



## Declines in Births by Month: United States, 2020

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### Abstract

**Objectives**—This report presents provisional 2020 and final 2019 and 2018 data on changes in the number of U.S. births by race and Hispanic origin of mother and by month of birth and state.

**Methods**—Data are based on all birth certificates registered to U.S. residents in the 50 states and D.C.; data for 2020 are provisional and data for 2018 and 2019 are final. Changes in the number of births by month from 2019 to 2020 by race and Hispanic-origin group are compared with changes occurring from 2018 to 2019. Changes for the first and second 6 months of the year by race and Hispanic origin and by state are also compared for the periods 2019 to 2020 and 2018 to 2019.

**Results**—From 2019 to 2020, the number of births for the United States declined for each month, with the largest declines occurring in December (8%), August (7%), and October and November (6%) (Figure 1). Larger declines in births were seen in the second half of 2020 (down 6%) compared with the first half (down 2%) of 2020. The number of births declined in both the first and second 6 months of 2020 compared with 2019 for nearly all race and Hispanic-origin groups, with larger declines in the second half of 2020 compared with the first half of the year. Births declined in 20 states in the first half of 2020, and in all states in the second half of 2020 (declines in 7 states were not significant). Changes in births by race and Hispanic origin and by state were less pronounced from 2018 to 2019; the number of births declined for 9 months by 1%–3%.

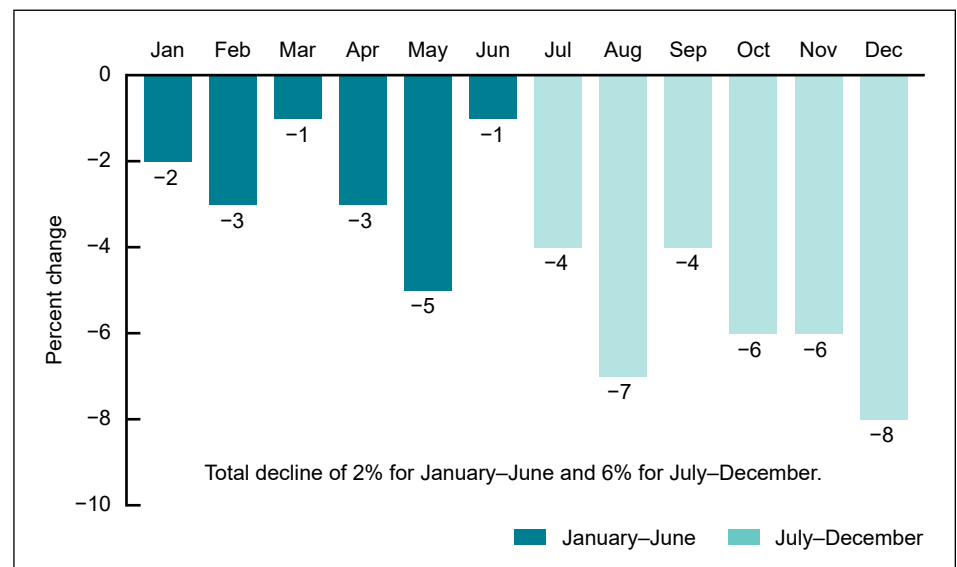
**Keywords:** birth certificate • maternal race and Hispanic origin • state • National Vital Statistics System

### Introduction

On March 13, 2020, the U.S. government declared a national emergency in response to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic (1). The pandemic, which is ongoing as of the publication of this report, has constituted a public health event not seen in the country since the 1918 influenza pandemic (2). A recent report has shown a decline of 1.0 year in the overall life expectancy at birth in the first 6 months of 2020 (3). The impact of the pandemic on trends in fertility for the United States has been uncertain, with predictions ranging from an upswing to a severe decline (4–6).

