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Sexual Activity and Contraceptive Use Among Teenagers in the United States, 2011–2015

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Abstract

Objective—This report presents national estimates of sexual activity and contraceptive use among males and females aged 15–19 in the United States in 2011–2015, based on data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). For selected indicators, data are also presented from the 1988, 1995, 2002, and 2006–2010 NSFGs, and from the 1988 and 1995 National Survey of Adolescent Males, which was conducted by the Urban Institute.

Methods—NSFG data were collected through in-person interviews with nationally representative samples of men and women aged 15–44 in the household population of the United States. NSFG 2011–2015 interviews were conducted between September 2011 and September 2015 with 20,621 men and women, including 4,134 teenagers (2,047 females and 2,087 males). The response rate was 72.5% for male teenagers and 73.0% for female teenagers.

Results—In 2011–2015, 42.4% of never-married female teenagers (4.0 million) and 44.2% of never-married male teenagers (4.4 million) had had sexual intercourse at least once by the time of the interview (were sexually experienced). These levels of sexual experience among teenagers are similar to those seen in 2002 and 2006–2010 data. Longer-term trends, from 1988 to 2011–2015, show declines in the percentage of teenagers who were sexually experienced. Female teenagers' use of a method of contraception at first sex increased from 74.5% in 2002 to 81.0% in 2011–2015. Male teenagers' use of a condom at first sex increased from 70.9% in 2002 to 79.6% in 2006–2010 and remained stable at 76.8% in 2011–2015. Overall, in 2011–2015, 5.8% of female teenagers had used a long-acting reversible method (intrauterine device or implant).

Keywords: adolescents • birth control • teen pregnancy risk • National Survey of Family Growth

Introduction

Monitoring sexual activity and contraceptive use among teenagers is important because of the health, economic, and social costs of pregnancy and childbearing among the teen population (1,2). Although teen pregnancy and birth rates have been declining since the early 1990s and reached historic lows at 22.3 per 1,000 females aged 15–19 in 2015 (3), U.S. rates are still higher than those in other developed countries. For example, in 2011, the teen birth rate in Canada was 13 per 1,000 females aged 15–19, which was less than one-half of the U.S. rate (34 per 1,000 females aged 15–19) in the same year. Also in 2011, the rate in France was 7 and the rate in Germany was 5, both of which were less than one-quarter of the U.S. rate (4). In addition, while declines have occurred for Hispanic, non-Hispanic black, and non-Hispanic white teenagers, differences between these groups persist, and pregnancy rates are at least twice as high for non-Hispanic black and Hispanic teenagers as they are for non-Hispanic white teenagers (5). As a result of the concern with these higher rates of teen pregnancy and births, as well as differences by race and ethnicity



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and other socioeconomic characteristics (3,6), a large number of federal, state, and local teen pregnancy prevention programs have been launched over the past few decades. In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) declared teen pregnancy one of seven “Winnable Battles,” highlighting the importance of reducing teen pregnancy and birth rates (7).

In addition, concern remains high over the incidence of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among young people. Sexually active adolescents aged 15–19 and young adults aged 20–24 are at higher risk of acquiring STIs than adults. Reasons for this include behavior, physiology, and factors related to health care access and services (8). Prevalence estimates suggest that one in four sexually active adolescent females has an STI, such as chlamydia or human papillomavirus (HPV) (8). According to the most recent estimates, the total direct medical cost of STIs in the United States among all ages was \$15.6 billion (9). Women and men aged 15–24 account for a large portion of these costs because they acquire nearly one-half of the 20 million new STIs in the United States each year.

This report presents recent data on the sexual activity and contraceptive use of males and females aged 15–19 in the United States, using data from the 2011–2015 and earlier National Surveys of Family Growth (NSFG) and the 1988 and 1995 National Surveys of Adolescent Males (NSAM) (Text Table, Tables 1–9, and Figures 1–7), updating statistics presented in prior similar reports (10–13).

Methods

Data source

This report is focused on combined NSFG data from 2011–2013 and 2013–2015, resulting in a data file of 4 years of interviews spanning 2011–2015. These two datasets together contain a total of 20,621 interviews: 11,300 with women and 9,321 with men, all aged 15–44. These interviews include 4,134 with teenagers: 2,047 females and 2,087 males aged 15–19. NSFG is administered through face-to-face interviews and

represents men and women aged 15–44 in the household population of the United States, including persons temporarily living away from the household in a college dormitory, sorority, or fraternity (14). Further details on the sample design, variance estimation, and fieldwork procedures for the most recent NSFG surveys were published previously (14–16). Earlier NSFG surveys presented here include the 1988, 1995, and 2002 periodic surveys and the 2006–2010 continuous survey (17). Also presented are statistics from the 1988 and 1995 NSAM, a national panel survey of never-married male teenagers conducted by the Urban Institute that is administered face-to-face and designed to yield information parallel to that for female teenagers from NSFG (18). The earliest surveys align approximately with the beginning of the decline in teen pregnancy rates. Because the teen pregnancy rate peaked in 1990, after which it fell 50% through 2010 (5), it is informative to examine national trends in both sexual activity and contraceptive use among teenagers during a time period starting as close to the peak as possible. For both NSFG and NSAM, 1988 is the survey point closest to the peak in teen pregnancy rates.

Presenting data from the 2002 and 2006–2010 surveys in addition to 2011–2015 allows for examination of more recent trends (through the 2000s) in sexual activity and contraceptive use. Monitoring changes in these measures is important for gauging whether progress is being made toward the goals of reduction in pregnancy and STI risk behaviors.

In addition, changes in the overall use of contraceptive methods and the use of specific methods are influenced by frequent changes in the development and discontinuation of specific contraceptive methods and their accessibility.

All respondents were given written and oral information about the survey and informed that participation was voluntary. Adult respondents aged 18–44 were asked to sign a consent form but were not required to do so. For minors aged 15–17, signed consent was required first from a parent or guardian, and then signed assent was required from the minor: If either the parent or the minor declined to give written consent or assent, the minor did not participate

in the survey. The overall response rate for the 2011–2015 NSFG was 71.0%. The response rate was 73.0% for female teenagers and 72.5% for male teenagers.

Measurement of sexual activity, contraception, and related measures

Sexual activity is measured in two ways: Whether the respondent has ever had sex and whether he or she has had sex recently. If a respondent has ever had sexual intercourse, they are referred to as “sexually experienced.” This is ascertained through a “yes or no” question in the male and female questionnaires that is consistent across all survey years. Female respondents who had ever been pregnant or had ever cohabited with or been married to a person of the opposite sex are not asked and are coded “yes” (19). The measures capturing recency of sexual intercourse—whether a respondent has had sex in the past 12 months and past 3 months—are based on the reported date of last sex with the last sexual partner. The probability of having had sex by specific ages is based on a question asking respondents how old they were the first time they had sexual intercourse with a male or female (presented as probabilities of having had sex by each age in the teen years, described in the next section). The relationship with the first sexual partner at first sex was based on a question asking respondents to choose from eight different categories to describe the relationship at that time: “had just met,” “just friends,” “going out once in a while,” “going steady,” “cohabiting,” “engaged,” “married,” or “something else” (19). The measure of “reasons for not yet having had sex” is based on a question asking respondents who had never had sexual intercourse, “What would you say is the most important reason why you have not had sexual intercourse up to now?” and includes the response categories “against religion or morals,” “don’t want to get pregnant/get a female pregnant,” “don’t want to get a sexually transmitted disease,” “haven’t found the right person yet,” “in a relationship, but waiting for the right time,” and “other.”

Ever-use of specific contraceptive methods was ascertained from a series of questions asking, for each specific method, whether the respondent had ever used it for any reason. Respondents were asked about the following methods: pill, male condom, (partner's) vasectomy, Depo-Provera or Lunelle injectable, (partner's use of) withdrawal, fertility awareness methods (specifically: calendar rhythm method, Standard Days Method or CycleBeads, and sympto-thermal method), contraceptive patch, contraceptive ring, emergency contraception, contraceptive implant, diaphragm, female condom, foam, jelly or cream, cervical cap, suppository, contraceptive sponge, intrauterine device (IUD), and other method. For females, use of contraception at first sex was determined from a question asking when their first contraceptive method use occurred in relation to first sex (19). The first contraceptive method ever used was also asked in a separate question. For males, use of contraception at first sex was determined from a question asking whether he or his partner used a method at first sex and if so, which method. Contraceptive use at last sex was based on a question asking if a contraceptive method was used at the last sex with the last sexual partner and if so, which method. The question on the respondent's feelings about a hypothetical pregnancy asked female respondents: "If you got pregnant now how would you feel?" and males: "If you got [your wife/your partner/a female] pregnant now how would you feel?" Respondents chose from these categories: "very upset," "a little upset," "a little pleased," and "very pleased" (19).

Demographic variables used in this report

The data on sexual activity and contraceptive use presented in this report are shown with respect to several key demographic characteristics of the respondent: age, race and Hispanic origin, family living arrangement at age 14, parental living arrangement at interview, mother's age at her first child's birth, and mother's education.

All tables showing data by race and Hispanic origin classify respondents according to the most recent (1997) guidelines for federal surveys from the Office of Management and Budget (20), except [Table 1](#), which shows race and Hispanic origin classified according to the 1977 guidelines (21). This reporting standard was used in prior reports on this topic and is the only classification that allows comparison to the 1988 and 1995 NSAM data. Statistics based on the two classification standards differ only minimally; the questions on the NSFG and NSAM have always been from self-reports and have allowed the choice of more than one category. (In reference 11, see text tables and Appendix Tables I through XIV.)

Three measures of the teenager's family of origin are included because they have well-documented influences on sexual activity and use of contraception among teenagers, partly through their strong correlation with family socioeconomic status: mother's educational attainment; the age when the mother had her first child; and family structure (parental presence or absence in the teenager's household). Regarding family structure, the focus is primarily on those with two biological or adoptive parents compared with other arrangements. Two such measures are included and the choice between them is based on the nature of the outcome or indicator being shown:

a) Family structure at age 14 addresses the living arrangement during the beginning of the teen years, before many have had sexual intercourse, and is used in tables presenting an event occurring at an undetermined time in the teenager's past (for example, "ever had sexual intercourse").

b) Parental living arrangements at the time of the interview, based on a roster of household members, was used when the outcome of interest was closer to the time of the interview (see [Table 2](#) for an example).

Statistical analysis

All estimates in this report are based on sampling weights that are designed to produce unbiased estimates representative of the 122 million men and

women aged 15–44 in the United States, including the approximately 19 million teenagers aged 15–19 in the population. To take into account the complex sampling design of NSFG, most statistics for this report, including sampling errors, were produced using the survey analysis procedures in SAS software, Version 9.4 (www.sas.com). Each table in this report includes the standard error for each point estimate as a measure of its precision.

