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U.S. Teenage Pregnancies, Births and Abortions, 2008: National Trends by Age, Race and Ethnicity

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Introduction

This report contains the most current national estimates of teenage pregnancy, birth and abortion statistics available. It comprises tables containing annual national rates and numbers through 2008 and a discussion of the methodology and sources used to obtain the estimates.

Pregnancy rates include births, abortions and miscarriages; the pregnancy rate is not synonymous with the birthrate. Trends in rates of births, abortions and pregnancies can move in different directions and may be affected by different social and economic factors.

Previous versions of this report included data at both the national and state levels. In order to release information more quickly, we have included only national-level data in this report. A state-level report will follow when data are available.

Key findings

National levels and trends

- In 2008, nearly 750,000 women younger than 20 became pregnant: Some 733,000 pregnancies were among teenagers (women aged 15–19), and 13,500 were among those aged 14 and younger.
- The **pregnancy rate** among teenagers was 67.8 pregnancies per 1,000 women aged 15–19; this means that about 7% became pregnant.
- In 2008, the U.S. teenage pregnancy rate reached its lowest point in more than 30 years (67.8), down 42% from its peak in 1990 (116.9). Among women younger than 15, the pregnancy rate fell even more in that period (62%), from 17.5 to 6.6 per 1,000.
- The pregnancy rate among sexually experienced teenagers (those who had ever had intercourse) was 158.5 pregnancies per 1,000 women aged 15–19, reflecting the fact that the overall teenage pregnancy rate includes a substantial proportion of young people who have never had sex. The pregnancy rate among sexually experienced teenagers has fallen 29% since 1990, when it was 223.1.
- The teenage **birthrate** in 2008 was 40.2 births per 1,000 women. This was 35% lower than the peak rate of 61.8, reached in 1991.
- The 2008 teenage **abortion rate** was 17.8 abortions per 1,000 women. This figure is the lowest since abortion was legalized and 59% lower than its peak in 1988 (43.5).
- The long-term decline in teenage birth and abortion rates were interrupted by increases in 2006. By 2008, the declines had resumed.
- From 1986 to 2008, the proportion of teenage pregnancies ending in abortion (i.e., the abortion ratio) declined by one-third, from 46% to 31%.

National levels by race and ethnicity

- Among non-Hispanic white teenagers, the pregnancy rate has declined 50% since 1990 (from 86.6 per 1,000 to 43.3).
- The pregnancy rate among black women aged 15–19 fell 48% between 1990 and 2008 (from 223.8 per 1,000 to 117.0), but remains much higher than the non-Hispanic white rate.
- Among Hispanic teenagers (of any race), the pregnancy rate fell 37% from its highest level between 1992 and 2008 (from 169.7 per 1,000 to 106.6).
- Wide differences in birth and abortion rates also persist across racial and ethnic groups. The birthrate in 2008 for black and Hispanic teenagers was more than twice the rate for non-Hispanic white teenagers. The abortion rate among black teenagers was four times the rate for non-Hispanic whites, while the rate among Hispanic teenagers was twice the rate for non-Hispanic white teenagers.
- Following the 2010 national census, population counts for 2001–2009 were revised. Because pregnancy rates use these population counts in the denominator, the pregnancy rates for 2001–2006 in this report differ from those previously published. In particular, the revised population counts for Hispanic teens were higher than the intercensal estimates, resulting in new estimated pregnancy rates for Hispanic teens in 2001–2006 that are lower than previously published.

Discussion

The 1980s and early 1990s saw the highest pregnancy rates among teenagers in the United States. Birthrates also reached high points during this time. In contrast, abortion rates were relatively stable, after having increased during the 1970s. Thus, the increase in pregnancy rates from 1973, when abortion was legalized nationally, to 1980 was manifested mostly in a higher abortion rate, while the further increases in the pregnancy rate to its peak levels in the late 1980s and early 1990s resulted in increased birthrates. Since the mid-1990s, all three rates have steadily declined, while the birthrate has accounted for an increasing proportion of the total pregnancy rate.

Recent research concluded that almost all of the decline in the pregnancy rate between 1995 and 2002 among 18–19-year-olds was attributable to increased contraceptive use.¹ Among women aged 15–17, about one-quarter of the decline during the same period was attributable to reduced sexual activity and three-quarters to increased contraceptive use.¹

Overall rates of pregnancy and birth—and, to a lesser extent, rates of abortion—among teenagers and young women increased from 2005 to 2006, stayed relatively stable in 2007 and dropped slightly in 2008. Partial data suggest that the higher estimates in 2006 and 2007 were short-term fluctuations and that rates will resume a decreasing trend. The National Center for Health Statistics report of births for 2009 and 2010 show a further decrease in the birthrate among teenagers and those aged 20–24; births among teenagers aged 15–19 fell 15% from 2008 to 2010; and those among 20–24-year-olds fell by 12%. In both 2009 and 2010, the birth rates

among teenagers and young adult women were at historic lows.² Abortion data for 2009 and 2010 are not yet available; whether pregnancy rates experienced a similar decline can be determined once those data are obtained.