Births generally had been on the decline in the United States from 2007 to 2019, with declines averaging about 2% annually (7–10). A recent report showed a 4% drop in the total number of U.S. births from 2019 to 2020, the largest annual decline in the number of births since 1973 (7–11). The number of births declined for all race and Hispanic-origin groups from 2019 to 2020, with declines ranging from 3% (Hispanic women) to 8% (non-Hispanic Asian women) (7). The U.S. general fertility rate (GFR) also declined 4% from 2019 to 2020, the largest percent decline in this rate in nearly five decades; rates declined for each race and Hispanic-origin group (7). The impact of the pandemic on the United States in 2020 varied by month, as reported infection cases rose rapidly through the year, from 26 cases in early March to over 20 million cases at

Figure 1. Percent change in number of births, by month: United States, 2019 final and 2020 provisional



NOTES: Number of births for February 2020 was adjusted for leap day, February 29. Significant declines from 2019 to 2020 for all months ( $p < 0.05$ ).  
SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

the end of December. The impact also varied widely by state as the infection spread across the United States, from 7 states reporting confirmed cases in early March to all 50 states, D.C., and the territories (except American Samoa) reporting confirmed cases by the end of March (12). This report examines changes occurring in the number of U.S. births by race and Hispanic origin by single month and for the first and second 6 months (January–June and July–December) of 2020, and in the number of births by state of residence for the first and second 6 months of 2020. Changes are compared with those occurring from 2018 to 2019, with the focus on the changes from 2019 to 2020, encompassing the period when the pandemic arose.

## Methods

Data for 2020 are based on 99.87% of all birth records received and processed by the National Center for Health Statistics as of February 11, 2021 (7,8,13). The number of provisional 2020 births are compared with final 2019 counts. Changes in final birth counts from 2018 to 2019 are also described.

Hispanic origin and race are reported separately on the birth certificate. Data shown by Hispanic origin include all persons of Hispanic origin of any race. Data for non-Hispanic persons are shown separately for each single-race group. Data by race are based on the revised standards issued by the Office of Management and Budget in 1997 (14). The race and Hispanic-origin groups shown are non-Hispanic, single-race white; non-Hispanic, single-race black; non-Hispanic, single-race American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN); non-Hispanic, single-race Asian; non-Hispanic, single-race Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (NHOPI); and Hispanic. For brevity, text references to race omit the term “single-race” (10).

The number of births for February 2020 was adjusted to account for the additional day in February 2020, compared with February 2019 (that is, for the leap day, February 29). Both

observed and adjusted numbers are shown for February 2020 in Table 1; text comparisons are based on the adjusted February 2020 number of births. The number of births for the total year and for the first half of 2020 were not adjusted for leap day due to the relatively small impact of the additional births on February 29.

Births by state by month were not analyzed because of the small number of births by month for some states.

All changes in the number of births and differences in the changes mentioned in this report are statistically significant at the 0.05 level based on a chi-squared test, unless noted otherwise.

## Results

### Changes in the number of births by month

From 2019 to 2020, the number of births declined for each month, with the largest declines in December (8%), August (7%), and October and November (6%) (Table 1 and Figure 1). In comparison, from 2018 to 2019, the number of births declined for 9 months of the year, with declines ranging from 1% to 3%.

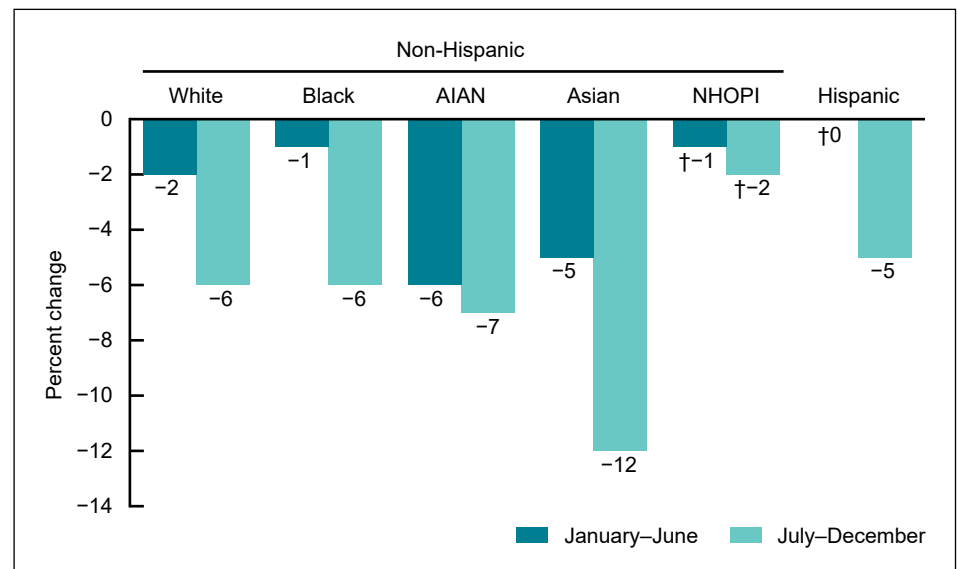
The decline in the number of births between 2019 and 2020 was larger in the second half of the year (6%) than in the first half of the year (2%). Between 2018 and 2019, the rate declined 2% in the first half of the year and 1% in the second half. (Table 1) (10,15).