In addition, PROC LIFETEST was used for [Table 2](#) to calculate life table probabilities of first sexual intercourse by each age up to 20, using respondents' reports of their age at first intercourse. It represents data for women who were aged 15–24 at the time of the interview. The age was expanded to increase the sample size for the events that happened during their entire teen years. Even though the ages used in the analysis include those over 19, the data are presented only for first intercourse that occurred between the ages of 15 and 20 (to include data for the complete year of age 19 for all respondents).

Most tables and figures present statistics for teenagers of all marital statuses, while a few present statistics for never-married teenagers. Because [Figures 1](#) and [6](#) include the year 1988, they are limited to never-married teenagers to allow for consistency with the 1988 NSAM, which included only never-married teen males. [Table 1](#) is limited to never-married teenagers for comparability with [Figure 1](#), and [Table 8](#) is limited to never-married teenagers for comparability with [Figure 6](#). [Table 9](#) and [Figure 7](#) are limited to never-married teenagers because they present a measure of motivation to avoid pregnancy, which is most relevant for teenagers who are not married. In 2011–2015, as in past NSFG survey years, very few teenagers had ever been married: 1.0% of females and 0.3% of males. Therefore, the estimate of never-married teenagers who have ever had sexual intercourse is expected to be very similar to the estimate for the population that would include married teenagers.

All tables show estimates for 2011–2015, the most recent survey. Tables on sexual activity and contraceptive use also show recent trends by including data from the 2002 and 2006–2010 NSFGs.

Figure 1 (percentage of teenagers who ever had sex) and Figure 2 (contraceptive use at last sex) show longer-term trends that include 1988 and 1995 in addition to the 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015 time periods.

Significance of differences among subgroups was determined by standard two-tailed *t* tests. No adjustments were made for multiple comparisons. The difference between any two estimates is mentioned only if it is statistically significant. Lack of comment regarding any difference does not mean that significance was tested and ruled out. Otherwise, terms such as “similar” or “no significant differences” are used to indicate that the estimates being compared were tested and found not to be significantly different. A weighted least squares regression method was used to test the significance of trends that involved more than two time points or more than two age groups. When this method was used, terms that refer to percentages that “increased” or “decreased” indicate that there was a significant difference over time or across age groups. When a linear trend was not identified, or to evaluate potential changes due to a policy or newly available contraceptive product, the estimates between two specific time points were compared using a *t* test.

In this report, percentages are not shown if the sample denominator is fewer than 75 cases or if the numerator is fewer than 5 cases. When a percentage or other statistic is not shown for this reason, the table contains an asterisk (*) signifying that the “figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision.” For most statistics presented in this report, the numerators and denominators are much larger. This report presents descriptive statistics on trends and differences in the sexual and contraceptive experiences of teenagers in the United States through 2011–2015; these results, based on cross-sectional survey data, are not intended to demonstrate cause-and-effect relationships.

Results

Sexual activity among teenagers

Sexual experience

Table 1 and Figure 1 present the percentage of never-married female and male teenagers who have ever had vaginal sexual intercourse with an opposite-sex partner. Table 1 shows the three most recent survey periods: 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015, and the Text Table shows race and Hispanic origin at these three time points. Figure 1 shows five time points spanning 1988 to 2011–2015.

In 2011–2015, 42.4% of never-married teen females and 44.2% of never-married teen males had experienced sexual intercourse at least once. These percentages were similar for never-married teenagers across all three time points between 2002 and 2011–2015. However, significant changes occurred within specific race and Hispanic origin groups: Never-married non-Hispanic black female teenagers experienced a decrease in the percentage who were sexually experienced between 2002 (56.9%) and 2011–2015 (46.6%),

and never-married non-Hispanic white males experienced an increase between 2006–2010 and 2011–2015, from 36.7 to 42.8% (Text Table).

Regarding the longer-term trend shown in Figure 1, from 1988 to 2011–2015, the percentage of never-married teen females who had ever had sexual intercourse declined from 51.1% in 1988 to 42.4% in 2011–2015. For never-married males, the percentage who were sexually experienced declined between 1988 (60.4%) and 2011–2015 (44.2%).

For female teenagers in 2011–2015, no significant differences were seen in the percentages who were sexually experienced among never-married Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, and non-Hispanic black female teenagers (Table 1). This was also the case in 2006–2010 and is a change from 2002 and earlier surveys when higher percentages of non-Hispanic black female teenagers were sexually experienced compared with non-Hispanic white female teenagers, as described in prior reports in this series (10–12). For male teenagers, in 2011–2015, 58.6% of never-married non-Hispanic black males aged 15–19 had ever had sexual intercourse, a significantly higher percentage than the 45.7% among

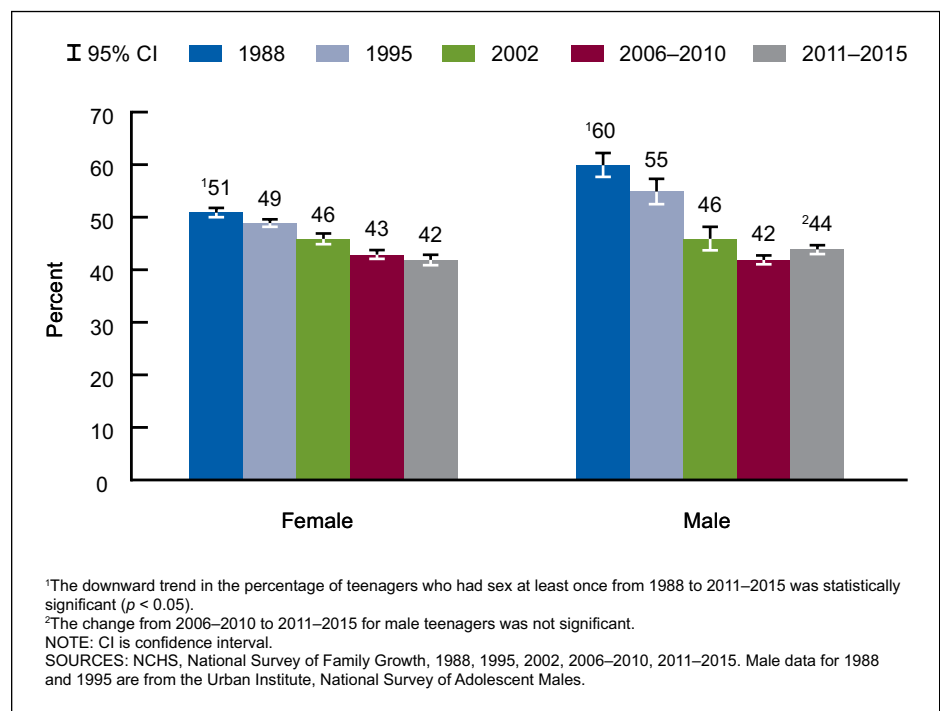


Figure 1. Trends in the percentage of never-married males and females aged 15–19 who have ever had sexual intercourse: United States, 1988–2015

Text Table. Never-married females and males aged 15–19 who have ever had sexual intercourse, by Hispanic origin and race: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Percent (standard error)
Female		
Hispanic origin and race and year		
Hispanic or Latina		
2002	1,447	37.4 (3.6)
2006–2010	1,849	42.1 (3.3)
2011–2015	2,129	41.4 (3.2)
Non-Hispanic white		
2002	6,099	45.1 (2.6)
2006–2010	6,150	41.9 (2.4)
2011–2015	5,057	44.3 (2.6)
Non-Hispanic black		
2002	1,496	56.9 (3.0)
2006–2010	1,691	46.4 (3.0)
2011–2015	1,540	46.6 (3.3)
Male		
Hispanic origin and race and year		
Hispanic or Latino		
2002	1,603	54.8 (4.3)
2006–2010	2,000	46.0 (3.0)
2011–2015	2,253	45.7 (2.7)
Non-Hispanic white		
2002	6,462	40.8 (2.5)
2006–2010	6,405	36.7 (2.2)
2011–2015	5,332	42.8 (2.2)
Non-Hispanic black		
2002	1,468	63.3 (4.4)
2006–2010	1,673	58.4 (3.0)
2011–2015	1,555	58.6 (3.0)

NOTE: Sexual intercourse is defined as vaginal sexual intercourse between opposite-sex partners.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

never-married Hispanic males and the 42.8% among never-married non-Hispanic white males in this age group. This difference between non-Hispanic white and black males has persisted through all five survey periods (10–12). The absence of a difference in the percentage of teenagers who were sexually experienced between Hispanic males and non-Hispanic white males in 2011–2015 is a change from 2006–2010, when the percentage for Hispanic males was higher than the percentage for non-Hispanic white males.

Table 1 also shows sexual experience among teenagers by family structure (parental living arrangements) at age 14, their mother's age at her first child's birth, and their mother's education. For both male and female teenagers, a significantly lower percentage were sexually experienced if they lived with both parents when they were 14 and, for males, if their mothers gave birth to their first child at age 20 or over. For example, in 2011–2015, 36.8% of

female never-married teenagers who lived with both parents at age 14 were sexually experienced compared with 50.8% among those who were living in any other family structure at that age. A similar pattern was observed among male teenagers: 39.4% of those who lived with both parents at age 14 were sexually experienced compared with 51.9% among those who lived in any other family structure.

The percentage of male teenagers who were sexually experienced varied by the amount of education their mothers had attained. For those with mothers who did not have a high school diploma or General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma (GED), 46.7% had had sex compared with 41.0% among those whose mothers had at least some college. For female teenagers, no differences in the percentage who were sexually experienced were observed between maternal education groups. For females, this is a change from past years,

when a higher level of maternal education was associated with lower percentages of those who were sexually experienced for both female and male teenagers (12).

Age at first sexual intercourse: Probability of first sex, by each age

In 2011–2015, males were more likely than females to have had sexual intercourse in the early teen years (ages 15 and 16) (Figure 2, Table 2). By age 17, the probabilities of having had sexual intercourse were similar for males and females. For example, by age 15, 16% of males had ever had sexual intercourse compared with 11% of females, but by age 18, 55% of male and female teenagers had ever had sexual intercourse. The probability of having had sexual intercourse by age 18 was higher for non-Hispanic black teenagers (compared with non-Hispanic white and Hispanic teenagers), those who did not live with both biological parents at age 14, those whose mothers were teen mothers, and those whose mothers did not attend any college (those with a high school diploma or less than a high school diploma compared with those whose mothers completed at least some college).

Relationship with first partner

Data on the circumstances of first intercourse aid in understanding what underlies current differentials and potential future changes in sexual activity. These circumstances can be associated with contraceptive use, as shown in later sections of this report.