Other research has noted and seeks to provide additional explanations for the longer-term trends and changes, including shifts in the racial and ethnic composition of the population, increases in poverty, and changes in public perception and attitudes toward both teenage and unintended pregnancy.³⁻⁶

Even with the recent reductions in teenage pregnancy, birth and abortion rates, the data presented here indicate that there are still large and long-standing disparities in rates by race and ethnicity. These disparities echo those seen among unintended pregnancy rates, which are several times higher among women of color than among white women.⁷

Trends in teenage pregnancy, birth and abortion will need to be closely monitored over the coming years to determine how the reproductive behaviors of young women in the United States may be changing. Further research will be needed to understand the factors that are affecting these trends.

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Table 1.1 Rates of pregnancy, birth and abortion, and abortion ratios, among women aged 15–19, by race or ethnicity, according to year, 1986–2008

Race or ethnicity and measure	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
TOTAL																							
Pregnancy rate*																							
All	106.7	106.6	111.4	114.9	116.9	115.3	111.0	108.0	104.6	99.6	95.6	91.4	88.7	85.7	83.4	78.7	74.4	71.8	70.1	68.3	70.1	69.8	67.8
Sexually experienced†	210.5	206.5	211.4	218.6	223.1	220.6	213.0	207.8	201.8	192.6	187.5	181.6	178.9	175.2	173.0	165.8	158.9	156.7	156.5	155.9	163.8	163.1	158.5
Birthrate	50.2	50.6	53.0	57.3	60.3	61.8	60.3	59.0	58.2	56.0	53.5	51.3	50.3	48.8	47.6	45.0	42.6	41.1	40.5	39.7	41.1	41.5	40.2
Abortion rate	42.3	41.8	43.5	42.0	40.5	37.4	35.2	33.9	31.6	29.4	28.6	27.1	25.8	24.7	23.9	22.5	21.1	20.4	19.5	18.7	18.9	18.2	17.8
Abortion ratio‡	45.7	45.2	45.1	42.3	40.2	37.7	36.9	36.5	35.2	34.5	34.8	34.6	33.9	33.6	33.4	33.3	33.1	33.2	32.5	32.0	31.5	30.6	30.6
WHITE																							
All																							
Pregnancy rate	90.0	89.6	93.0	95.8	98.8	96.6	92.3	90.0	87.8	84.9	81.4	77.9	75.9	73.4	71.2	67.7	64.4	62.3	60.7	59.1	60.6	60.9	58.8
Birthrate	42.3	42.5	44.4	47.9	51.2	52.6	51.4	50.6	50.5	49.5	47.5	45.5	44.9	44.0	43.0	41.0	39.2	38.0	37.4	36.7	37.9	38.4	37.3
Abortion rate	35.6	35.1	36.1	34.8	33.9	30.4	27.9	26.6	24.7	23.2	22.2	21.1	20.0	18.7	17.8	16.8	15.7	15.2	14.4	13.7	13.7	13.5	12.8
Abortion ratio	45.7	45.2	44.9	42.1	39.8	36.6	35.2	34.4	32.8	31.9	31.9	31.7	30.8	29.8	29.3	29.0	28.6	28.5	27.8	27.1	26.5	25.9	25.5
Non-Hispanic§																							
Pregnancy rate	u	u	u	u	86.6	83.6	77.8	75.3	72.5	69.7	66.4	63.6	60.9	58.0	55.4	51.7	48.2	46.5	44.5	43.3	44.0	43.8	43.3
Birthrate	u	u	u	39.9	42.1	43.4	41.7	40.7	40.4	39.3	37.6	36.0	35.3	34.1	32.6	30.3	28.5	27.4	26.7	25.9	26.6	26.6	26.6
Abortion rate	u	u	u	u	32.9	28.7	25.3	24.0	21.8	20.5	19.3	18.6	16.9	15.5	14.8	13.9	12.7	12.3	11.4	11.1	11.0	10.8	10.4
Abortion ratio	u	u	u	u	43.9	39.8	37.7	37.1	35.1	34.3	33.9	34.0	32.4	31.3	31.2	31.5	30.9	31.1	29.9	30.0	29.3	28.8	28.0
NONWHITE																							
All																							
Pregnancy rate	180.7	180.1	189.1	193.4	189.4	188.5	183.5	177.6	169.0	155.1	148.9	141.6	136.2	130.8	127.7	118.7	110.1	105.1	102.3	99.3	101.3	98.6	96.3
Birthrate	84.8	85.5	89.2	95.9	96.3	97.8	94.6	91.2	87.5	80.5	75.9	72.6	70.2	66.1	64.2	59.4	54.8	52.0	51.2	49.9	51.4	51.3	49.5
Abortion rate	71.8	70.4	74.5	71.3	67.0	64.7	63.6	62.0	58.2	53.2	52.5	49.4	47.3	46.8	46.1	43.1	40.3	38.8	37.1	35.8	36.0	33.7	33.6
Abortion ratio	45.8	45.2	45.5	42.6	41.0	39.8	40.2	40.5	39.9	39.8	40.9	40.5	40.3	41.4	41.8	42.1	42.4	42.7	42.0	41.8	41.2	39.6	40.4
Black																							
Pregnancy rate	u	u	u	u	223.8	222.3	216.6	209.9	198.7	181.4	175.1	168.1	162.0	156.1	152.9	141.2	131.6	125.3	122.5	118.9	121.6	119.1	117.0
Birthrate	95.8	97.6	102.7	111.5	112.9	114.8	111.3	107.3	102.9	94.4	89.6	86.3	83.5	79.1	77.2	71.3	65.7	62.5	61.7	60.1	62.2	62.0	60.1
Abortion rate	u	u	u	u	80.3	76.9	75.5	73.8	68.3	61.9	61.4	58.7	56.2	55.7	54.8	50.6	47.9	45.7	44.1	42.5	42.7	40.6	40.8
Abortion ratio	u	u	u	u	41.6	40.1	40.4	40.7	39.9	39.6	40.7	40.5	40.2	41.3	41.5	41.5	42.1	42.3	41.7	41.4	40.7	39.5	40.4
HISPANIC																							
Pregnancy rate	u	u	u	u	162.2	169.1	169.7	165.8	164.4	158.5	152.8	143.5	142.5	139.4	137.1	132.1	126.5	122.3	121.9	116.9	118.1	114.6	106.6
Birthrate	u	u	u	100.8	99.5	104.6	103.3	101.8	101.3	99.3	94.6	89.6	87.9	86.8	86.6	84.4	80.6	78.4	78.1	76.5	77.4	75.3	70.3
Abortion rate	u	u	u	u	38.9	39.6	41.6	39.7	39.0	35.8	35.7	32.7	33.7	32.1	30.2	28.0	27.0	25.7	25.7	22.9	22.9	22.1	20.1
Abortion ratio	u	u	u	u	28.1	27.5	28.7	28.0	27.8	26.5	27.4	26.8	27.7	27.0	25.8	24.9	25.1	24.7	24.7	23.0	22.9	22.7	22.2