### Changes in the number of births by maternal race and Hispanic origin

From 2019 to 2020, declines in the number of births by month for non-Hispanic white women ranged from 1% to 7%, for non-Hispanic black women from 2% to 8%, and for Hispanic women from 2% to 9% (Table 1). For non-Hispanic AIAN and non-Hispanic Asian women, declines in births by month ranged from 6% to 13% and from 3% to 19%, respectively. Among non-Hispanic NHOPI women, changes in births by month from 2019 to 2020 were not significant. From 2018 to 2019, monthly changes among the maternal race and Hispanic-origin groups ranged from declines of 2% to 9% to increases of 1% to 12%.

The decline in births between 2019 and 2020 was larger in the second

Figure 2. Percent change in number of births, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, January–June, 2019 final and 2020 provisional; and July–December, 2019 final and 2020 provisional



† No significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ).  
 NOTES: AIAN is American Indian or Alaska Native. NHOPI is Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.  
 SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

half of the year than in the first half for non-Hispanic white (6% and 2%, respectively), non-Hispanic black (6% and 1%), non-Hispanic Asian (12% and 5%), and Hispanic (5% and 0%) women (Table 1 and Figure 2). The difference in the declines in the number of births for non-Hispanic AIAN (7% and 6%) and non-Hispanic NHOPI (2% and 1%) women were not significant.

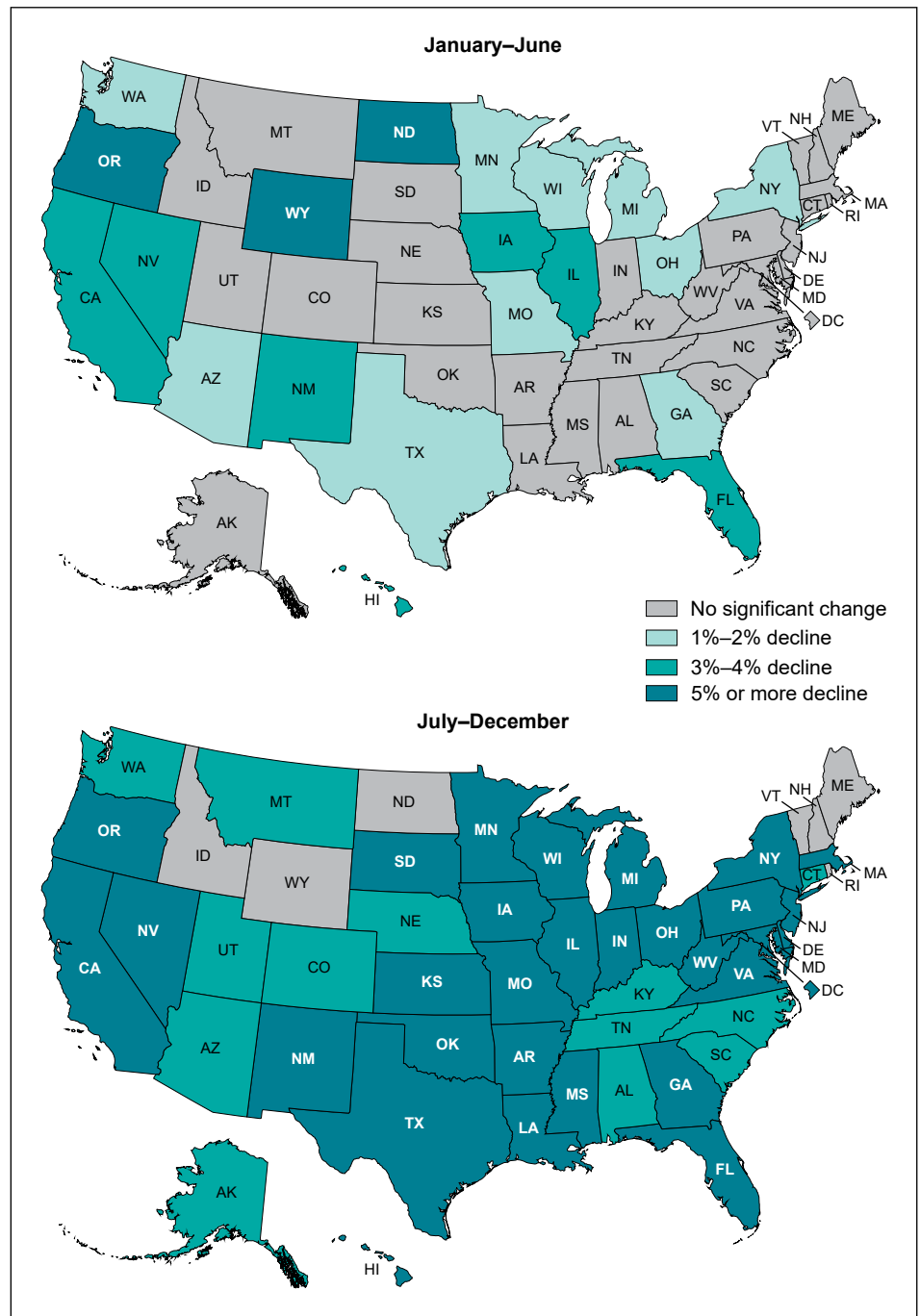
**Decline in number of births by state**