For teenagers, the nature of the relationship with the first sexual partner varies widely. In 2011–2015, the majority of teenagers had their first sexual intercourse with someone with whom they were “going steady” (Table 3), but the percentage was higher for female (74.1%) than for male (51.1%) teenagers. Thirteen percent of female teenagers and 27.3% of male teenagers had their first sex with someone with whom they were “just friends.” Differences by race and Hispanic origin were seen in the percentage of male teenagers whose first sex was with someone with whom they were “just friends.” Non-Hispanic black teen males were more likely (40.5%) than non-Hispanic white teen males (20.7%)

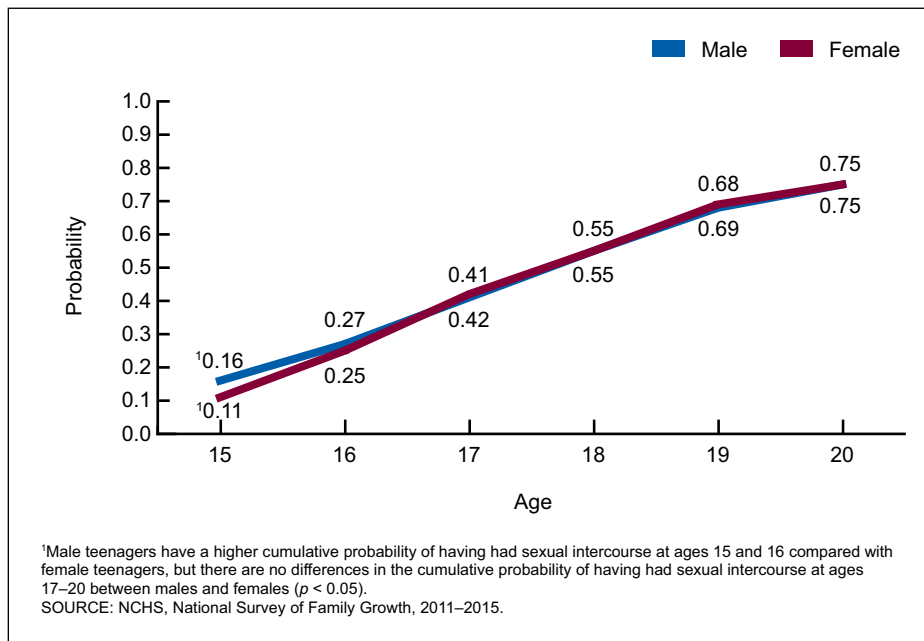


Figure 2. Cumulative probability of having had sexual intercourse by age 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 for females and males aged 15–24: United States, 2011–2015

and Hispanic teen males (27.7%) to have had first sex with someone with whom they were “just friends.” For female teenagers, no significant difference by race and Hispanic origin was seen in the percentage who were “just friends” with their first sexual partner at their first sexual intercourse.

Among female teenagers, younger age at first sex was associated with a higher likelihood that they were “just friends” with their first sexual partner. In 2011–2015, 21.9% of female teenagers who were age 14 and under at first sexual intercourse were “just friends” with their first partner compared with 8.8% of those who were aged 15–16 at first sex. Among male teenagers, those who were aged 15–16 at first sex were less likely to be “just friends” with their first sexual partner (18.3%) than those who were 14 and under (38.7%) or aged 17–19 (29.3%) at first sex. Compared with those whose first sex was at ages 15–16, male teenagers who were 14 and under at first sex were more likely to have first sex with someone they had just met.

Reasons for not having had sex

Teenagers who have not yet had sex make up more than one-half of the teen population (57.6% of females and 55.8% of males). Data on their reasons for not having

had sex aids in understanding the context of teen decision making about sexual activity.

In 2011–2015, the most common reason female teenagers chose for not having had sex, among the categories provided, was that it was “against religion or morals” (Table 4). A total of 35.3% of female teenagers who had not yet had sex chose this as their main reason, followed by “haven’t found the right person yet” (21.9%) and “don’t want to get pregnant” (19.3%). Among male teenagers, the most common reasons cited for not having had sex were “against religion or morals” (27.9%) and “haven’t found the right person yet” (28.5%), followed by “don’t want to get (a female) pregnant” (21.2%).

Recent sexual activity

Recency of sexual activity is an important component for monitoring the risk of pregnancy and STIs. Having had sex in the past 3 months or past 12 months are commonly used indicators of “current” exposure, and having had sex in the past 3 months is commonly used to define the “sexually active” population at a given point in time.

As shown in Table 5, in 2011–2015, 38.9% of female teenagers and 39.5% of male teenagers had sexual intercourse at least once in the past 12 months. This prevalence did not change significantly

from 2002 for male and female teenagers. Regarding the percentage who were sexually active (had sex) in the past 3 months, no significant change was seen between 2002 and 2011–2015 for male teenagers. Among female teenagers, the percentage decreased between 2002 and 2006–2010, from 35.7% to 31.3%, while no significant change occurred thereafter (30.2% in 2011–2015). Among female teenagers, the percentage who were sexually active in 2011–2015 varied little among Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, and non-Hispanic black females. For male teenagers, however, non-Hispanic black teenagers had higher percentages of those who were sexually active (39.9%) compared with both Hispanic (28.2%) and non-Hispanic white (27.8%) teenagers.

Male and female teenagers aged 18–19 were more than twice as likely to have had sex in the past 3 months and within the past 12 months compared with teenagers aged 15–17. For female teenagers living in a household with both parents present, a smaller percentage—19.0%—had had sex in the past 3 months compared with 31.3% and 33.9% for those from both step-parent and single-parent households, respectively. For male teenagers, having a mother who gave birth to her first child during her teen years was associated with a significantly higher percentage who were sexually active. For male teenagers whose mothers had less than a high school degree, 33.6% were sexually active compared with those whose mothers had at least some college (25.9%).

Contraceptive use among teenagers

Tables 6, 7, and 8 show findings on three different measures of contraceptive use among teenagers: having ever used a method, method use at first intercourse, and method use at the most recent intercourse. Tables 6 and 7 are limited to teenagers who have ever had sexual intercourse. Table 8, presenting recent contraceptive use, is limited to sexually active teenagers, defined as those who had had sex in the 3 months before the interview. These tables show three time periods: 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

Ever-use of a contraceptive method

Table 6 and Figure 3 show the percentage of sexually experienced females aged 15–19 who had ever used each of several methods of birth control. From 2002 to 2011–2015, virtually all sexually experienced female teenagers had used some method of contraception, and this increased across these time periods, from 97.7% in 2002 to 99.4% in 2011–2015. This level has been sustained since the earliest published data in this series, for 1995, when it was 96.2% (10). The most commonly used method among teenagers in 2011–2015 remained the condom (reported by 97.4% of teen females), followed by withdrawal (59.7%) and the pill (55.5%). The use of hormonal contraceptive injectables remained relatively stable between 2002 and 2011–2015. In 2011–2015, 17.3% of all female teenagers had ever used injectables (17.2% used Depo-Provera and 0.04% used Lunelle, which was discontinued in 2002).

Some changes in contraceptives ever used by female teenagers can be seen in Table 6. Use of the contraceptive patch increased significantly, from about 1.5% in 2002, when it was newly introduced, to 10.3% by 2006–2010, then dropped off significantly to 1.8% by 2011–2015. The use of emergency contraception increased between 2002 and 2011–2015, from 8.1% to 22.9%. IUD and implant contraception were redesigned in the early 2000s. Together known as long-acting reversible contraception or LARC, they were not used sufficiently among the teen population to make reliable estimates prior to 2006–2010. In 2006–2010, 2.5% of teenagers had ever used the IUD and 0.6% had used implants. By 2011–2015, 5.8% of teenagers had ever used LARC, with 2.8% having used the IUD and 3.0% having used implants.

Contraceptive use at first sexual intercourse

Table 7 and Figure 4 present contraceptive use at first sexual intercourse by sexually experienced females and males aged 15–19. Among teen females in 2011–2015, 81.0% used a contraceptive method at first sex, an increase from 74.5% in 2002. The most common method used at first intercourse was the condom. Among females, 74.6% reported condom use at

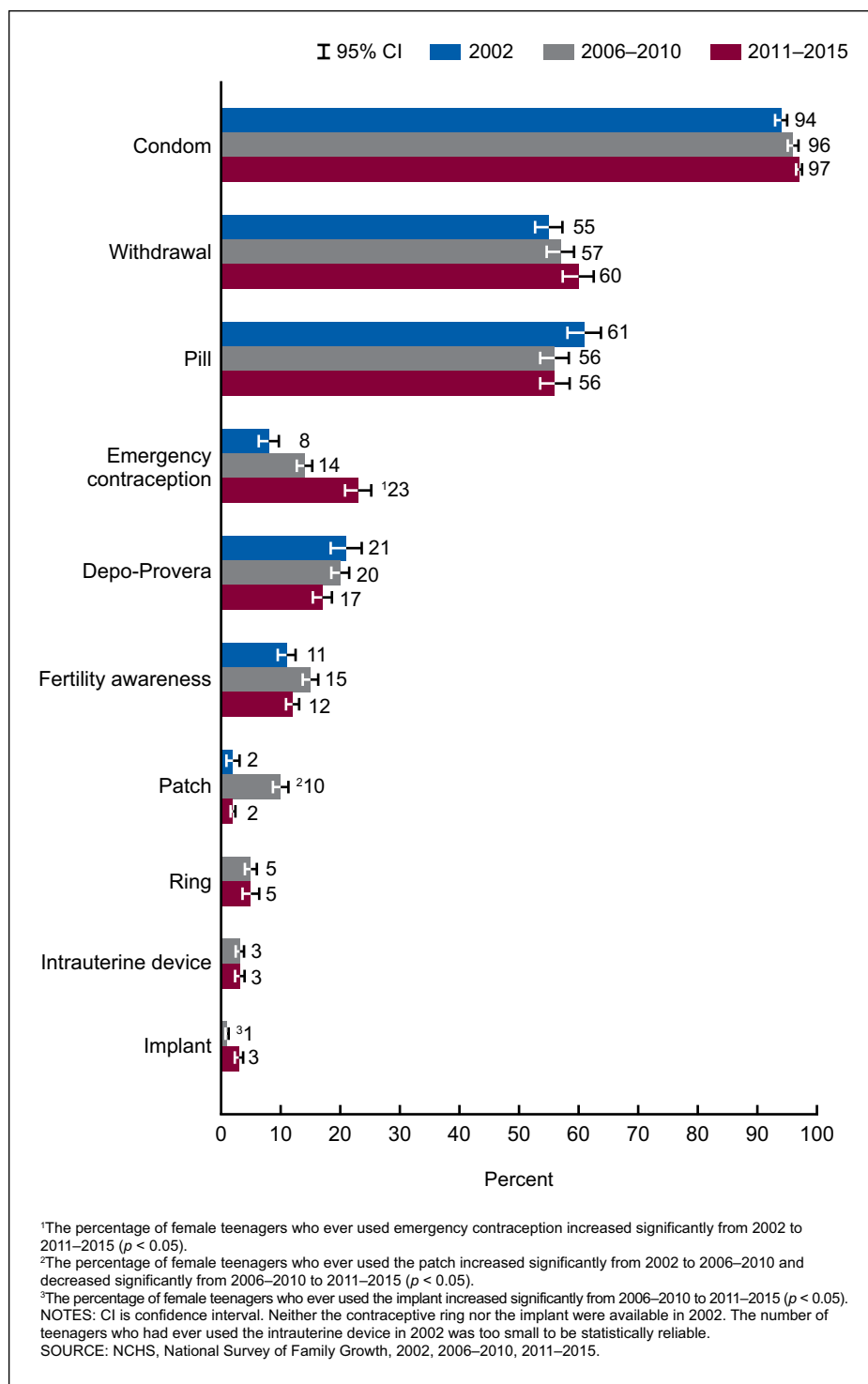


Figure 3. Methods of contraception ever used among females aged 15–19 who had ever had sexual intercourse: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