*All rates are the number of events per 1,000 women aged 15–19; pregnancy rate includes the estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †The pregnancy rate among all 15–19-year-olds who have ever had sex. ‡The number of abortions per 100 pregnancies ending in abortion or live birth; denominator excludes miscarriages and stillbirths. §Pregnancy rates, birthrates and abortion ratios of non-Hispanic whites follow the NCHS methodology of including all white births of unknown Hispanic ethnicity with non-Hispanic births (<1% of all birth certificates).

Notes: In this and subsequent tables, data are tabulated according to the woman's age at the pregnancy outcome and, for births, according to the mother's race (not the child's). Numbers and rates may differ slightly from those published previously because we updated the population numbers from 2000 through 2008, using revised estimates of the intercensal populations based on the 2000 and 2010 censuses. We have also updated the proportion of all 15–19-year-olds who have ever had sex for 2003–2006 (see "National-level methods" in text), which affects the estimated pregnancy rates among sexually experienced teens for those years. u=unavailable.

Table 2.1 Among women aged 15–19, pregnancy, birth and abortion rates and numbers, and number of miscarriages, by year, 1972–2008

Year	Pregnancy rate*	Birthrate	Abortion rate	Total pregnancies	Births	Abortions	Estimated miscarriages†	Female population (in 1,000s)
1972	95.1	61.7	19.1	949,630	616,280	191,000	142,350	9,988
1973	96.1	59.3	22.8	980,000	604,096	231,900	144,100	10,193
1974	98.8	57.5	27.0	1,022,210	595,449	279,700	147,060	10,350
1975	101.1	55.6	31.2	1,058,150	582,238	326,780	149,130	10,466
1976	101.1	52.8	34.3	1,069,440	558,744	362,680	148,020	10,582
1977	104.6	52.8	37.5	1,107,290	559,154	396,630	151,500	10,581
1978	105.4	51.5	39.7	1,112,760	543,407	418,790	150,560	10,555
1979	109.4	52.3	42.4	1,148,430	549,472	444,600	154,350	10,497
1980	111.0	53.2	42.8	1,151,850	552,161	444,780	154,910	10,381
1981	109.9	52.2	42.9	1,109,540	527,392	433,330	148,810	10,096
1982	109.8	52.4	42.7	1,077,120	513,758	418,740	144,620	9,809
1983	109.3	51.4	43.2	1,039,600	489,286	411,330	138,990	9,515
1984	107.9	50.6	42.9	1,002,370	469,682	398,870	133,830	9,287
1985	109.0	51.0	43.5	1,000,110	467,485	399,200	133,420	9,174
1986	106.7	50.2	42.3	982,450	461,905	389,240	131,310	9,206
1987	106.6	50.6	41.8	974,580	462,312	381,640	130,630	9,139
1988	111.4	53.0	43.5	1,006,010	478,353	392,720	134,940	9,029
1989	114.9	57.3	42.0	1,015,790	506,503	370,900	138,390	8,840
1990	116.9	60.3	40.5	1,012,260	521,826	350,970	139,460	8,656
1991	115.3	61.8	37.4	969,280	519,577	314,350	135,350	8,407
1992	111.0	60.3	35.2	931,400	505,415	295,360	130,620	8,389
1993	108.0	59.0	33.9	917,800	501,093	287,710	128,990	8,496
1994	104.6	58.2	31.6	908,910	505,488	274,840	128,580	8,689
1995	99.6	56.0	29.4	889,080	499,873	262,930	126,270	8,929
1996	95.6	53.5	28.6	878,990	491,577	262,810	124,600	9,193
1997	91.4	51.3	27.1	861,070	483,220	255,640	122,210	9,425
1998	88.7	50.3	25.8	855,420	484,895	248,680	121,850	9,641
1999	85.7	48.8	24.7	836,290	476,050	240,940	119,300	9,762
2000	83.4	47.6	23.9	821,810	468,990	235,470	117,350	9,855
2001	78.7	45.0	22.5	780,200	445,944	222,790	111,470	9,909
2002	74.4	42.6	21.1	742,430	425,493	210,770	106,170	9,982
2003	71.8	41.1	20.4	723,980	414,580	205,900	103,500	10,087
2004	70.1	40.5	19.5	718,040	415,262	199,750	103,030	10,243
2005	68.3	39.7	18.7	712,610	414,593	195,550	102,470	10,435
2006	70.1	41.1	18.9	742,990	435,436	200,420	107,130	10,597
2007	69.8	41.5	18.2	749,180	444,899	195,730	108,550	10,731
2008	67.8	40.2	17.8	733,010	434,758	192,090	106,160	10,805