- For the first half of 2020, 20 states reported declines in the number of births compared with the same period in 2019, with 30 states and D.C. reporting no significant change. Similarly, between the first half of 2018 and the first half of 2019, the number of births declined for 27 states, did not change significantly for 22 states or D.C., and increased for 1 state.
- For the second half of 2020, births declined for all states and D.C. compared with the same period in 2019 (declines in seven states were not significant) (Table 2 and Figure 3). In contrast, during the second 6 months of 2018 and 2019, births declined for 9 states, increased for 5 states, and did not change significantly for 36 states and D.C.
- The largest declines by state for the second half of 2020 were seen in New Mexico (11%), New York (9%), and California, Hawaii, and West Virginia (8% each); 38 states and D.C. had declines of 3% to 7% (Table 2).

**Summary**

From 2019 to 2020, the number of births declined for each month by 1% to 8%, with larger declines observed for the second half of 2020 (6%) compared with the first half of the year (2%). Births declined for all race and Hispanic-origin groups in both the first and second half of 2020, with larger declines in the second half of the year compared with the first half for all groups (the difference in the declines in births to

Figure 3. Percent change in number of births, by state of residence: United States, January–June, 2019 final and 2020 provisional; and July–December, 2019 final and 2020 provisional



SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

non-Hispanic AIAN and NHOPI women was not significant). The number of births declined for all states in the second half of 2020 (declines for 7 states were not significant), compared with declines for only 20 states in the first half of 2020 and 9 states in the second half of 2019.

Evaluation of trends in births by month

will continue to determine whether these declines continued into 2021 or were unique to 2020 during the time of the initial COVID-19 pandemic.

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Table 1. Births, by race and Hispanic origin of the mother and month of birth: United States, final 2018 and 2019 and provisional 2020, and percent change in births from 2018–2019 and 2019–2020