first sex, up from 68.0% in 2006–2010. This continues a longer-term upward trend since 1988 when 50.4% of females used condoms at first intercourse (10–12). The use of dual methods at first sex, that is, a condom combined with a hormonal method, increased significantly from 13.1%

in 2002 to 18.5% in 2011–2015. This trend follows the patterns of condom and pill use, because these are the two most commonly combined methods: The pill was also commonly used at first sex (19.5% among teenagers in 2011–2015).

Significant differences exist in contraceptive use at first sex for female teenagers by race and Hispanic origin. Non-Hispanic black teen females in 2011–2015 had the lowest percentage using contraception at first sex (62.2%), followed by Hispanic (78.8%) and non-Hispanic white (87.2%) females. This pattern by race and Hispanic origin was the same for the use of the condom and pill. For condom use, this is similar to the pattern that existed in 1988 and 2002, when non-Hispanic black females' use of condoms at first sex was significantly lower than that of non-Hispanic white females (10–12). 2006–2010 was the only time period covered in this report when non-Hispanic black female teenagers' condom use at first sex was not different from that of non-Hispanic white female teenagers (12). In the case of other hormonal methods, although not as commonly used at first sex as the pill and condom, a higher percentage of non-Hispanic black teen females used these methods (7.4%) compared with non-Hispanic white (2.7%) and Hispanic (1.8%) females. These methods include the implant, injectables, contraceptive patch, contraceptive ring, and emergency contraception.

Differences exist for teen females' use of contraception at first sex by their

age at first sex (Figure 4). Younger age at first sex is associated with a lower percentage using contraception at first sex: For teen females age 14 and under at first sex, 70.7% used a method compared with 84.2% among those aged 17–19 at first sex. The percentage using contraception among those aged 15–16 at first sex was similar to the percentage for those aged 17–19 at first sex.

Among sexually experienced teen males, the percentage using contraception at first sex remained consistent with prior years: 83.6% of sexually experienced male teenagers in 2011–2015 used contraception at first intercourse, 85.4% in 2006–2010, and 82.0% in 2002. Sexually experienced teen males' use of the condom at first sex increased significantly between 2002 to 2006–2010 and remained stable up to 2011–2015, when the percentage was 76.8%. Male teenagers' use of dual methods (a condom combined with a partner's hormonal method) increased between 2002 and 2011–2015 from 10.4% to 18.8%. Documenting changes between recent survey periods in teen males' use of the condom at first sex permits better comparison of these trends with rates of births, pregnancies, and STIs among teenagers over the same time periods.

Table 7 also shows differences between race and Hispanic origin groups

in males' use of contraception at first sex. Non-Hispanic white males reported higher levels of method use at first sex compared with Hispanic and non-Hispanic black males, a pattern that was also seen for condom use, (partner's) pill use, and dual method use.

A positive association between age at first sex and method use at first sex was seen for male teenagers. Among male teenagers who had first sex at age 14 and under, 71.3% used a method, which was lower than the 86.7% among those who first had sex at ages 15–16 and lower than the 94.7% among those who first had sex at ages 17–19.

The nature of the relationship between a teenager and their opposite-sex partner at first sex is associated with whether or not contraception is used for male teenagers (Figure 5). Among male teenagers, if their first sexual partner was someone who they had just met or were just friends with, 76.4% used a method of contraception compared with 88.4% among those whose first partner was someone they were going out with once in a while, going steady with, cohabiting with, engaged to, or married to. The same pattern is seen for female teenagers, although the difference in percentages falls short of statistical significance.

Contraceptive use at last sexual intercourse in the past 3 months

Table 8 shows the percentage of never-married female and male teenagers who used a method of birth control at last sexual intercourse among those who had had sexual intercourse in the 3 months before the interview (were "sexually active"). Contraceptive use overall at last intercourse among never-married sexually active females increased between 2002 and 2011–2015. In 2002, 83.2% of never-married sexually active female teenagers used a contraceptive method at last sex compared with 89.9% in 2011–2015. This continues a longer-term trend of gradual increase (Figure 6): Between 1988 and 2011–2015, the percentage increased from 79.9% to 89.9%. Percentages using each of the specific methods presented were similar over the three time periods. The condom remained the most commonly used method in 2011–2015 among never-married female teenagers

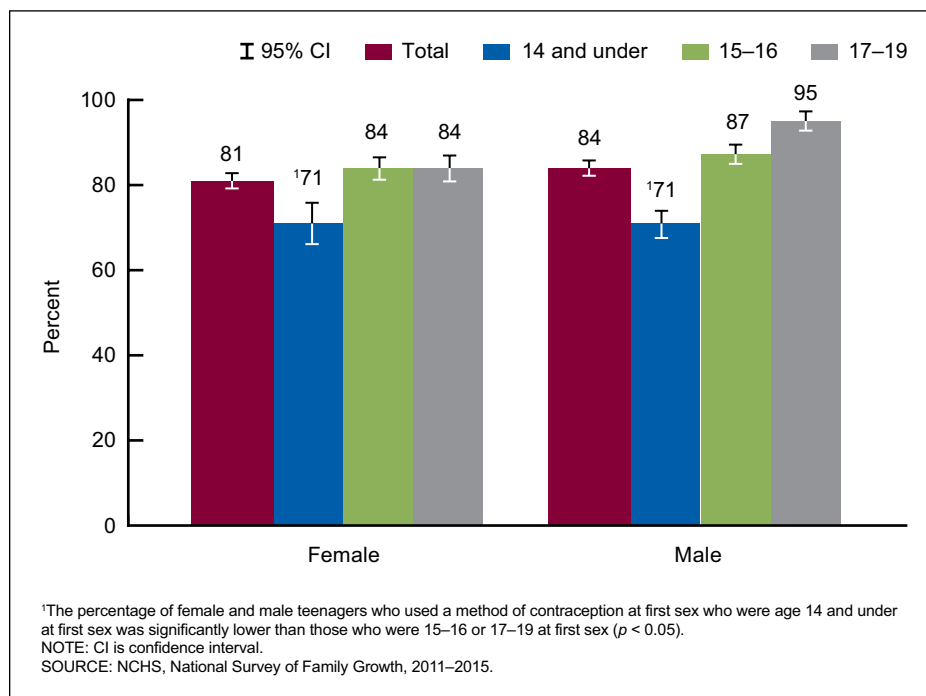


Figure 4. Use of contraception at first sex among males and females aged 15–19 who had ever had sexual intercourse, by age at first sex: United States, 2011–2015

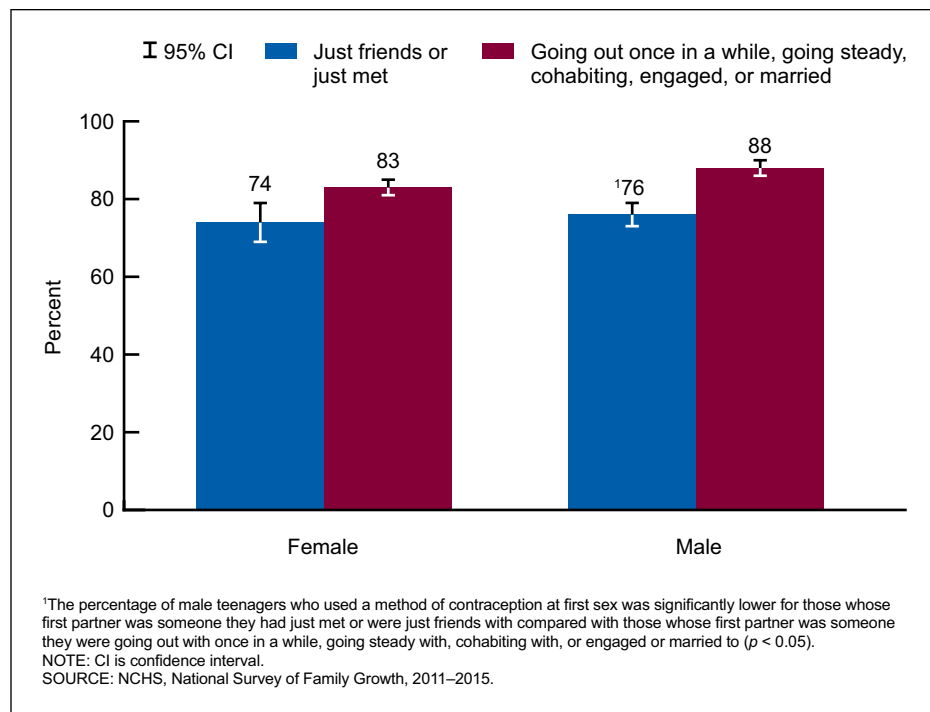


Figure 5. Use of contraception at first sex among males and females aged 15–19 who had ever had sexual intercourse, by relationship with first sexual partner: United States, 2011–2015

at last sex: 56.5% used a condom, 31.5% used the pill, and 12.6% used other hormonal methods.