*All rates are the number of events per 1,000 women aged 15–19; pregnancy rate includes the estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †Includes stillbirths.

Table 2.2 Among women aged 15–17, pregnancy, birth and abortion rates and numbers, and number of miscarriages, by year, 1972–2008

Year	Pregnancy rate*	Birthrate	Abortion rate	Total pregnancies	Births	Abortions	Estimated miscarriages†	Female population (in 1,000s)
1972	62.4	39.0	14.2	378,720	236,641	86,140	55,940	6,071
1973	64.9	38.5	16.9	401,130	238,403	104,590	58,140	6,185
1974	66.4	37.3	19.7	416,700	234,177	123,350	59,170	6,276
1975	68.0	36.1	22.3	427,300	227,270	140,520	59,510	6,288
1976	67.5	34.1	24.2	426,560	215,493	152,700	58,370	6,319
1977	69.5	33.9	26.2	438,720	213,788	165,610	59,320	6,310
1978	68.3	32.2	26.9	429,390	202,661	169,270	57,460	6,286
1979	70.4	32.3	28.8	436,590	200,137	178,570	57,880	6,200
1980	72.5	32.7	30.2	439,550	198,222	183,350	57,980	6,063
1981	71.5	32.0	30.1	418,400	187,397	175,930	55,070	5,848
1982	71.7	32.2	30.0	402,640	181,162	168,410	53,070	5,618
1983	72.0	31.8	30.7	390,290	172,673	166,440	51,180	5,424
1984	70.2	31.0	29.9	377,080	166,744	160,900	49,440	5,373
1985	70.9	31.0	30.6	383,540	167,789	165,630	50,120	5,409
1986	69.6	30.5	29.9	384,050	168,572	165,240	50,240	5,520
1987	70.5	31.7	29.6	384,340	172,591	161,120	50,630	5,450
1988	73.5	33.6	30.2	386,110	176,624	158,330	51,160	5,251
1989	74.4	36.4	28.0	370,290	181,044	139,130	50,120	4,974
1990	74.2	37.5	26.6	362,800	183,327	129,820	49,650	4,889
1991	72.9	38.6	24.2	355,730	188,226	118,050	49,450	4,882
1992	70.3	37.6	22.9	350,900	187,549	114,400	48,950	4,993
1993	69.4	37.5	22.2	352,900	190,535	112,960	49,400	5,086
1994	67.7	37.2	21.0	355,510	195,169	110,280	50,060	5,249
1995	64.1	35.5	19.5	347,580	192,508	105,970	49,100	5,424
1996	60.4	33.3	18.6	337,060	185,721	103,810	47,530	5,582
1997	56.6	31.4	17.2	324,490	180,154	98,460	45,880	5,732
1998	53.9	29.9	16.4	312,170	173,231	94,810	44,130	5,790
1999	50.5	28.2	15.2	293,570	163,588	88,420	41,560	5,811
2000	48.1	26.8	14.5	281,900	157,209	84,770	39,920	5,862
2001	44.2	24.5	13.4	261,880	145,324	79,540	37,020	5,928
2002	41.7	23.1	12.7	250,570	138,731	76,450	35,390	6,008
2003	40.2	22.2	12.4	243,810	134,384	75,050	34,380	6,060
2004	38.9	21.8	11.6	239,320	133,980	71,400	33,940	6,146
2005	37.6	21.1	11.2	237,630	133,191	70,730	33,710	6,319
2006	38.3	21.6	11.2	246,250	138,943	72,290	35,020	6,434
2007	37.9	21.7	10.8	245,610	140,566	69,930	35,110	6,484
2008	36.8	21.1	10.4	236,220	135,664	66,750	33,810	6,417

*All rates are the number of events per 1,000 women aged 15–17; pregnancy rate includes the estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †Includes stillbirths.