Race and Hispanic origin of mother and year	Total	January–June	July–December	January	February (observed)	February (adjusted) <sup>1</sup>	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
All races and origins <sup>2</sup>																
Number																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	3,605,201	1,782,237	1,822,964	304,683	282,601	272,856	301,457	290,252	301,313	301,931	321,253	319,313	311,224	304,460	281,576	285,138
2019	3,747,540	1,814,497	1,933,043	310,872	279,963	279,963	304,237	298,947	316,386	304,092	333,646	341,685	325,781	325,043	298,086	308,802
2018	3,791,712	1,848,934	1,942,778	314,808	284,250	284,250	316,044	298,394	320,622	314,816	329,009	344,750	322,772	326,778	308,703	310,766
Non-Hispanic, single race <sup>4</sup>																
White:																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	1,839,565	916,442	923,123	152,502	143,676	138,722	155,886	150,811	156,788	156,779	164,990	162,403	157,874	154,074	139,928	143,854
2019	1,915,912	937,741	978,171	156,819	142,992	142,992	157,502	156,516	165,587	158,325	172,130	174,284	165,366	165,035	148,646	152,710
2018	1,956,413	961,247	995,166	159,323	145,906	145,906	164,884	157,306	168,974	164,854	170,622	178,368	165,502	168,336	156,411	155,927
Black:																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	528,448	259,621	268,827	46,344	42,029	40,580	43,560	41,364	42,980	43,344	46,367	46,744	45,188	44,134	42,446	43,948
2019	548,075	262,114	285,961	47,486	41,497	41,497	43,583	42,151	44,584	42,813	48,129	50,076	47,649	47,115	45,305	47,687
2018	552,029	268,779	283,250	47,759	42,564	42,564	45,920	42,400	45,098	45,038	46,945	49,705	46,738	47,015	45,707	47,140
American Indian or Alaska Native:																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	26,638	13,218	13,420	2,292	2,049	1,978	2,209	2,192	2,235	2,241	2,410	2,414	2,315	2,211	1,982	2,088
2019	28,450	14,013	14,437	2,525	2,182	2,182	2,332	2,293	2,382	2,299	2,518	2,521	2,462	2,377	2,170	2,389
2018	29,092	14,038	15,054	2,427	2,230	2,230	2,454	2,140	2,361	2,426	2,589	2,740	2,432	2,504	2,378	2,411
Asian:																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	218,860	110,791	108,069	19,303	17,676	17,066	19,265	17,980	18,691	17,876	18,984	18,771	18,122	18,554	17,273	16,365
2019	238,769	116,289	122,480	19,628	17,975	17,975	19,910	19,261	20,168	19,347	20,473	21,021	19,777	21,159	19,832	20,218
2018	240,798	118,836	121,962	20,639	18,143	18,143	20,413	19,354	20,641	19,646	20,252	21,049	19,951	20,592	20,104	20,014
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	9,612	4,660	4,952	802	786	759	792	704	819	757	836	850	800	824	818	824
2019	9,770	4,695	5,075	790	762	762	814	738	847	744	843	888	815	852	792	885
2018	9,476	4,647	4,829	790	686	686	810	786	796	779	803	839	805	794	801	787
Hispanic <sup>5</sup>																
2020 <sup>3</sup>	863,949	420,419	443,530	73,597	67,461	65,135	70,334	67,958	70,051	71,018	76,930	77,366	76,710	74,543	69,581	68,400
2019	886,467	421,991	464,476	73,742	65,667	65,667	70,442	68,517	72,747	70,876	78,805	81,983	79,240	78,074	71,532	74,842
2018	886,210	424,400	461,810	74,247	66,039	66,039	72,088	67,276	72,745	72,005	77,446	81,472	77,294	77,416	73,576	74,606

See footnotes at end of table.



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Table 2. Births: United States and each state, January–June and July–December, final 2018 and 2019 and provisional 2020, and percent change in births from January–June and July–December, 2018–2019 and 2019–2020