No significant differences by race and Hispanic origin were seen in never-married female teenagers’ use of any method at last sex (Table 8). This

continues a reduction in the gap between non-Hispanic black and non-Hispanic white teenagers that existed in 2002 and earlier years (10–12). However, the use of specific methods at last sex varies significantly: Non-Hispanic white female teenagers had higher percentages

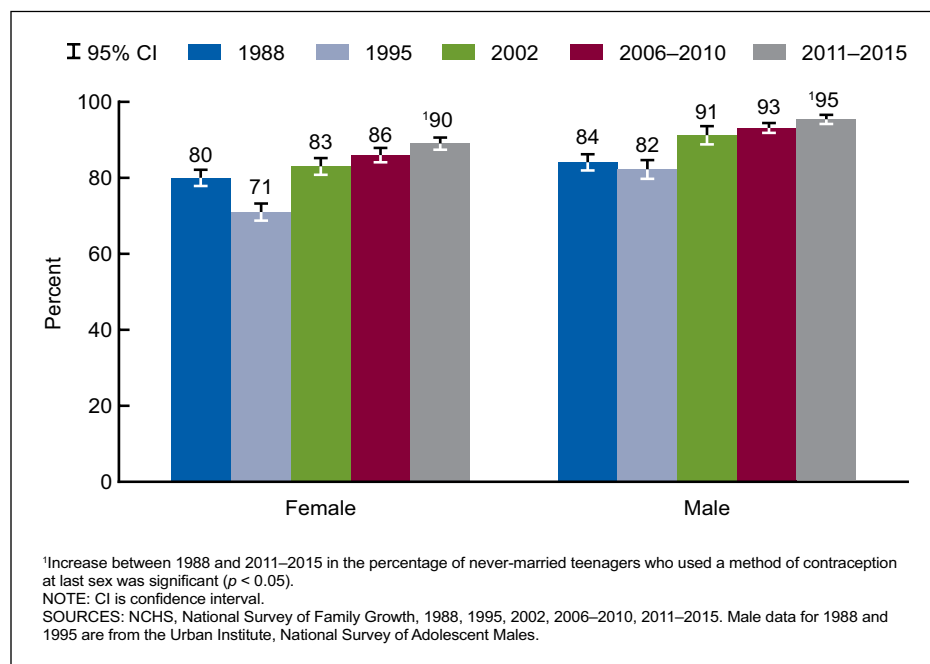


Figure 6. Trends in use of contraception at last sex among never-married males and females aged 15–19 who had sexual intercourse in the past 3 months: United States, 2011–2015

using the pill at last sex (39.3% compared with 20.8% and 13.3% among Hispanic and non-Hispanic black teenagers, respectively); dual method use (condom plus hormonal method) had the same pattern.

Among never-married male teenagers, the percentage who used a method of contraception at last sex increased from 1988 to 2011–2015 (Figure 6). However, the changes in the recent time period from 2002 to 2011–2015 were not statistically significant.

Regarding specific contraceptive methods (Table 8), the percentage of never-married sexually active males reporting their partner’s pill use increased, from 31.0% to 39.9% between 2002 and 2011–2015, and the use of dual methods increased from 23.9% to 35.0% during this same period. No changes were observed from 2002 to 2011–2015 in the percentage using the condom, other hormonal methods, or other methods. Among never-married males, 94.9% used a method of contraception at last sex and 75.5% used a condom at last sex.

Condom use at last intercourse varies by race and Hispanic origin for never-married sexually active teen males, with non-Hispanic black males having higher percentages who used the condom (84.4%) than Hispanic males (68.0%). Never-married sexually active males’ reports of pill use mirror those of females: Non-Hispanic white males reported higher levels of their partner’s pill use than their non-Hispanic black and Hispanic counterparts. Non-Hispanic white and non-Hispanic black males reported a higher percentage using dual methods than their Hispanic counterparts.

For never-married sexually active male teenagers, the age at which they had their first intercourse is associated with using a condom at their last sex. Among never-married sexually active males who first had sex at age 14 and under, 66.9% used a condom at last sex compared with 82.1% of those who first had sex at ages 17–19. This pattern is consistent with females’ experience: Among never-married sexually active female teenagers whose first sex was at age 14 and under, 34.7% reported (partner’s) condom use compared with 63.0% among those whose first sex was at ages 17–19.

Feelings about a hypothetical pregnancy

Teenagers' reaction to a hypothetical pregnancy has been shown to be associated with the risk of having a teen birth (22). This measure helps to shed light on teenagers' motivation to avoid pregnancy, a potentially important influence on pregnancy risk behaviors. [Table 9](#) shows that in 2011–2015, among never-married teenagers aged 15–19, a larger percentage of females than males reported that they would be very upset if a pregnancy occurred: 60.5% of females compared with 46.1% of males. Teenagers who had never had sex and younger teenagers aged 15–17 were more likely than other groups to report that they would be very upset if they became pregnant or got someone pregnant. In addition, female teenagers aged 15–19 who lived with both biological parents at age 14 were more likely than those who did not live with both parents to report that they would be very upset if they became pregnant. Non-Hispanic white male teenagers were more likely to be very upset (54.7%) than Hispanic (30.0%) and non-Hispanic black (32.0%) teenagers. Among females, non-Hispanic white teenagers were more likely (65.6%) than Hispanic teenagers (51.8%) to report that they would be very upset if they became pregnant.

In contrast, while no differences were noted between male and female teenagers in the percentage who reported they would be “very pleased” in response to a pregnancy, there are differences by other characteristics. Female teenagers aged 18–19 were more likely to be very pleased (6.7%) than teenagers aged 15–17 (2.1%). Among male teenagers, those who had ever had sex were more likely to be very pleased (7.9%) than those who had never had sex (4.6%). Hispanic male teenagers were more likely to be very pleased (9.9%) than non-Hispanic white male teenagers (4.7%).

Female teenagers' reactions of being upset or being pleased at the prospect of a pregnancy are associated with their use of contraception. [Figure 7](#) shows that among those who would be very upset or a little upset, 95.6% used contraception at last sex compared with 84.4% who said they would be a little

pleased or very pleased if they became pregnant. While the same pattern in the percentages using contraception at last sex exists for males, the difference falls short of statistical significance.

Summary

Using data from the 2011–2015 NSFG and earlier NSFG surveys, this report provides an update of information on U.S. teenagers' sexual activity and contraceptive use, thus helping to improve understanding of their risk of pregnancy and STIs.

NSFG is the only source of current and ongoing data on the topics of sexual activity and contraceptive use for the total U.S. population of females and males aged 15–19, paralleling the teen population whose pregnancy and birth rates are captured by birth certificates as part of the vital statistics system of the National Center for Health Statistics (3,6). The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), a biennial survey conducted by CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health, is a source of data on the U.S. population of high school students. This survey, a self-administered paper questionnaire, includes males and females

enrolled in school in 9th through 12th grades and contains some measures similar to those on the NSFG. YRBSS allows estimates to be calculated at the state level as well as the national level (23).

Overall, the percentage of teenagers who had ever had sexual intercourse and who had had sex recently remained unchanged over roughly the past 10 years from 2002 to 2011–2015. One exception was among females: The percentage having had sex recently (within 3 months of the survey) decreased between 2002 and 2006–2010 but remained stable through 2011–2015. This pattern across recent time periods sheds light on the contribution of sexual activity to the pattern of decline in the teen birth rate in similar time periods. With regard to teenagers' use of contraceptives, over the period from 2002 to 2011–2015, the percentage of females using any method at first sex and at last sex increased, while the percentage for males remained unchanged at very high levels. The percentage of males using any contraception at last sex remains high at 94.9%.

Data from the 1988 and 1995 NSFG and NSAM compared with the more recent time periods 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015 show decreases in sexual activity and increases in contraceptive

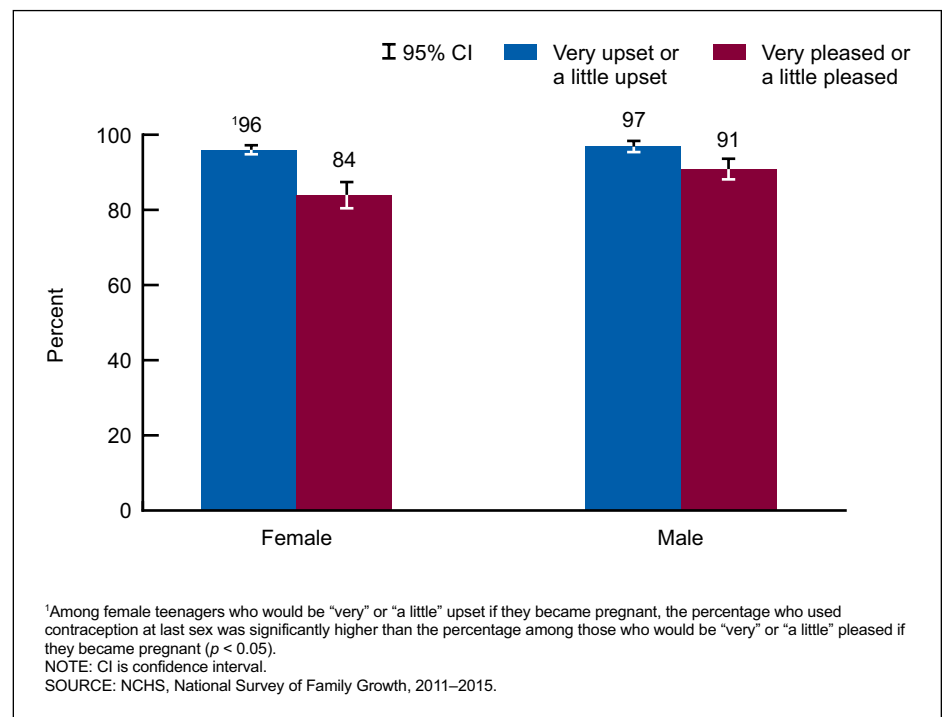


Figure 7. Use of contraception at last sex among never-married sexually active males and females aged 15–19, by reaction to a hypothetical pregnancy: United States, 2011–2015

use from 1988 (or 1995 in the case of females' contraceptive use at last sex) through 2002 (10–12). These earlier trends align with declines in teen pregnancy and birth rates beginning in 1990 and 1991, respectively, although pregnancy and birth rates continued to decline through this entire period, including in 2002 and subsequent time periods (3,5). Even though sexual activity has generally remained stable, or in the case of females, decreased slightly since 2002, and contraceptive use has not increased at the same pace since 2002 as it had in the earlier period, a wider variety of contraceptive methods that are now available are being used by teenagers. This is evidenced by increases through the 2000s, when they began to be available, in the percentage of teenagers having ever used injectable contraception, the hormonal patch, the hormonal ring, emergency contraception, and most recently, LARC.