Table 2.3 Among women aged 18–19, pregnancy, birth and abortion rates and numbers, and number of miscarriages, by year, 1972–2008

Year	Pregnancy rate*	Birthrate	Abortion rate	Total pregnancies	Births	Abortions	Estimated miscarriages†	Female population (in 1,000s)
1972	145.8	96.9	26.8	570,910	379,639	104,860	86,410	3,917
1973	144.4	91.2	31.8	578,870	365,693	127,310	85,870	4,008
1974	148.6	88.7	38.4	605,510	361,272	156,350	87,890	4,074
1975	151.0	85.0	44.6	630,850	354,968	186,260	89,620	4,178
1976	150.8	80.5	49.3	642,880	343,251	209,980	89,650	4,263
1977	156.5	80.9	54.1	668,570	345,366	231,020	92,180	4,271
1978	160.1	79.8	58.4	683,370	340,746	249,520	93,100	4,269
1979	165.7	81.3	61.9	711,840	349,335	266,030	96,470	4,297
1980	164.9	81.9	60.5	712,300	353,939	261,430	96,930	4,319
1981	162.7	80.0	60.6	691,140	339,995	257,400	93,740	4,248
1982	160.9	79.4	59.7	674,480	332,596	250,330	91,550	4,191
1983	158.7	77.4	59.8	649,310	316,613	244,890	87,810	4,092
1984	159.8	77.4	60.8	625,290	302,938	237,970	84,390	3,914
1985	163.8	79.6	62.0	616,570	299,696	233,570	83,300	3,765
1986	162.3	79.6	60.8	598,400	293,333	224,000	81,070	3,686
1987	160.0	78.5	59.8	590,240	289,721	220,520	80,000	3,689
1988	164.1	79.9	62.0	619,900	301,729	234,390	83,780	3,778
1989	167.0	84.2	60.0	645,500	325,459	231,770	88,270	3,865
1990	172.4	89.9	58.7	649,460	338,499	221,150	89,810	3,766
1991	174.0	94.0	55.7	613,550	331,351	196,300	85,900	3,526
1992	171.0	93.6	53.3	580,500	317,866	180,960	81,670	3,395
1993	165.6	91.1	51.2	564,900	310,558	174,750	79,590	3,410
1994	160.8	90.2	47.8	553,400	310,319	164,560	78,520	3,440
1995	154.5	87.7	44.8	541,500	307,365	156,960	77,170	3,505
1996	150.1	84.7	44.0	541,930	305,856	159,000	77,070	3,611
1997	145.3	82.1	42.6	536,580	303,066	157,180	76,330	3,693
1998	141.1	80.9	40.0	543,250	311,664	153,870	77,720	3,851
1999	137.4	79.1	38.6	542,720	312,462	152,520	77,740	3,951
2000	135.2	78.1	37.7	539,910	311,781	150,700	77,430	3,993
2001	130.2	75.5	36.0	518,320	300,620	143,250	74,450	3,981
2002	123.8	72.2	33.8	491,860	286,762	134,320	70,780	3,974
2003	119.3	69.6	32.5	480,170	280,196	130,850	69,120	4,026
2004	116.9	68.7	31.3	478,720	281,282	128,350	69,090	4,096
2005	115.4	68.4	30.3	474,980	281,402	124,820	68,760	4,116
2006	119.3	71.2	30.8	496,730	296,493	128,130	72,110	4,163
2007	118.6	71.7	29.6	503,580	304,333	125,800	73,450	4,247
2008	113.2	68.2	28.6	496,780	299,094	125,340	72,350	4,389

*All rates are the number of events per 1,000 women aged 18–19; pregnancy rate includes the estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †Includes stillbirths.

Table 2.4 Among women aged 14 or younger, pregnancy, birth and abortion rates and numbers, and number of miscarriages, by year, 1972–2008

