



## National Survey of Family Growth

### About NCHS

The CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency, providing data to identify and address health issues. NCHS compiles statistical information to help guide public health and health policy decisions.

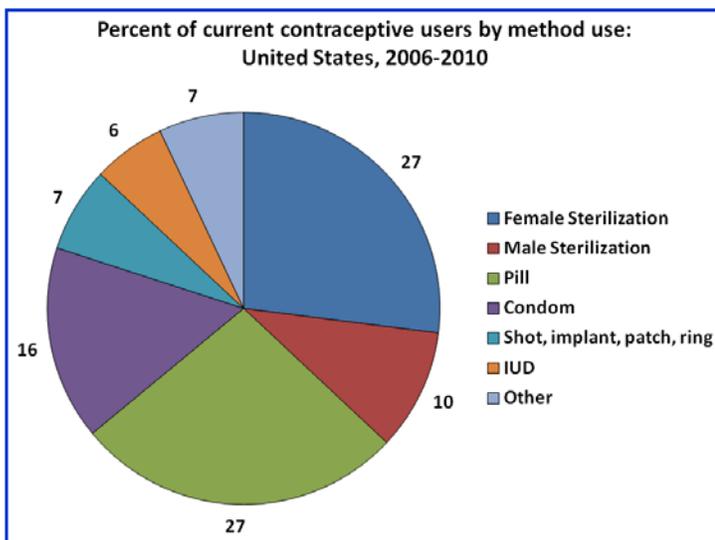
Collaborating with other public and private health partners, NCHS employs a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. This process provides a broad perspective to help us understand the population's health, influences on health, and health outcomes.

### Topics addressed include:

- Marriage, divorce, cohabitation
- Women's pregnancy and birth history
- Breast-feeding
- Adoption and non-biological parenting
- Contraceptive use
- Sexual activity related to health
- Family planning and medical services
- Infertility and use of infertility services
- Attitudes on sex, parenthood, and marriage
- Men's involvement as fathers and child support
- Sexual behaviors that may increase risk of HIV
- Sexual orientation and its impact on health

### National Survey of Family Growth

The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) collects information on families, fertility, and health from a national sample of men and women 15-44 years of age in the household population of the United States. The NSFG was conducted five times with a national sample of women periodically between 1973 and 1995. A sixth periodic survey, conducted in 2002, included both men and women. In 2006, the NSFG shifted to a continuous survey design, interviewing men and women; that survey concluded in June 2010. Continuous interviewing resumed in September 2011.



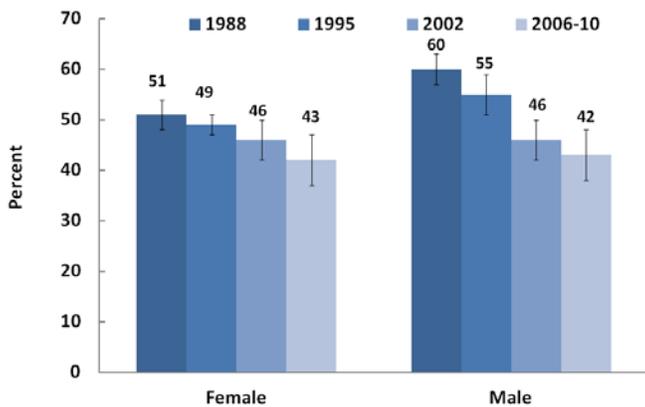
Source: National Survey of Family Growth, 2006-2010

In 2006-2010, the most popular methods of contraception in the United States were the pill (28 percent), female sterilization (27 percent), the male condom (16 percent), and male sterilization (10 percent). Together, these four methods accounted for 81 percent of contraceptive users.

- At first premarital intercourse, the condom is the leading method of contraception.
- Among women under 30 years of age, the pill is the leading method. After age 30, female sterilization is the leading method.

Among 22-44 year old college-educated contraceptive users, the pill is the leading method. Among 22-44 year old women with a high school education or less, female sterilization is the leading method.

Percent of never married teens aged 15-19 who have ever had sexual intercourse: United States, 1988-2010



Source: National Survey of Family Growth, 1988, 1995, 2002, 2006-2010

Between 1988 and 2006-2010, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of never-married teenagers who have ever had sexual intercourse. In 2006-2010, just over 40 percent of male and female teenagers (aged 15-19 years) had ever had sexual intercourse.

- For male teens, the proportion of 15-19 year olds who had ever had sexual intercourse declined by almost one-third over this 20 year period, from 60 percent in 1988 to 42 percent in 2006-2010. A significant decrease occurred between 1995 and 2002, with a drop of almost 10 percentage points.
- For females, the overall decline between 1988 and 2006-2010 from 51 percent to 43 percent is significant, although the change between any two surveys in the percentage that had ever had intercourse is not significant.

## Other findings from the 2006-2010 NSFG:

- NSFG data on breastfeeding shows two-thirds of singleton babies born between 2001-2005 were breastfed; about one-third were breastfed for 6 months or more.
- About half of men and women 15-44 have cohabited at some time; 11 percent of women and 12 percent of men are currently cohabiting.
- Approximately 22 percent of first births to women and 25 percent of first births fathered by men are within a cohabiting union.
- About 9 percent of persons 15-44 years of age (more than 11 million) were potentially at elevated risk of HIV because of their sexual or drug use behavior in the last 12 months.
- About 24 percent of men 40-44 years of age in 2006-2010 had not fathered any children, 18 percent had fathered one child, 31 percent two, and 27 percent had fathered three or more children.
- Among persons 18-44 years of age, the median age at 1<sup>st</sup> marriage for men is 28.3 years; for women, the median age at first marriage is 25.8 years.

## Challenges and Future Opportunities

To improve the timeliness and usefulness of NSFG data, in June 2006 the NSFG adopted a new continuous model of data collection. Using this new design, data were collected from June 2006 through June 2010 and data files were released in 2011. Another round of continuous interviewing began in September 2011 with interviewing expected to continue indefinitely. To serve a wide variety of data users, NSFG staff continues to improve the web site by adding and updating information. The web site can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>. More examples of key findings from the NSFG are in the “Key Statistics from the NSFG (from A to Z)”, and can be found at: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg/abc\\_list.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg/abc_list.htm).

For further information about NCHS and its programs, visit us at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>, or call the Office of Planning, Budget and Legislation at 301-458-4100.

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