Reporting area	2018			2019			2020 <sup>1</sup>		
	Total	January–June	July–December	Total	January–June	July–December	Total	January–June	July–December
	Number								
Total	3,791,712	1,848,934	1,942,778	3,747,540	1,814,497	1,933,043	3,605,201	1,782,237	1,822,964
Alabama	57,761	27,951	29,810	58,615	27,778	30,837	57,634	28,052	29,582
Alaska	10,086	5,073	5,013	9,822	4,881	4,941	9,447	4,706	4,741
Arizona	80,723	38,641	42,082	79,375	38,168	41,207	76,923	37,439	39,484
Arkansas	37,018	17,965	19,053	36,564	17,439	19,125	35,210	17,185	18,025
California	454,920	220,137	234,783	446,479	216,456	230,023	419,612	207,015	212,597
Colorado	62,885	30,872	32,013	62,869	30,590	32,279	61,493	30,528	30,965
Connecticut	34,725	17,022	17,703	34,258	16,752	17,506	33,448	16,613	16,835
Delaware	10,621	5,253	5,368	10,562	4,963	5,599	10,336	5,050	5,286
District of Columbia	9,212	4,500	4,712	9,079	4,364	4,715	8,858	4,461	4,397
Florida	221,542	106,482	115,060	220,002	105,184	114,818	209,612	102,477	107,135
Georgia	126,172	61,278	64,894	126,371	60,855	65,516	122,266	60,027	62,239
Hawaii	16,972	8,376	8,596	16,797	8,191	8,606	15,730	7,827	7,903
Idaho	21,403	10,547	10,856	22,063	10,896	11,167	21,520	10,642	10,878
Illinois	144,815	71,613	73,202	140,128	68,353	71,775	133,207	66,094	67,113
Indiana	81,646	40,015	41,631	80,859	38,992	41,867	78,087	38,842	39,245
Iowa	37,785	18,679	19,106	37,649	18,518	19,131	36,080	18,018	18,062
Kansas	36,261	17,716	18,545	35,395	17,130	18,265	34,360	16,922	17,438
Kentucky	53,922	26,160	27,762	53,069	25,520	27,549	51,581	25,215	26,366
Louisiana	59,615	28,686	30,929	58,941	27,849	31,092	57,070	27,631	29,439
Maine	12,311	5,962	6,349	11,779	5,772	6,007	11,532	5,683	5,849
Maryland	71,080	34,508	36,572	70,178	34,035	36,143	68,523	34,010	34,513
Massachusetts	69,109	34,176	34,933	69,117	33,601	35,516	66,429	33,376	33,053
Michigan	110,032	54,444	55,588	107,886	53,014	54,872	103,846	52,249	51,597
Minnesota	67,344	33,357	33,987	66,027	32,474	33,553	63,387	31,797	31,590
Mississippi	37,000	17,828	19,172	36,636	17,233	19,403	35,457	17,190	18,267
Missouri	73,269	35,912	37,357	72,127	35,046	37,081	69,238	34,232	35,006
Montana	11,513	5,811	5,702	11,079	5,546	5,533	10,785	5,498	5,287
Nebraska	25,488	12,489	12,999	24,755	12,152	12,603	24,235	12,080	12,155
Nevada	35,682	17,219	18,463	35,072	16,798	18,274	33,632	16,350	17,282
New Hampshire	11,995	5,865	6,130	11,839	5,732	6,107	11,773	5,785	5,988
New Jersey	101,223	49,612	51,611	99,585	48,245	51,340	96,543	48,387	48,156
New Mexico	23,039	11,033	12,006	22,960	11,048	11,912	21,316	10,739	10,577
New York	226,238	111,416	114,822	221,539	107,791	113,748	209,172	105,506	103,666
North Carolina	118,954	57,478	61,476	118,725	57,371	61,354	116,674	57,402	59,272
North Dakota	10,636	5,285	5,351	10,454	5,275	5,179	10,059	5,017	5,042
Ohio	135,134	66,471	68,663	134,461	65,303	69,158	129,071	63,862	65,209

See footnotes at end of table.

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Table 2. Births: United States and each state, January–June and July–December, final 2018 and 2019 and provisional 2020, and percent change in births from January–June and July–December, 2018–2019 and 2019–2020—Con.

Reporting area	2018			2019			2020 <sup>1</sup>			
	Total	January–June	July–December	Total	January–June	July–December	Total	January–June	July–December	
					Number					
Oklahoma	49,800	24,237	25,563	49,143	23,607	25,536	47,393	23,286	24,107	
Oregon	42,188	20,907	21,281	41,858	20,937	20,921	39,792	19,993	19,799	
Pennsylvania	135,673	66,571	69,102	134,230	65,204	69,026	130,562	64,658	65,904	
Rhode Island	10,506	5,184	5,322	10,175	4,993	5,182	10,102	5,066	5,036	
South Carolina	56,669	27,297	29,372	57,038	27,515	29,523	55,693	27,150	28,543	
South Dakota	11,893	5,999	5,894	11,449	5,686	5,763	10,952	5,519	5,433	
Tennessee	80,751	39,280	41,471	80,450	38,715	41,735	78,659	38,240	40,419	
Texas	378,624	182,268	196,356	377,599	179,973	197,626	365,857	178,369	187,488	
Utah	47,209	23,275	23,934	46,826	23,175	23,651	45,702	23,084	22,618	
Vermont	5,432	2,622	2,810	5,361	2,689	2,672	5,117	2,574	2,543	
Virginia	99,843	48,938	50,905	97,429	47,295	50,134	94,391	46,848	47,543	
Washington	86,085	42,529	43,556	84,895	42,165	42,730	83,067	41,481	41,586	
West Virginia	18,248	9,046	9,202	18,136	8,767	9,369	17,159	8,510	8,649	
Wisconsin	64,098	31,604	32,494	63,270	31,144	32,126	60,491	30,528	29,963	
Wyoming	6,562	3,345	3,217	6,565	3,317	3,248	6,118	3,024	3,094	

See footnotes at end of table.