Year	Pregnancy rate*	Birthrate	Abortion rate	Total pregnancies	Births	Abortions	Estimated miscarriages†	Female population (in 1,000s)‡
1972	u	5.8	u	u	12,082	u	u	2,093
1973	13.5	6.1	5.6	28,230	12,861	11,630	3,740	2,094
1974	14.3	6.0	6.4	29,800	12,529	13,420	3,850	2,086
1975	15.1	6.0	7.2	31,950	12,642	15,260	4,050	2,118
1976	15.2	5.7	7.6	31,710	11,928	15,820	3,960	2,080
1977	15.1	5.6	7.6	30,970	11,455	15,650	3,860	2,048
1978	14.6	5.3	7.5	29,550	10,772	15,110	3,670	2,020
1979	15.8	5.5	8.3	30,680	10,699	16,220	3,760	1,944
1980	15.9	5.5	8.4	29,080	10,169	15,340	3,570	1,834
1981	15.8	5.4	8.5	28,320	9,632	15,240	3,450	1,787
1982	15.9	5.6	8.3	27,770	9,773	14,590	3,410	1,748
1983	16.7	5.5	9.2	29,690	9,752	16,350	3,590	1,781
1984	16.8	5.5	9.3	30,570	9,965	16,920	3,690	1,819
1985	16.7	5.5	9.2	30,930	10,220	16,970	3,740	1,853
1986	17.3	6.0	9.2	29,470	10,176	15,690	3,600	1,706
1987	17.4	6.4	8.8	28,070	10,311	14,270	3,490	1,613
1988	17.6	6.7	8.7	27,720	10,588	13,650	3,480	1,573
1989	17.3	7.1	7.9	27,810	11,486	12,750	3,570	1,608
1990	17.5	7.3	7.9	27,830	11,657	12,580	3,590	1,588
1991	16.7	7.2	7.3	27,910	12,014	12,270	3,630	1,670
1992	17.0	7.2	7.6	28,780	12,220	12,830	3,730	1,694
1993	16.4	7.2	7.1	28,710	12,554	12,410	3,750	1,756
1994	15.5	7.0	6.5	28,770	12,901	12,080	3,790	1,855
1995	14.3	6.6	5.8	26,600	12,242	10,830	3,530	1,860
1996	13.0	5.8	5.4	24,780	11,148	10,360	3,270	1,910
1997	11.9	5.3	5.0	22,750	10,121	9,640	2,990	1,919
1998	11.5	5.0	5.0	21,650	9,462	9,360	2,830	1,890
1999	10.5	4.6	4.5	20,450	9,054	8,720	2,680	1,957
2000	10.0	4.3	4.3	19,640	8,519	8,560	2,560	1,972
2001	9.2	3.9	4.1	18,190	7,781	8,050	2,360	1,980
2002	8.5	3.6	3.8	17,190	7,315	7,640	2,230	2,015
2003	7.9	3.2	3.7	16,300	6,661	7,550	2,090	2,058
2004	7.4	3.2	3.3	15,890	6,781	7,050	2,060	2,147
2005	7.3	3.2	3.2	15,540	6,722	6,800	2,020	2,123
2006	7.0	3.0	3.1	14,790	6,396	6,460	1,930	2,103
2007	6.9	3.0	3.0	14,360	6,195	6,290	1,870	2,074
2008	6.6	2.8	2.9	13,520	5,764	6,010	1,750	2,046

*All rates are calculated as the number of events experienced by women aged 14 and younger divided by the female population aged 14. The denominator is limited to 14-year-olds because the majority of all pregnancies among women aged 14 and younger occur among those aged 14 (see methodology in text). The pregnancy rate includes the estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †Includes stillbirths. ‡Denominator (population) is women aged 14. Note: u=unavailable.

Table 2.5 Among women younger than age 20, pregnancy, birth and abortion rates and numbers, and number of miscarriages, by year, 1972–2008

Year	Pregnancy rate*	Birthrate	Abortion rate	Total pregnancies	Births	Abortions	Estimated miscarriages†	Female population (in 1,000s)‡
1972	u	62.9	u	u	628,362	u	u	9,988
1973	98.9	60.5	23.9	1,008,230	616,957	243,530	147,750	10,193
1974	101.6	58.7	28.3	1,052,010	607,978	293,120	150,910	10,350
1975	104.2	56.8	32.7	1,090,100	594,880	342,040	153,180	10,466
1976	104.1	53.9	35.8	1,101,150	570,672	378,500	151,980	10,582
1977	107.6	53.9	39.0	1,138,260	570,609	412,280	155,360	10,581
1978	108.2	52.5	41.1	1,142,310	554,179	433,900	154,230	10,555
1979	112.3	53.4	43.9	1,179,110	560,171	460,820	158,110	10,497
1980	113.8	54.2	44.3	1,180,930	562,330	460,120	158,480	10,381
1981	112.7	53.2	44.4	1,137,860	537,024	448,570	152,260	10,096
1982	112.6	53.4	44.2	1,104,890	523,531	433,330	148,030	9,809
1983	112.4	52.4	44.9	1,069,290	499,038	427,680	142,580	9,515
1984	111.2	51.6	44.8	1,032,940	479,647	415,790	137,520	9,287
1985	112.4	52.1	45.4	1,031,040	477,705	416,170	137,160	9,174
1986	109.9	51.3	44.0	1,011,920	472,081	404,930	134,910	9,206
1987	109.7	51.7	43.3	1,002,650	472,623	395,910	134,120	9,139
1988	114.5	54.2	45.0	1,033,730	488,941	406,370	138,420	9,029
1989	118.1	58.6	43.4	1,043,600	517,989	383,650	141,960	8,840
1990	120.2	61.6	42.0	1,040,090	533,483	363,550	143,050	8,656
1991	118.6	63.2	38.8	997,190	531,591	326,620	138,980	8,407
1992	114.5	61.7	36.7	960,180	517,635	308,190	134,350	8,389
1993	111.4	60.5	35.3	946,510	513,647	300,120	132,740	8,496
1994	107.9	59.7	33.0	937,680	518,389	286,920	132,370	8,689
1995	102.5	57.4	30.7	915,680	512,115	273,760	129,800	8,929
1996	98.3	54.7	29.7	903,770	502,725	273,170	127,870	9,193
1997	93.8	52.3	28.1	883,820	493,341	265,280	125,200	9,425
1998	91.0	51.3	26.8	877,070	494,357	258,040	124,680	9,641
1999	87.8	49.7	25.6	856,750	485,104	249,660	121,990	9,762
2000	85.4	48.5	24.8	841,450	477,509	244,030	119,910	9,855
2001	80.6	45.8	23.3	798,390	453,725	230,840	113,830	9,909
2002	76.1	43.4	21.9	759,620	432,808	218,410	108,400	9,982
2003	73.4	41.8	21.2	740,280	421,241	213,450	105,590	10,087
2004	71.7	41.2	20.2	733,930	422,043	206,800	105,090	10,243
2005	69.8	40.4	19.4	728,170	421,315	202,350	104,500	10,435
2006	71.5	41.7	19.5	757,760	441,832	206,880	109,050	10,597
2007	71.1	42.0	18.8	763,530	451,094	202,020	110,420	10,731
2008	69.1	40.8	18.3	746,530	440,522	198,100	107,910	10,805