Differences by race and Hispanic origin described in this report, in particular for sexual experience among males and for contraceptive use by females and males, align with higher birth rates for Hispanic and non-Hispanic black teenagers shown in birth registration data (3). Non-Hispanic black male teenagers had higher percentages who were sexually experienced and sexually active compared with the other two groups in 2011–2015. Non-Hispanic white teenagers, both female and male, had higher percentages using any method of contraception, the pill, and the condom at first sex, and higher percentages using the pill at last sex compared with their Hispanic and non-Hispanic black counterparts. Exceptions existed for specific methods: Non-Hispanic black female teenagers had higher percentages using other hormonal methods at first sex and non-Hispanic black male teenagers had higher percentages using the condom at last sex.

Further progress in teen pregnancy and STI risk reduction and reduction of differences between racial and ethnic groups may be aided by understanding the circumstances around teenagers' sexual and contraceptive behaviors. One consistent finding is that the age at first sex is related to lower contraceptive use not only at first sex but at last sex

as well. In addition, the findings in this report suggest the relationship with their first partner plays a role: Teenagers who are younger at first sex are also more likely to have had a first partner with whom they were in a less-established relationship (were “just friends”), and for male teenagers, this type of relationship was associated with being less likely to use contraception at first sex.

Whether and to what degree teenagers want to avoid pregnancy influences their sexual and contraceptive behavior. This is reflected by 19.3% of female and 21.2% of male teenagers who had not yet had sex choosing “didn't want to get [a female] pregnant” as their primary reason for not yet having had sex. Furthermore, the majority of female teenagers (88.5%) reported that they would be a little or very upset if they became pregnant and having these feelings was associated with a higher likelihood of contraceptive use.

This report presents information on the primary behavioral determinants of pregnancy and STIs among teenagers. It provides insights into the ways in which those determinants are changing with time, how they differ by sociodemographic groups, and what circumstances are most associated with them. The information can be used to monitor and understand trends in teen sexual behavior and contraception use.

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Table 1. Percentage of never-married females and males aged 15–19 who have ever had sexual intercourse: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Percent (standard error)
Female		
Total, 2002 ¹	9,598	45.5 (1.8)
Total, 2006–2010 ¹	10,361	42.6 (1.7)
Total, 2011–2015 ¹	9,385	42.4 (1.9)
Female, 2011–2015		
Hispanic origin and race		
Hispanic or Latina	2,129	41.4 (3.2)
Non-Hispanic white	5,057	44.3 (2.6)
Non-Hispanic black	1,540	46.6 (3.3)
Age		
15–17	5,515	28.1 (2.0)
18–19	3,870	62.9 (2.7)
Respondent's mother's age at her first child's birth		
Under 20	2,913	45.7 (2.9)
20 and over	6,345	40.6 (2.2)
Respondent's mother's education		
No high school diploma or GED	1,446	41.0 (3.5)
High school diploma or GED	2,592	44.6 (3.3)
Some college or higher	5,306	41.6 (2.4)
Family structure at age 14		
Both biological or adoptive parents	5,608	36.8 (2.4)
Other ²	3,777	50.8 (2.5)
Male		
Total, 2002 ¹	10,139	45.7 (2.1)
Total, 2006–2010 ¹	10,766	41.8 (1.6)
Total, 2011–2015 ¹	9,963	44.2 (1.5)
Male, 2011–2015		
Hispanic origin and race		
Hispanic or Latino	2,253	45.7 (2.7)
Non-Hispanic white	5,332	42.8 (2.2)
Non-Hispanic black	1,555	58.6 (3.0)
Age		
15–17	6,109	31.5 (1.6)
18–19	3,853	64.3 (2.5)
Respondent's mother's age at her first child's birth		
Under 20	2,876	56.7 (2.5)
20 and over	6,921	39.3 (1.7)
Respondent's mother's education		
No high school diploma or GED	1,578	46.7 (3.7)
High school diploma or GED	2,751	49.0 (2.2)
Some college or higher	5,557	41.0 (1.9)
Family structure at age 14		
Both biological or adoptive parents	6,128	39.4 (1.8)
Other ²	3,835	51.9 (2.1)

¹Total includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups and those whose mother figure had no births. These groups are not shown separately due to their small numbers in the sample.

²Refers to anything other than two biological or adoptive parents or biological mother and step-father, including one biological parent and no other parent(s)/parent-figures or no parent(s)/parent figures.

NOTES: Sexual intercourse is defined as vaginal sexual intercourse between opposite-sex partners. GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

Table 2. Cumulative probability of having had first sex by age 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 for males and females aged 15–24: United States, 2011–2015

Characteristic	Male						Female					
	Probability of first sexual intercourse by:						Probability of first sexual intercourse by:					
	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20
Total, 2011–2015 ¹	0.16	0.27	0.41	0.55	0.68	0.75	0.11	0.25	0.42	0.55	0.69	0.75
2011–2015												
Hispanic origin and race												
Hispanic or Latino	0.19	0.30	0.46	0.61	0.72	0.76	0.11	0.26	0.40	0.55	0.70	0.79
Non-Hispanic												
White, single race	0.11	0.21	0.37	0.51	0.66	0.74	0.10	0.24	0.42	0.55	0.67	0.74
Black, single race	0.36	0.48	0.58	0.69	0.79	0.86	0.17	0.31	0.50	0.62	0.77	0.82
Family structure at age 14												
Both biological or adoptive parents	0.11	0.20	0.34	0.49	0.62	0.71	0.07	0.18	0.33	0.47	0.61	0.69
Other ²	0.26	0.39	0.53	0.66	0.79	0.84	0.18	0.36	0.56	0.68	0.81	0.85
Respondent's mother's age at her child's first birth												
Under 20	0.26	0.39	0.55	0.67	0.79	0.85	0.18	0.33	0.49	0.64	0.78	0.84
20 and over	0.13	0.22	0.35	0.50	0.63	0.72	0.08	0.21	0.38	0.51	0.64	0.71
Respondent's mother's education												
No high school diploma or GED	0.17	0.29	0.44	0.56	0.68	0.73	0.13	0.29	0.47	0.63	0.76	0.82
High school diploma or GED	0.21	0.32	0.46	0.61	0.73	0.80	0.14	0.28	0.49	0.60	0.71	0.78
Some college or higher	0.14	0.24	0.38	0.52	0.65	0.73	0.09	0.22	0.36	0.50	0.65	0.72

¹Includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups, not shown separately.

²Refers to anything other than two biological or adoptive parents or biological mother and step-father, including one biological parent and no other parent(s)/parent-figures or no parent(s)/parent figures.

NOTES: GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma. The probabilities in this table are produced using the life table methodology (all standard errors are < 0.001).

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2011–2015.

Table 3. Relationship with first sexual partner at time of first sexual intercourse among females and males aged 15–19: United States, 2011–2015

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Total	Had just met	Just friends	Going out once in a while	Going steady	Cohabiting, engaged, or married
Female		Percent distribution (standard error)					
Total ¹	4,076	100.0	2.1 (0.5)	13.0 (1.8)	7.2 (1.1)	74.1 (2.0)	1.6 (0.4)
Hispanic origin and race							
Hispanic or Latina	922	100.0	*	12.4 (4.5)	7.3 (2.0)	70.5 (4.2)	3.4 (1.2)
Non-Hispanic							
White, single race	2,227	100.0	2.3 (0.8)	12.0 (2.6)	7.5 (1.8)	76.3 (2.9)	1.3 (0.5)
Black, single race	635	100.0	1.9 (1.1)	13.7 (3.3)	6.2 (1.8)	74.6 (4.3)	*
Age at first sexual intercourse							
14 and under	927	100.0	3.4 (1.3)	21.9 (5.1)	3.2 (1.2)	66.9 (5.0)	1.7 (0.9)
15–16	2,165	100.0	1.8 (0.8)	8.8 (1.6)	9.3 (2.0)	76.7 (2.5)	1.4 (0.5)
17–19	984	100.0	1.5 (0.8)	13.6 (4.2)	6.2 (1.9)	75.3 (4.5)	1.9 (0.9)
Family structure at age 14							
Both biological or adoptive parents	2,110	100.0	3.3 (0.9)	12.2 (2.9)	7.8 (2.0)	73.7 (3.1)	1.3 (0.5)
Other ²	1,965	100.0	0.8 (0.4)	13.8 (1.9)	6.6 (1.3)	74.5 (2.2)	1.8 (0.6)
Respondent's mother's age at her first child's birth							
Under 20	1,369	100.0	2.4 (0.9)	14.2 (3.2)	8.9 (2.6)	70.1 (3.8)	2.2 (0.8)
20 and over	2,597	100.0	2.1 (0.7)	12.1 (2.1)	6.5 (1.2)	76.2 (2.6)	1.1 (0.5)
Respondent's mother's education							
No high school diploma or GED	635	100.0	*	16.6 (6.2)	5.5 (1.7)	71.4 (6.1)	3.3 (1.4)
High school diploma or GED	1,165	100.0	2.3 (1.0)	10.1 (1.8)	12.1 (3.1)	71.6 (3.7)	2.2 (0.9)
Some college or higher	2,248	100.0	2.1 (0.7)	13.4 (2.5)	5.2 (1.1)	76.2 (2.8)	*
Male							
Total ¹	4,437	100.0	7.4 (1.2)	27.3 (1.9)	12.2 (1.3)	51.1 (2.2)	*
Hispanic origin and race							
Hispanic or Latino	1,050	100.0	5.2 (1.2)	27.7 (2.8)	16.9 (3.7)	47.3 (4.5)	*
Non-Hispanic							
White, single race	2,189	100.0	9.8 (2.4)	20.7 (2.8)	10.3 (1.7)	58.1 (3.6)	*
Black, single race	827	100.0	4.6 (2.0)	40.5 (3.6)	13.6 (2.7)	38.1 (4.0)	*
Age at first sexual intercourse							
14 and under	1,422	100.0	8.2 (1.9)	38.7 (2.8)	10.5 (2.0)	40.1 (3.1)	*
15–16	2,035	100.0	4.0 (0.9)	18.3 (2.0)	14.6 (2.3)	60.5 (3.0)	*
17–19	980	100.0	13.0 (4.8)	29.3 (5.1)	9.6 (2.3)	47.5 (5.1)	*
Family structure at age 14							
Both biological or adoptive parents	2,429	100.0	6.7 (2.0)	26.6 (2.9)	13.1 (2.0)	52.3 (3.3)	*
Other ²	2,007	100.0	8.1 (1.6)	28.1 (2.7)	11.2 (1.7)	49.7 (2.6)	*
Respondent's mother's age at her first child's birth							
Under 20	1,648	100.0	9.5 (2.4)	26.5 (3.1)	13.3 (1.9)	48.2 (3.8)	*
20 and over	2,734	100.0	6.2 (1.5)	26.8 (2.4)	11.5 (1.8)	53.6 (2.9)	*
Respondent's mother's education							
No high school diploma or GED	744	100.0	6.8 (2.9)	30.1 (4.5)	13.0 (2.6)	45.7 (4.8)	*
High school diploma or GED	1,372	100.0	8.4 (2.9)	31.6 (3.7)	8.8 (1.9)	49.3 (4.0)	*
Some college or higher	2,279	100.0	7.0 (1.6)	23.0 (2.5)	13.9 (2.3)	54.6 (3.3)	*

* Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision.

