



NCHS Data on Teenage Pregnancy

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.

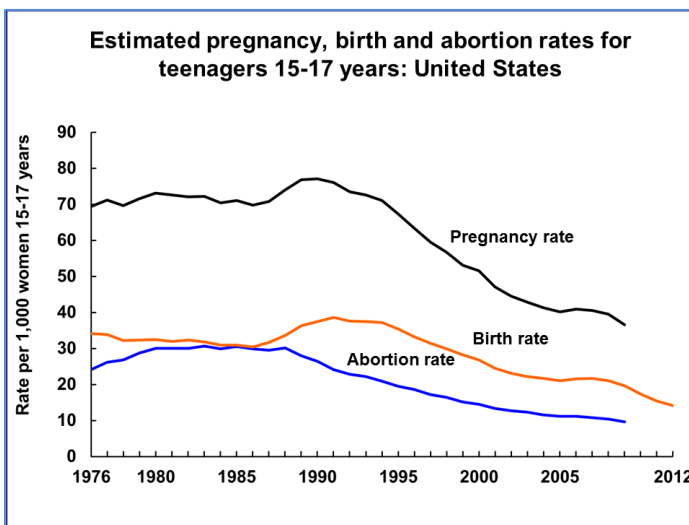
Overview

Teenage pregnancy rates dropped 44 percent overall from 1990 to 2009. The rate fell from its historic peak in 1990, 116.8 per 1,000 teenagers aged 15-19 years, to 65.3 in 2009. The 2009 pregnancy rate for teenagers was the lowest ever reported since the national series of estimates began in 1976.

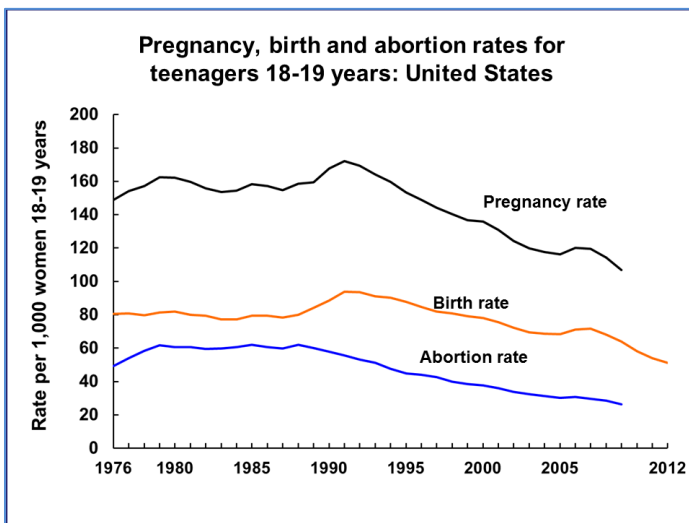
Trends in Teen Pregnancy by Age

The declines in teenage pregnancy have been much steeper for younger than for older teenagers.

- The rate for teenagers 15-17 years of age dropped more than half, from 77.1 per 1,000 in 1990 to 36.4 in 2009.
- The rate for older teenagers 18-19 years of age fell as well, by 38 percent from its 1991 peak (172.1 per 1,000) to 106.3 in 2009.
- The rates in 2009 for these age groups were also lower than for any year during the 1976-2009 period.



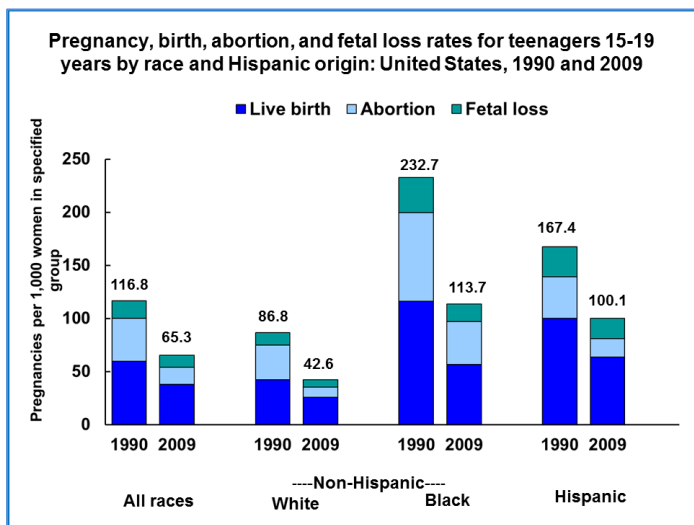
Source: Curtin SC, Abma JC, Ventura SJ, Henshaw SK. Pregnancy rates for U.S. women continue to drop. NCHS data brief, no. 136. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2013.