*All rates are calculated as the number of events experienced by women younger than 20 (including those aged 14 and younger) divided by the female population aged 15–19. The denominator is limited to 15–19-year-olds because 97–98% of all pregnancies among women younger than 20 occurred among those aged 15–19. The pregnancy rate includes estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †Includes stillbirths. ‡Denominator (population) is women aged 15–19. Note: u=unavailable.

Table 2.6 Among women aged 20–24, pregnancy, birth and abortion rates and numbers, and number of miscarriages, by year, 1972–2008

Year	Pregnancy rate*	Birthrate	Abortion rate	Total pregnancies	Births	Abortions	Estimated miscarriage†	Female population (in 1,000s)
1972	u	130.2	u	u	1,174,183	u	u	9,021
1973	172.4	119.7	26.2	1,586,000	1,101,113	240,610	244,280	9,198
1974	174.7	117.7	30.4	1,644,920	1,108,051	286,600	250,270	9,415
1975	173.3	113.0	34.3	1,677,220	1,093,676	331,640	251,900	9,677
1976	175.9	110.3	39.6	1,741,430	1,091,602	392,280	257,550	9,901
1977	184.2	112.9	44.3	1,870,410	1,146,491	449,660	274,260	10,152
1978	183.7	109.9	47.2	1,905,780	1,139,524	489,410	276,850	10,373
1979	190.2	112.8	49.9	2,004,670	1,188,663	525,710	290,300	10,541
1980	194.3	114.8	51.4	2,075,790	1,226,200	549,410	300,180	10,683
1981	191.1	112.2	51.4	2,064,830	1,212,000	554,940	297,890	10,805
1982	190.1	111.6	51.1	2,054,020	1,205,979	551,680	296,360	10,805
1983	185.4	107.8	50.9	1,995,270	1,160,274	548,130	286,870	10,762
1984	184.9	106.8	51.6	1,976,120	1,141,578	551,110	283,430	10,687
1985	187.1	108.3	52.0	1,972,410	1,141,320	548,020	283,070	10,541
1986	185.9	107.4	51.8	1,907,060	1,102,119	531,380	273,560	10,258
1987	186.7	107.9	52.0	1,861,150	1,075,856	518,290	267,000	9,971
1988	191.2	110.2	53.6	1,852,520	1,067,472	519,600	265,450	9,689
1989	195.7	113.8	53.8	1,853,480	1,077,598	509,420	266,460	9,473
1990	202.0	116.4	56.7	1,898,200	1,093,730	532,480	271,990	9,396
1991	200.4	115.3	56.4	1,894,240	1,089,692	533,280	271,270	9,451
1992	197.9	113.7	55.9	1,863,730	1,070,490	526,490	266,750	9,417
1993	194.0	111.3	54.9	1,809,330	1,038,127	512,340	258,860	9,328
1994	188.1	109.2	51.9	1,724,700	1,001,418	475,450	247,830	9,168
1995	182.9	107.5	49.1	1,643,520	965,547	440,780	237,190	8,986
1996	183.5	107.8	49.3	1,609,600	945,210	432,130	232,260	8,770
1997	181.6	107.3	48.1	1,594,850	942,048	422,170	230,630	8,781
1998	181.8	108.4	47.0	1,617,980	965,122	418,030	234,830	8,901
1999	180.6	107.9	46.4	1,643,120	981,929	422,550	238,640	9,099
2000	181.2	108.9	45.9	1,693,940	1,017,806	429,610	246,520	9,350
2001	175.6	105.6	44.4	1,698,880	1,021,627	429,930	247,320	9,677
2002	170.6	103.1	42.7	1,691,900	1,022,106	423,060	246,730	9,916
2003	168.3	102.3	41.4	1,698,470	1,032,305	417,910	248,250	10,094
2004	165.6	101.5	39.8	1,687,400	1,034,454	405,510	247,440	10,191
2005	164.7	101.8	38.7	1,683,910	1,040,388	395,860	247,660	10,223
2006	170.4	105.5	39.8	1,744,440	1,080,437	407,190	256,810	10,239
2007	168.7	105.4	38.4	1,733,070	1,082,354	394,770	255,950	10,270
2008	164.3	101.8	38.4	1,698,980	1,052,184	396,690	250,110	10,340

*All rates are the number of events per 1,000 women aged 20–24; pregnancy rate includes estimated number of pregnancies ending in miscarriage or stillbirth. †Includes stillbirths. *Note:* u=unavailable.

