervous habits like nail biting (8 percent vs. 16 percent nationwide).
- More Seattle residents are exercising a few times a week or more than in 2010 (64 percent in 2011 vs. 53 percent in 2010).
- In 2011, Seattle residents who exercise regularly are more likely to cite enjoyment as a reason for exercise (58 percent vs. 41 percent in 2010).

But healthy eating habits are on the decline, possibly related to the economy.

- On the whole, Seattle residents say that healthy eating has fallen somewhat since 2010 — there was a significant drop in those reporting healthy food consumption very often, almost always and always (52 percent in 2011 vs. 65 percent in 2010).
- The percentage of Seattle residents citing cost as a barrier to healthy eating is up in 2011 from a year ago (31 percent vs. 18 percent in 2010).

## Managing Stress

Managing stress is less of a priority to people in Seattle than elsewhere, though most people continue to rank it as important.

- Three in 5 (62 percent) Seattle residents rate stress management as somewhat/very important to their well-being, but only about 1 in 3 (36 percent) believe that they are managing stress very/extremely well.
- Managing stress is the second most important aspect of well-being for the general population, but only the fifth most important (out of seven) for Seattle residents; the ranking in Seattle remained steady from 2010 to 2011.

Seattle residents also make slightly different choices about activities that help them to manage stress than their national counterparts. They are more likely to turn to music and less likely to turn to religion, and they are more open to meeting with a psychologist for stress management.

- Three in 5 adults in Seattle listen to music to manage their stress, more so than adults nationwide (58 percent vs. 48 percent nationally).
- A significantly higher percentage of Seattle residents believe that a psychologist can help a great deal/a lot with coping with mental health issues (64 percent vs. 52 percent nationally), coping with grief (60 percent vs. 48 percent nationally), relationship issues (57 percent vs. 42 percent nationally) and coping with chronic illness (40 percent vs. 29 percent nationally).

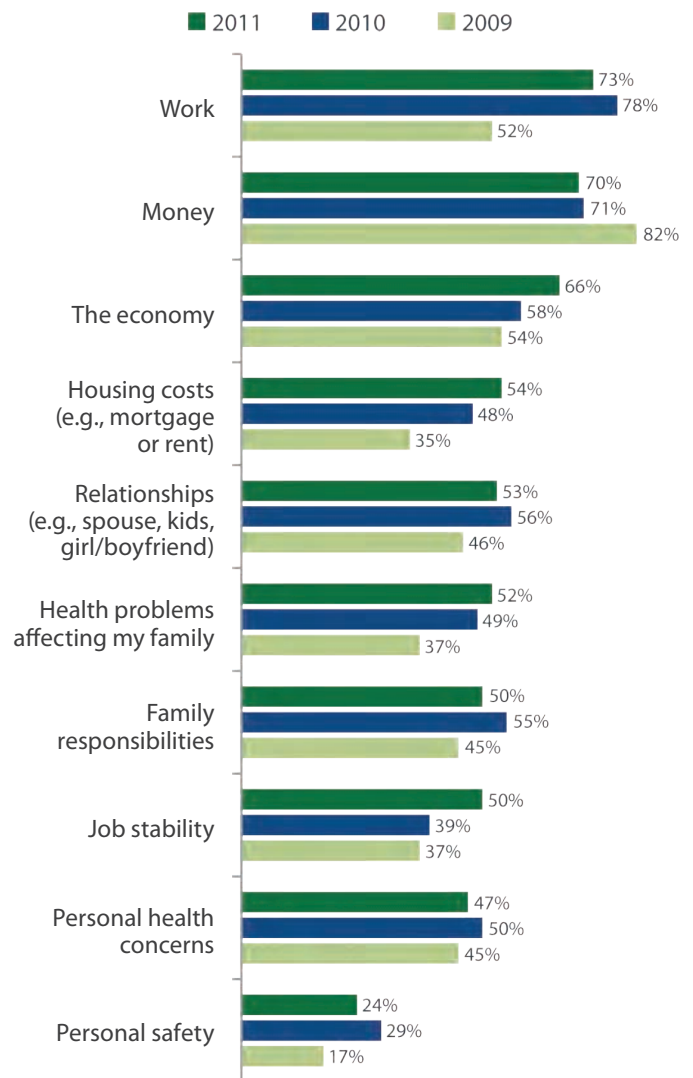
## Barriers to Change

Of those Seattle residents who identify a barrier to making the behavior changes that may be necessary to reduce their stress, willpower is most often cited. Still, many report that no specific barrier prevents them from making those changes.

- More adults in Seattle (35 percent) than nationally (27 percent) say that willpower prevents them from making the lifestyle or behavior changes that have been recommended to them.

Three in 5 adults in Seattle listen to music to manage their stress, more so than adults nationwide.

**Causes of Stress in Seattle**  
(% Somewhat/Very Significant)



BASE: All respondents 2009 (n=200); 2010 (n=214); 2011 (n=224)  
Q625 Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.



## STRESS IN SEATTLE

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Seattle residents said they don't have enough time and it's too expensive to make behavior changes.

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- Seattle residents (29 percent) also said they don't have enough time and it's too expensive (14 percent) to make behavior changes.
- Thirty-three percent of Seattle adults say that nothing has prevented them from making lifestyle or behavior changes.