# Vital Statistics Surveillance Report

Table 2. Births: United States and each state, January–June and July–December, final 2018 and 2019 and provisional 2020, and percent change in births from January–June and July–December, 2018–2019 and 2019–2020—Con.

Reporting area	2018–2019			2019–2020		
	Total	January–June	July–December	Total	January–June	July–December
	Percent change					
Total	-1	-2	-1	-4	-2	-6
Alabama	1	†-1	3	-2	†1	-4
Alaska	†-3	†-4	†-1	-4	†-4	-4
Arizona	-2	†-1	-2	-3	-2	-4
Arkansas	†-1	-3	†0	-4	†-1	-6
California	-2	-2	-2	-6	-4	-8
Colorado	†0	†-1	†1	-2	†0	-4
Connecticut	†-1	†-2	†-1	-2	†-1	-4
Delaware	†-1	-6	4	†-2	†2	-6
District of Columbia	†-1	†-3	†0	†-2	†2	-7
Florida	-1	-1	†0	-5	-3	-7
Georgia	†0	†-1	†1	-3	-1	-5
Hawaii	†-1	†-2	†0	-6	-4	-8
Idaho	3	3	3	-2	†-2	†-3
Illinois	-3	-5	-2	-5	-3	-6
Indiana	†-1	-3	†1	-3	†0	-6
Iowa	†0	†-1	†0	-4	-3	-6
Kansas	-2	-3	†-2	-3	†-1	-5
Kentucky	-2	-2	†-1	-3	†-1	-4
Louisiana	†-1	-3	†1	-3	†-1	-5
Maine	-4	†-3	-5	†-2	†-2	†-3
Maryland	-1	†-1	†-1	-2	†0	-5
Massachusetts	†0	-2	2	-4	†-1	-7
Michigan	-2	-3	-1	-4	-1	-6
Minnesota	-2	-3	†-1	-4	-2	-6
Mississippi	†-1	-3	†1	-3	†0	-6
Missouri	-2	-2	†-1	-4	-2	-6
Montana	-4	-5	†-3	-3	†-1	-4
Nebraska	-3	-3	-3	-2	†-1	-4
Nevada	-2	-2	†-1	-4	-3	-5

See footnotes at end of table.

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Reporting area	2018–2019			2019–2020		
	Total	January–June	July–December	Total	January–June	July–December
	Percent change					
New Hampshire	†-1	†-2	†0	†-1	†1	†-2
New Jersey	-2	-3	†-1	-3	†0	-6
New Mexico	†0	†0	†-1	-7	-3	-11
New York	-2	-3	-1	-6	-2	-9
North Carolina	†0	†0	†0	-2	†0	-3
North Dakota	†-2	†0	†-3	-4	-5	†-3
Ohio	†0	-2	†1	-4	-2	-6
Oklahoma	-1	-3	†0	-4	†-1	-6
Oregon	†-1	†0	†-2	-5	-5	-5
Pennsylvania	-1	-2	†0	-3	†-1	-5
Rhode Island	-3	†-4	†-3	†-1	†1	†-3
South Carolina	†1	†1	†1	-2	†-1	-3
South Dakota	-4	-5	†-2	-4	†-3	-6
Tennessee	†0	-1	†1	-2	†-1	-3
Texas	†0	-1	1	-3	-1	-5
Utah	†-1	†0	†-1	-2	†0	-4
Vermont	†-1	†3	†-5	-5	†-4	†-5
Virginia	-2	-3	-2	-3	†-1	-5
Washington	-1	†-1	-2	-2	-2	-3
West Virginia	†-1	-3	†2	-5	†-3	-8
Wisconsin	-1	†-1	†-1	-4	-2	-7
Wyoming	†0	†-1	†1	-7	-9	†-5

† No significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ).

0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.5.

<sup>1</sup>Provisional 2020 data; based on 99.87% of births.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

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