¹Includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups and persons in "other" types of relationships, not shown separately.²Refers to anything other than two biological or adoptive parents or biological mother and step-father, including one biological parent and no other parent(s)/parent-figures or no parent(s)/parent figures.

NOTES: GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Sexual intercourse is defined as vaginal sexual intercourse between opposite-sex partners.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2011–2015.

Table 4. Main reason for never having had sexual intercourse for females and males aged 15–19: United States, 2011–2015

Reason	Female	Male
	Number (thousands)	
Total	5,362	5,515
	Percent who reported reason (standard error)	
Total	100.0	100.0
Against religion or morals	35.3 (2.4)	27.9 (2.1)
Don't want to get pregnant	19.3 (1.6)	21.2 (2.0)
Don't want to get a sexually transmitted disease	7.1 (1.2)	4.7 (0.8)
Haven't found the right person yet	21.9 (1.7)	28.5 (2.1)
In a relationship, but waiting for the right time	6.2 (0.8)	6.6 (0.9)
Other reason	10.0 (1.3)	11.1 (1.4)

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2011–2015.

Table 5. Females and males aged 15–19 who had sexual intercourse in the past 12 months and in the past 3 months: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

Characteristic	Female			Male		
	Number (thousands)	Had sex in last 12 months	Had sex in last 3 months	Number (thousands)	Had sex in last 12 months	Had sex in last 3 months
		Percent (standard error)			Percent (standard error)	
Total, 2002	9,834	42.5 (1.9)	35.7 (1.7)	10,208	39.8 (2.1)	31.7 (1.8)
Total, 2006–2010	10,478	39.7 (1.7)	31.3 (1.4)	10,817	37.6 (1.4)	27.9 (1.5)
Total, 2011–2015 ¹	9,482	38.9 (1.8)	30.2 (1.7)	9,997	39.5 (1.4)	28.7 (1.4)
2011–2015						
Hispanic origin and race						
Hispanic or Latino	2,169	36.1 (2.9)	27.7 (3.0)	2,273	39.8 (2.7)	28.2 (2.4)
Non-Hispanic						
White, single race	4,925	42.9 (2.7)	34.1 (2.5)	5,132	38.6 (2.0)	27.8 (1.9)
Black, single race	1,370	40.4 (3.3)	28.9 (3.2)	1,420	52.7 (3.5)	39.9 (3.2)
Age						
15–17	5,523	24.8 (1.9)	16.8 (1.8)	6,109	27.5 (1.5)	18.2 (1.5)
18–19	3,960	58.7 (2.8)	48.9 (2.8)	3,888	58.3 (2.5)	45.1 (2.4)
Living arrangement at interview						
Both biological or adoptive parents	4,015	24.9 (2.4)	19.0 (2.4)	4,492	32.7 (2.2)	24.4 (2.0)
Biological and step or adoptive parent	1,329	40.5 (4.9)	31.3 (4.5)	1,562	43.2 (3.2)	29.1 (3.0)
Single parent (biological, adoptive, or step-parent)	3,007	44.3 (2.7)	33.9 (2.5)	3,037	40.5 (2.3)	29.0 (2.2)
Respondent's mother's age at her first child's birth						
Under 20	2,956	41.6 (2.9)	32.2 (2.6)	2,893	51.5 (2.4)	40.1 (2.6)
20 and over	6,365	37.4 (2.1)	29.6 (1.9)	6,938	34.8 (1.7)	23.9 (1.5)
Respondent's mother's education						
No high school diploma or GED	1,491	39.0 (3.5)	28.6 (3.1)	1,585	43.1 (3.6)	33.6 (3.4)
High school diploma or GED	2,602	41.1 (3.2)	31.4 (2.8)	2,776	42.2 (2.3)	30.7 (2.1)
Some college or higher	5,349	37.8 (2.4)	30.2 (2.3)	5,559	37.0 (1.9)	25.9 (1.9)

¹Includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups, living arrangements that did not include parents or parent figures, and those with a mother figure who had no births, not shown separately. These groups are not shown separately due to their small numbers in the sample.

NOTES: GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma. Sexual intercourse is defined as vaginal sexual intercourse between opposite-sex partners.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

Table 6. Methods of contraception ever used among females aged 15–19 who had ever had sexual intercourse: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

Method	2002	2006–2010	2011–2015
	Number (thousands)		
Total	4,598	4,531	4,079
	Percent who ever used (standard error)		
Any method	97.7 (0.5)	98.9 (0.5)	99.4 (0.2)
Pill.	61.4 (2.8)	55.6 (2.4)	55.5 (2.5)
Injectable	20.7 (2.6)	20.3 (1.5)	17.3 (1.6)
Intrauterine device	*	2.5 (0.7)	2.8 (0.8)
Implant	*	0.6 (0.3)	3.0 (0.7)
Emergency contraception	8.1 (1.7)	13.7 (1.3)	22.9 (2.2)
Contraceptive patch	1.5 (1.1)	10.3 (1.3)	1.8 (0.4)
Contraceptive ring	†	5.2 (1.0)	5.3 (1.4)
Condom	93.7 (1.0)	95.9 (0.9)	97.4 (0.5)
Fertility awareness methods	10.8 (1.7)	15.0 (1.3)	12.1 (1.1)
Withdrawal	55.0 (2.3)	57.3 (2.3)	59.7 (2.6)
Other methods	9.9 (1.6)	7.1 (0.9)	2.5 (0.6)

* Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision.

† Method was not available for this survey year.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

Table 7. Use of contraception at first sexual intercourse among sexually experienced females and males aged 15–19, by method used: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Any method	No method	Pill (at all)	Other hormonal ¹	Condom (at all)	All other methods ²	Dual methods (hormonal and condom) ³
Female								
Total, 2002	4,598	74.5 (2.0)	25.5 (2.0)	16.5 (1.9)	2.1 (0.7)	66.4 (2.0)	2.6 (0.8)	13.1 (1.9)
Total, 2006–2010	4,532	78.0 (1.9)	21.7 (1.9)	15.7 (1.6)	6.1 (1.1)	68.0 (2.0)	3.4 (0.8)	14.8 (1.5)
Total, 2011–2015 ⁴	4,079	81.0 (1.8)	19.0 (1.8)	19.5 (2.0)	3.1 (0.6)	74.6 (1.9)	6.7 (1.1)	18.5 (1.9)
Female, 2011–2015								
Hispanic origin and race								
Hispanic or Latina	922	78.8 (2.3)	21.2 (2.3)	12.2 (2.5)	1.8 (0.8)	70.5 (3.1)	9.3 (2.4)	10.3 (2.4)
Non-Hispanic								
White, single race	2,227	87.2 (2.3)	12.8 (2.3)	26.6 (3.2)	2.7 (0.9)	81.4 (2.4)	6.6 (1.6)	25.0 (3.1)
Black, single race	635	62.2 (5.2)	37.8 (5.2)	3.9 (1.5)	7.4 (2.2)	56.3 (5.2)	2.6 (1.2)	6.7 (2.1)
Age at first sexual intercourse								
14 and under	927	70.7 (5.0)	29.3 (5.0)	8.8 (3.3)	1.1 (0.6)	65.8 (5.1)	5.5 (2.1)	7.4 (3.1)
15–16	2,165	83.9 (2.6)	16.1 (2.6)	23.9 (3.1)	2.9 (0.8)	78.5 (2.7)	7.0 (1.6)	22.7 (3.1)
17–19	987	84.2 (3.1)	15.8 (3.1)	19.9 (3.3)	5.6 (1.8)	74.5 (3.5)	7.1 (1.8)	19.5 (3.5)
Age of male partner								
Younger	266	89.5 (4.7)	10.5 (4.7)	19.5 (6.9)	9.4 (5.3)	78.6 (6.7)	7.1 (4.2)	24.1 (8.1)
Same age	1,045	79.0 (4.1)	21.0 (4.1)	19.5 (3.8)	3.6 (1.4)	73.4 (4.3)	8.9 (3.0)	17.5 (3.7)
1–2 years older	2,078	84.7 (2.4)	15.3 (2.4)	20.9 (2.9)	2.6 (0.7)	80.6 (2.7)	4.9 (1.1)	21.1 (2.8)
3 or more years older	690	69.6 (4.5)	30.4 (4.5)	15.2 (2.9)	1.7 (0.8)	56.9 (4.6)	8.5 (2.2)	9.7 (2.4)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 7. Use of contraception at first sexual intercourse among sexually experienced females and males aged 15–19, by method used: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015—Con.

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Any method	No method	Percent (standard error)				
				Pill (at all)	Other hormonal ¹	Condom (at all)	All other methods ²	Dual methods (hormonal and condom) ³
Male								
Total, 2002	4,697	82.0 (2.2)	18.0 (2.2)	14.9 (1.9)	2.1 (0.7)	70.9 (2.4)	4.7 (1.2)	10.4 (1.4)
Total, 2006–2010	4,551	85.4 (1.6)	14.6 (1.6)	17.9 (2.0)	1.4 (0.6)	79.6 (2.0)	2.7 (0.7)	16.2 (1.8)
Total, 2011–2015 ⁴	4,437	83.6 (1.7)	16.4 (1.7)	20.0 (2.1)	1.8 (0.4)	76.8 (1.9)	3.9 (0.7)	18.8 (2.0)
Male, 2011–2015								
Hispanic origin and race								
Hispanic or Latino	1,050	76.3 (3.9)	23.6 (3.9)	10.5 (2.6)	1.1 (0.5)	70.2 (4.1)	4.2 (1.2)	9.7 (2.5)
Non-Hispanic								
White, single race	2,189	89.2 (2.1)	10.8 (2.1)	29.2 (3.5)	1.9 (0.7)	81.8 (2.2)	4.1 (1.2)	27.9 (3.3)
Black, single race	827	76.0 (3.2)	24.0 (3.2)	7.7 (1.7)	2.2 (1.1)	71.4 (3.7)	3.1 (1.2)	8.2 (1.7)
Age at first sexual intercourse								
14 and under	1,422	71.3 (3.2)	28.7 (3.2)	8.8 (1.7)	*	66.3 (3.4)	4.4 (1.4)	8.8 (1.7)
15–16	2,035	86.7 (2.3)	13.3 (2.3)	23.4 (3.2)	2.6 (0.7)	80.3 (2.6)	2.7 (0.9)	22.2 (2.9)
17–19	980	94.7 (2.3)	5.3 (2.3)	28.9 (4.8)	1.7 (0.8)	84.9 (3.4)	5.5 (2.0)	26.3 (4.3)
Age of female partner								
Younger	657	86.4 (3.4)	13.6 (3.4)	17.0 (3.6)	*	75.7 (4.3)	6.5 (2.7)	14.9 (3.6)
Same age	1,879	82.7 (2.8)	17.3 (2.8)	20.8 (3.0)	1.9 (0.8)	76.0 (3.2)	2.9 (0.9)	18.8 (2.7)
1–2 years older	1,568	88.0 (2.0)	12.0 (2.0)	21.0 (3.3)	1.6 (0.6)	83.8 (2.2)	2.6 (1.1)	21.1 (3.4)
3 or more years older	333	61.9 (6.6)	38.1 (6.6)	15.6 (5.0)	*	50.8 (7.0)	9.9 (4.7)	15.8 (5.0)

* Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision.