National-level methodology

The figures in these tables are based on data from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (number of births), the Guttmacher Institute (total number of abortions), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (distribution of women obtaining abortions by age, race and ethnicity), and the Population Estimates Program of the U.S. Bureau of the Census in collaboration with NCHS (population estimates). The exact sources are listed at the end of this section. We have adjusted the national age and race/ethnicity distributions of women obtaining abortions to ensure year-to-year comparability.

Pregnancies are the sum of births, abortions and miscarriages. Rates are calculated as the number of events per 1,000 women. Abortion ratios represent the number of abortions divided by the sum of abortions and births. Please note that in these tables, “age” refers to the woman’s age when the pregnancy ended. Consequently, the actual number of pregnancies that occurred among teenagers is higher than what is reported here because most of the women who conceived at age 19 had their births or abortions after they turned 20 and thus were not counted as teenagers. Likewise, please note that “year” refers to the calendar year in which the birth or abortion occurred, not when the conception occurred.

A small number of abortions performed between 1972 and 1975 were illegal. This report counts only legal abortions.

Some of the figures differ from those previously published by the Guttmacher Institute for two reasons. First, the estimates of the population counts for 2001–2006 have been revised using recently released updated counts of the population, which are based on the 2010 census (“intercensal estimates”). While most of the rates did not change dramatically, those for Hispanic teenagers did, with much lower rates for this group for 2001–2006, as compared with those based on the earlier population estimates projected by the Census Bureau. This was due to a larger number of Hispanic teenagers counted in the 2010 census than were projected from the 2000 census.

The second reason these estimates differ from those published previously is that we have revised our estimate of the proportion of women aged 15–19 who have ever had sex for 2003–2006. In our prior estimates, we used the estimate of this proportion from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). For the current estimates, we obtained the proportion sexually experienced from the 2006–2010 NSFG and applied a proportion calculated by linear interpolation for each year from 2003 through 2005, using the proportions sexually experienced in 2002 and in 2006–2008. This difference affects only the rates among sexually experienced women.

The figures in this report may also differ from those found in other sources. First, as explained above, these data are not adjusted to reflect women’s age at conception or the year in which she conceived. Second, unlike some other reports, this one includes estimated numbers and rates of pregnancies ending in miscarriage. (Pregnancy rates excluding miscarriages can be calculated from the tables by summing the rates of birth and abortion.) The number of miscarriages was

estimated as 20% of births plus 10% of abortions; these proportions attempt to account for miscarriages that occurred after the pregnancy had lasted long enough to be noticed by the woman (i.e., 6–7 weeks after her last menstrual period).¹ Stillbirths are a very small proportion of all pregnancies; they are included in our estimates of miscarriages. In contrast to the 20%-10% approach we used, NCHS estimates miscarriages from survey respondents' reports of their pregnancies in the five years preceding the fielding of each round of the NSFG.² Third, the denominator we used in calculating rates among women younger than 15 is the female population aged 14, because most pregnancies occurring among these very young teenagers are among 14-year-olds (79% in 2008). The NCHS estimates use the number of women aged 10–14 for the denominator.³ Similarly, the denominator for rates among all women under age 20 is the female population aged 15–19 because from 1973–2008, 97–98% of all pregnancies to women younger than 20 were among those aged 15–19. Finally, denominators are based on population estimates that are produced by the Census Bureau in collaboration with NCHS for July 1 of each year and revised periodically; hence, our rates may differ slightly from those published elsewhere, depending on which year the population estimates were made (the “vintage”) or whether the rates have been updated using the intercensal population estimates available after each national census. For the years 1980, 1990 and 2000, NCHS uses the April 1 census counts and we use the July 1 estimates.

The percentage of 15–19-year-old women who were sexually experienced for the years 1982 and 1988 was obtained from Singh and Darroch.⁴ Linear interpolation was used to calculate the percentages for 1986 and 1987. For these two years only, “sexually experienced” was defined as having ever had sex after menarche. For the percentage of sexually experienced 15–19-year-olds from 1988 to 2002, we obtained the proportions of all 15–19-year-olds who had ever had sexual intercourse in 1988, 1995, 2002 and 2006–2008 from analyses of the NSFG. From 1988 on, “sexually experienced” is defined as having ever had sex, regardless of whether it occurred before or after menarche. Linear interpolation was used to calculate the percentages for the intervening years, 1989–1994, 1996–2001 and 2003–2005. These resulting percentages were applied to the population totals of 15–19-year-old women to calculate the number who were sexually experienced.

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