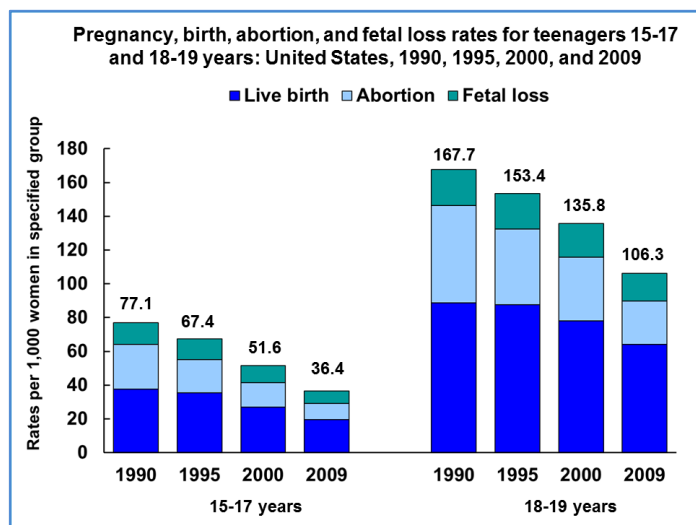
Source: Curtin SC, Abma JC, Ventura SJ, Henshaw SK. Pregnancy rates for U.S. women continue to drop. NCHS data brief, no. 136. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2013.

Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin

Pregnancy rates dropped for teenagers in all race/Hispanic groups between 1990 and 2009. Overall, in 2009 pregnancy rates for non-Hispanic white and black teenagers aged 15-19 declined 51 percent each, with much larger declines for younger than for older teenagers in each group. The rates for Hispanic teenagers began to decline after 1992 (the peak year); the overall teen pregnancy rate for this group fell 42 percent from 1992 to 2009.



Source: Curtin SC, Abma JC, Ventura SJ, Henshaw SK. Pregnancy rates for U.S. women continue to drop. NCHS data brief, no. 136. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2013.



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Changes in Pregnancy Rates by Outcome

All components of the pregnancy rates for teenagers aged 15-19 (births, abortions, and fetal losses) declined from 1990 through 2009. The teenage birth rate fell 39 percent from its 1991 peak (61.8 per 1,000) to 37.9 in 2009. As shown in the charts on the preceding page, the birth rates have continued to fall to record lows through 2012. Abortion rates for teenagers dropped more rapidly than birth rates, by 60 percent from 1990 (40.3 per 1,000) to 2009 (16.3 per 1,000).

Birth and abortion rates fell for Hispanic, non-Hispanic white and black teenagers 15-19 through 2009. Birth rates for each group fell about 40 percent or more during 1991-2009 and just-published data show that each rate has continued to drop through 2012. Abortion rates fell 49-70 percent for each group during 1991-2009.

Factors Accounting for the Recent Decline in Teen Pregnancy

The recent declines in teen pregnancy and childbearing are sustained, widespread, and broad-based. The declines have been attributed to a number of factors, including strong teen pregnancy prevention messages. The latest data from the 2006-2010 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) show a continuation of a long-term downward trend in the percent of teens who are sexually experienced and of a long-term upward trend in the use of contraception at first sex. Additionally, the NSFG has documented increased use of dual methods of contraception (that is, condoms and hormonal methods) among sexually active female and male teenagers. It has been suggested that the declining economy beginning in 2007 has likely played a role in the decreased rates for teenagers as well as for adult women under 40. Findings from the next release of the NSFG, based on interviews conducted September 2011-September 2013 (available in the Fall of 2014) are expected to help explain the most recent trends and variations in pregnancy and birth rates and the behavioral, social, and economic factors that account for them. Data from CDC's 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System forthcoming in 2014 may also help to explain geographic patterns in these behaviors affecting teen pregnancy and birth rates.

Teenage Pregnancy Data Sources

NCHS and its partners employ a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. They include:

National Vital Statistics System – Collects information from birth certificates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, including detailed age and race/ethnicity characteristics. Because all births are part of this database, it provides the detail needed for monitoring annual changes in teenage pregnancy and for research on disparities. (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss.htm>)

National Survey of Family Growth – The Nation's leading source of reliable national data on topics related to birth and pregnancy histories, sexual activity, contraception and fertility, HIV risk behaviors, and marriage, divorce, and cohabitation. The NSFG is conducted through confidential personal interviews. Pregnancy history data from the NSFG are the source of information of fetal loss that is incorporated in the teen pregnancy rates. The NSFG also provides critical information on behavioral and social patterns that may affect teen sexual behavior. (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>)

CDC's Abortion Surveillance System – CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) collects summary data on abortions from most state health departments. Information is collected on several patient characteristics, including age, race, Hispanic origin, and marital status. (http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/data_stats/Abortion.htm)

The Guttmacher Institute – The Guttmacher Institute compiles national totals of abortions from their surveys of all known abortion providers. The Guttmacher Institute's national totals are distributed by patient characteristics (i.e., age, race, Hispanic origin, marital status) according to CDC/NCCDPHP's tabulations. (<http://www.guttmacher.org/sections/abortion.php>)

For further information about NCHS and its programs, visit us at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>,
For information on birth data visit us at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm>,
for information on the data brief visit us at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db136.htm>

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