¹Includes Depo-Provera and Lunelle injectable, Norplant implants, emergency contraception, and contraceptive patch in 2002; adds contraceptive ring (NuvaRing) and Implanon implant in 2006–2010; adds Nexplanon implant in 2011–2015. Although some intrauterine devices (IUDs) are hormonal, IUD is included in "all other methods" because the type of IUD cannot be ascertained. This includes one report of IUD use across all three time periods: 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

²All other methods, excluding condom and hormonal methods. Thus, if other method was combined with condom or hormonal method, it is not counted. Other methods include withdrawal, sterilization, IUD, female condom, diaphragm, cervical cap, spermicidal foam, jelly or cream, suppository, sponge, calendar rhythm method, and "other" methods.

³IUD is excluded because type of IUD cannot be ascertained; see footnote 1. There were no cases reporting IUD combined with condom across all three time periods: 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

⁴Includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups, not shown separately.

NOTE: Statistics for condom (at all), pill (at all), and other hormonal reflect use of that method regardless of whether it was used alone or in combination with another method.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2002, 2006–2010 and 2011–2015.

Table 8. Use of contraception at last sexual intercourse in the past 3 months among never-married females and males aged 15–19, by method used: United States, 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Any method	No method	Pill (at all)	Other hormonal ¹	Condom (at all)	All other methods ²	Dual methods (hormonal and condom) ³
Female								
Total, 2002	3,304	83.2 (2.2)	16.8 (2.2)	34.2 (3.0)	9.1 (1.8)	54.3 (3.0)	5.1 (1.2)	19.5 (2.5)
Total, 2006–2010	3,175	85.6 (1.9)	14.4 (1.9)	30.5 (2.3)	12.2 (1.7)	52.0 (2.8)	11.0 (1.8)	20.1 (2.2)
Total, 2011–2015 ⁴	2,805	89.9 (1.5)	10.1 (1.5)	31.5 (2.7)	12.6 (2.1)	56.5 (3.0)	9.8 (1.6)	21.7 (2.6)
Female, 2011–2015								
Hispanic origin and race								
Hispanic or Latina	565	86.9 (3.6)	13.1 (3.6)	20.8 (6.2)	7.8 (1.7)	49.4 (6.6)	16.5 (3.8)	7.6 (2.4)
Non-Hispanic								
White, single race	1,657	91.3 (1.8)	8.7 (1.8)	39.3 (3.6)	13.6 (3.1)	60.8 (3.9)	6.8 (1.8)	29.0 (4.0)
Black, single race	396	87.4 (5.1)	12.6 (5.1)	13.3 (4.6)	15.4 (3.8)	55.9 (7.2)	5.9 (2.3)	11.7 (3.5)
Age at first sexual intercourse								
14 and under	625	85.6 (3.9)	14.4 (3.9)	26.3 (6.1)	16.5 (3.7)	34.7 (5.1)	11.6 (2.9)	9.0 (2.6)
15–16	1,421	90.7 (1.8)	9.3 (1.8)	32.8 (3.6)	13.4 (3.2)	62.7 (3.7)	8.6 (2.0)	26.8 (3.9)
17–19	759	91.9 (2.2)	8.1 (2.2)	33.5 (4.9)	7.9 (2.4)	63.0 (5.6)	10.4 (3.9)	22.5 (4.2)
Male								
Total, 2002	3,165	90.7 (2.4)	9.3 (2.4)	31.0 (2.8)	6.3 (1.5)	70.7 (3.0)	2.0 (4.2)	23.9 (2.4)
Total, 2006–2010	2,970	92.5 (1.3)	7.5 (1.3)	39.0 (2.6)	9.3 (1.6)	74.7 (2.2)	3.4 (0.7)	33.9 (2.8)
Total, 2011–2015 ⁴	2,832	94.9 (1.2)	5.1 (1.2)	39.9 (2.8)	10.0 (1.5)	75.5 (2.2)	5.7 (1.0)	35.0 (3.0)
Male, 2011–2015								
Hispanic origin and race								
Hispanic or Latino	621	94.4 (1.8)	5.6 (1.8)	27.4 (4.6)	12.5 (2.6)	68.0 (4.7)	5.4 (1.9)	18.3 (3.8)
Non-Hispanic								
White, single race	1,416	96.3 (1.6)	3.7 (1.6)	50.4 (4.0)	9.5 (2.5)	75.6 (3.6)	6.0 (1.8)	43.3 (4.5)
Black, single race	561	95.9 (1.5)	4.1 (1.5)	26.1 (5.0)	10.0 (2.4)	84.4 (3.0)	6.5 (2.4)	31.1 (5.0)
Age at first sexual intercourse								
14 and under	985	92.4 (2.4)	7.6 (2.4)	38.5 (4.2)	9.7 (2.1)	66.9 (4.6)	8.2 (2.2)	29.6 (4.5)
15–16	1,243	95.9 (1.3)	4.1 (1.3)	40.2 (4.3)	13.2 (2.8)	79.0 (2.9)	4.6 (1.4)	39.7 (4.5)
17–19	604	96.9 (1.4)	3.1 (1.4)	41.3 (5.9)	3.9 (1.5)	82.1 (4.1)	3.9 (1.6)	34.4 (6.0)

¹Includes Depo-Provera and Lunelle injectable, Norplant implants, emergency contraception, and contraceptive patch in 2002; adds contraceptive ring (NuvaRing) and Implanon implant in 2006–2010; adds Nexplanon implant in 2011–2015. Although some intrauterine devices (IUDs) are hormonal, IUD is included in "all other methods" because the type of IUD cannot be ascertained. This includes 24 cases reporting IUD use across all 3 time periods: 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

²All other methods, excluding condom and hormonal methods. Thus, if other method was combined with condom or hormonal method, it is not counted. Other methods include withdrawal, sterilization, IUD, female condom, diaphragm, cervical cap, spermicidal foam, jelly or cream, suppository, sponge, calendar rhythm method, and "other" methods.

³IUD is excluded since type of IUD cannot be ascertained; see footnote 1. There were two cases reporting IUD combined with condom across all three time periods: 2002, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015.

⁴Includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups, not shown separately.

NOTE: Statistics for condom (at all), pill (at all), and other hormonal reflect use of that method regardless of whether it was used alone or in combination with another method.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2002, 2006–2010 and 2011–2015.

Table 9. Responses to the statement “If you got pregnant now/got a female pregnant now, how would you feel?” for never-married females and males aged 15–19: United States, 2011–2015

Characteristic	Number (thousands)	Total	Very upset	A little upset	A little pleased	Very pleased
Female						
Total ¹	9,128	100.0	60.5 (1.8)	28.0 (1.5)	7.3 (0.8)	4.0 (0.8)
Hispanic origin and race						
Hispanic or Latina	2,057	100.0	51.8 (3.1)	34.0 (2.9)	9.8 (1.5)	4.2 (0.9)
Non-Hispanic						
White, single race	4,761	100.0	65.6 (2.3)	26.1 (2.1)	5.8 (0.9)	2.3 (0.7)
Black, single race	1,307	100.0	59.2 (4.1)	26.7 (3.1)	10.0 (2.9)	3.7 (1.1)
Age						
15–17	5,394	100.0	65.5 (2.3)	25.8 (2.1)	6.3 (1.0)	2.1 (0.9)
18–19	3,734	100.0	53.4 (2.5)	31.2 (2.1)	8.8 (1.1)	6.7 (1.5)
Ever had sex						
Yes	3,749	100.0	49.4 (2.4)	32.7 (2.2)	12.6 (1.6)	5.2 (0.9)
No	5,379	100.0	68.3 (2.4)	24.7 (2.0)	3.7 (0.7)	3.1 (1.2)
Family structure at age 14						
Both biological or adoptive parents	5,463	100.0	65.0 (2.3)	25.9 (2.0)	4.8 (0.7)	4.3 (1.2)
Other ²	3,665	100.0	53.9 (2.7)	31.1 (2.6)	11.1 (1.6)	3.6 (0.7)
Male						
Total ¹	9,644	100.0	46.1 (1.7)	33.7 (1.5)	13.6 (0.9)	6.0 (0.8)
Hispanic origin and race						
Hispanic or Latino	2,197	100.0	30.0 (2.5)	36.3 (2.3)	22.8 (2.7)	9.9 (1.4)
Non-Hispanic						
White, single race	4,993	100.0	54.7 (2.5)	32.0 (2.2)	8.3 (1.1)	4.7 (1.3)
Black, single race	1,353	100.0	32.0 (3.0)	40.4 (3.3)	19.7 (2.2)	7.5 (1.6)
Age						
15–17	5,924	100.0	51.1 (2.2)	31.9 (1.8)	11.3 (1.0)	5.1 (1.0)
18–19	3,720	100.0	38.2 (2.5)	36.5 (2.7)	17.4 (1.9)	7.6 (1.4)
Ever had sex						
Yes	4,271	100.0	36.0 (2.0)	36.9 (2.1)	18.6 (1.6)	7.9 (1.0)
No	5,373	100.0	54.2 (2.5)	31.2 (2.1)	9.7 (1.0)	4.6 (1.2)
Family structure at age 14						
Both biological or adoptive parents	5,960	100.0	48.0 (2.2)	34.0 (2.0)	11.8 (1.3)	6.0 (1.1)
Other ²	3,684	100.0	43.1 (2.5)	33.1 (2.3)	16.6 (1.6)	6.3 (1.1)

¹Includes persons of other or unknown race and origin groups, not shown separately.

²Refers to anything other than two biological or adoptive parents or biological mother and step-father, including one biological parent and no other parent(s)/parent-figures or no parent(s)/parent-figures.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because responses of “would not care” (coded only if respondent insisted) are not shown separately.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Survey of Family Growth, 2011–2015.

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