

Continued Declines in Teen Births in the United States, 2015

Brady E. Hamilton, Ph.D., and T.J. Mathews, M.S.

Key Findings

Data from the National Vital Statistics System

The teen birth rate declined to another historic low for the United States in 2015, down 8% from 2014 to 22.3 births per 1,000 females aged 15–19.

The birth rates for teenagers aged 15–17 and 18–19 declined in 2015 to 9.9 and 40.7, respectively, which are record lows for both groups.

In 2015, birth rates declined to record lows for nearly all race and Hispanic-origin groups of females aged 15–19, 15–17, and 18–19 in 2015.

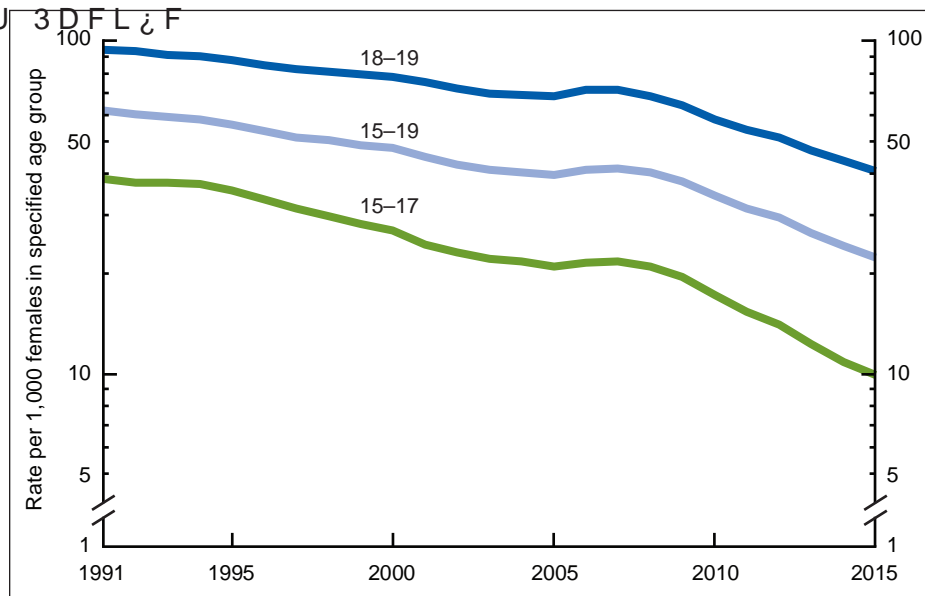
Birth rates fell to record lows for nearly all race and Hispanic-origin groups of females aged 15–19, 15–17, and 18–19 in 2015.

The birth rate for teenagers aged 15–19 has fallen almost continuously since 1991, reaching historic lows for the nation every year since 2009. (Despite declines in all racial and ethnic groups, teen birth rates continue to vary considerably by race and ethnicity. Moreover, the U.S. teen birth rate remains higher than in other industrialized countries.) Childbearing by teenagers continues to be a matter of public concern. This report presents the recent and long-term trends and disparity in teen childbearing by race and Hispanic origin.

Keywords: teen childbearing • race and Hispanic origin • National Vital Statistics System

The 2015 teen birth rate fell to another historic low for the nation.

Figure 1. Birth rates for females aged 15–19, by age group: United States, 1991–2015



NOTES: Rates are plotted on a logarithmic scale. For each age group, differences are significant ($p < 0.05$) from 1991 to 2015, 2007 to 2015, and 2014 to 2015. Access data table for Figure 1 at: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db259_table.pdf#1. SOURCE: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

- ” The birth rate for U.S. teenagers aged 15–19 fell 8% from 2014 to 2015, to 22.3 births per 1,000 females aged 15–19, falling below the record low set in 2007 (Figure 1). The rate for this group has declined 46% since 2007 and 64% since 1991.
- ” The birth rate for teenagers aged 15–17 fell 9% from 2014 to 2015, to 9.9 births per 1,000 females aged 15–17, a historic low. The rate for these younger teenagers was down 54% from 2007 and 74% from 1991.
- ” The rate for teenagers aged 18–19 dropped 7% from 2014 to 2015, to 40.7 births per 1,000 females aged 18–19, also a historic low. The rate for these older teenagers was down 43% from 2007 and 57% since 1991.

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Islander (API) (to 6.9), 9% for non-Hispanic black (31.8), 8% for both non-Hispanic white (16.0) and Hispanic (34.9), and 6% for American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN) (25.7) females (Figure 2).
- ” Since 2007, declines in teen birth rates have ranged from 41% for non-Hispanic white females to 54% for Hispanic females. Since 1991, declines have ranged from 63% for non-Hispanic white females to 75% for API females.

Figure 2. Birth rates for females aged 15–19, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, 1991–2015

¹Race and Hispanic origin are reported separately on birth certificates. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Race categories are consistent with 1977 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) standards. Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia reported multiple-race data in 2015 that were bridged to the single-race categories of the 1977 OMB standards for comparability with other states. Multiple-race reporting areas vary for 2003–2015.

²Includes all persons of Hispanic origin of any race.

³Includes persons of Hispanic and non-Hispanic origin, and origin not stated according to the mother's reported race.

” Differences in teen childbearing across the race and Hispanic-origin groups have narrowed from 1991 to 2015. In 1991, there was a difference of 77 births per 1,000 teenagers aged 15–19 between the lowest rate (27.3 for API females) and the highest rate (104.6 for Hispanic females), compared with a difference of 28 births between the lowest rate (6.9 for API females) and the highest rate (34.9 for Hispanic females) in 2015.

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Summary

In 2015, teen birth rates for the nation declined to record lows for nearly all age and race and Hispanic-origin groups. As a result of these declines, particularly with large long-term declines for the groups with higher rates, differences in rates across race and Hispanic-origin groups have narrowed for teenagers aged 15–19, and for both younger (aged 15–17) and older (aged 18–19) teenagers^{2–4,6}. A number of factors have been cited in the downward trend in teen birth rates since 1991, including declines in the proportion of teenagers who have ever had sex and, for sexually active teenagers, increases in the use of effective contraception and practices, as well as increases in teen pregnancy prevention programs^{7–12}. Research has also shown diminished

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Data sources and methods

This report contains data from the birth data set, which is part of the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) (1,3,13). NVSS includes all live births reported in the United States and is

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are available from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/vitalstatsonline.htm

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