



File Teen

Pregnancy



**NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

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**U.S. Pregnancy Rate Lowest in Two Decades
New Report Documents Trends in Births, Abortions and Miscarriages**

The number of pregnancies (live births, induced abortions, and fetal losses) in the United States fell from 6.78 to 6.24 million, a decline of about half a million between 1990 and 1996. The pregnancy rate in 1996 was 104.7 pregnancies per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years, 9 percent lower than in 1990 and the lowest rate since 1976. (Table 1)

The pregnancy rate declined for all women under 30, but the sharpest drop was among teenagers, with the teen pregnancy rate falling by 15 percent from its record high in 1991. (page 5 and table 2) Among the factors driving this downturn in teen pregnancies are increases in condom use (tables 13, 14, 15, 19), the adoption of the effective injectable and implant contraceptives (tables 13, 14, 15) (especially among teen mothers), and the levelling off of teen sexual activity (table 8). Pregnancy rates remain highest for women in their 20s (table 3 and Figure 5). For example, the pregnancy rate at age 20-24 was 140 per 1,000 women (14 percent) for white women, 302 (30 percent) for black women, and 277 (28 percent) for Hispanic women. (Figure 6 and table 4).

A detailed, comprehensive new report from the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tracks the effects of changes in sexual activity, marriage, contraceptive use, and other factors on pregnancies and pregnancy rates over the past

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two decades in the United States. Using complete counts of births from the birth registration system and estimates of abortions and fetal loss, the report examines patterns by age, race and Hispanic origin and marital status.

The 6 million-plus pregnancies in 1996 in the U.S. resulted in 3.9 million births, 1.3 million induced abortions and almost a million fetal deaths. This means that 62 percent of pregnancies ended in a live birth, 22 percent in abortion and 16 percent with a miscarriage or stillbirth. Trends in birth, abortion and fetal loss have varied over the past twenty years, but since 1990 the rates for all three have declined: live births, down 8 percent; induced abortions, down 16 percent, and fetal losses, down 4 percent. (table 1)

Pregnancy outcomes differ markedly by marital status. The birth rate for married women is almost 10 times their abortion rate. In contrast, for unmarried women, birth and abortion rates are nearly equal. However in recent years unmarried women were increasingly more likely to give birth and less likely to have an induced abortion. (Table 6 and Figure 12)

Overall, U.S. women are currently averaging 2.0 live births, 0.7 induced abortions, and 0.5 miscarriages and stillbirths, or a total of 3.2 pregnancies each, (page 10 and table B), of which only 1.8 are wanted births - that is, "wanted" by the woman when the child was conceived. (table F, page 16) The fraction of births that are wanted by the mother is closely associated with the amount of education the woman has. (Figure 15)

The report documents striking differences in pregnancy rates by race and ethnicity, reflecting disparities in education, income, access to medical care, and the communities in which they live. Black women report that they want about the same number of births as white women,

(table F, page 16) but black women average 4.6 pregnancies per woman, compared with just 2.7 for white women. Only 39% of black women's pregnancies result in wanted births, compared with about 60% for Hispanic and non-Hispanic white women. (table F). Pregnancies among black women are twice as likely to end in abortion as pregnancies among white and Hispanic women.

The teenage abortion rate dropped from 1988 to 1996, from 43.5 per 1,000 to 29.2---a 33% decline. The overall teenage pregnancy rate has declined since 1991, falling 15 percent from 117 per 1,000 to 99 in 1996. (table 3 and table 18) The proportion of teen pregnancies ending in non-marital birth has increased sharply, rising from 25 percent of teen pregnancies in 1982 to 42 percent in 1995 and 1996. (table 18) Changes in abortion rates at other ages were small. (table 3).

The birth rate for childless teens dropped from a peak of 50 (births per 1,000 teens) in 1991 to 1995, down to 45 in 1997, a drop of about 10 percent. This decline may be related to the increase in condom use at first intercourse (table 13), and the decline in the proportion of teens who wait a year or longer after first intercourse to begin contraceptive use. But the teen 2nd birth rate fell from 221 (births per 1,000 teens with one child) to 174, a decline of 21 percent. (table A). This change may be related to the rapid adoption of injectable and implant contraception among teens with children, (tables 14, 15), and to increases in the consistency of condom use by teen males (table 19). These changes in contraception were also found among both white and black mothers 20-24 years of age. (tables 14, 15).

In more prosperous neighborhoods (measured by median neighborhood income,

unemployment rate, or percent of households on welfare in 1990), lower proportions of both black and white teenagers had had sexual intercourse in 1995. (Table 10 and Figure 14). Teens with more educated mothers and teens in 2-parent families were also less likely to have had intercourse by the date of interview in 1995. (table 8) These findings and previous research suggest that strong families and economic opportunities created by prosperity are associated with a lower risk of teenage pregnancy. (references 43-48)

"Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates by Outcome: Estimates for the United States, 1976-96," can be viewed or downloaded from the NCHS Home Page at www.cdc.gov/nchs. ###

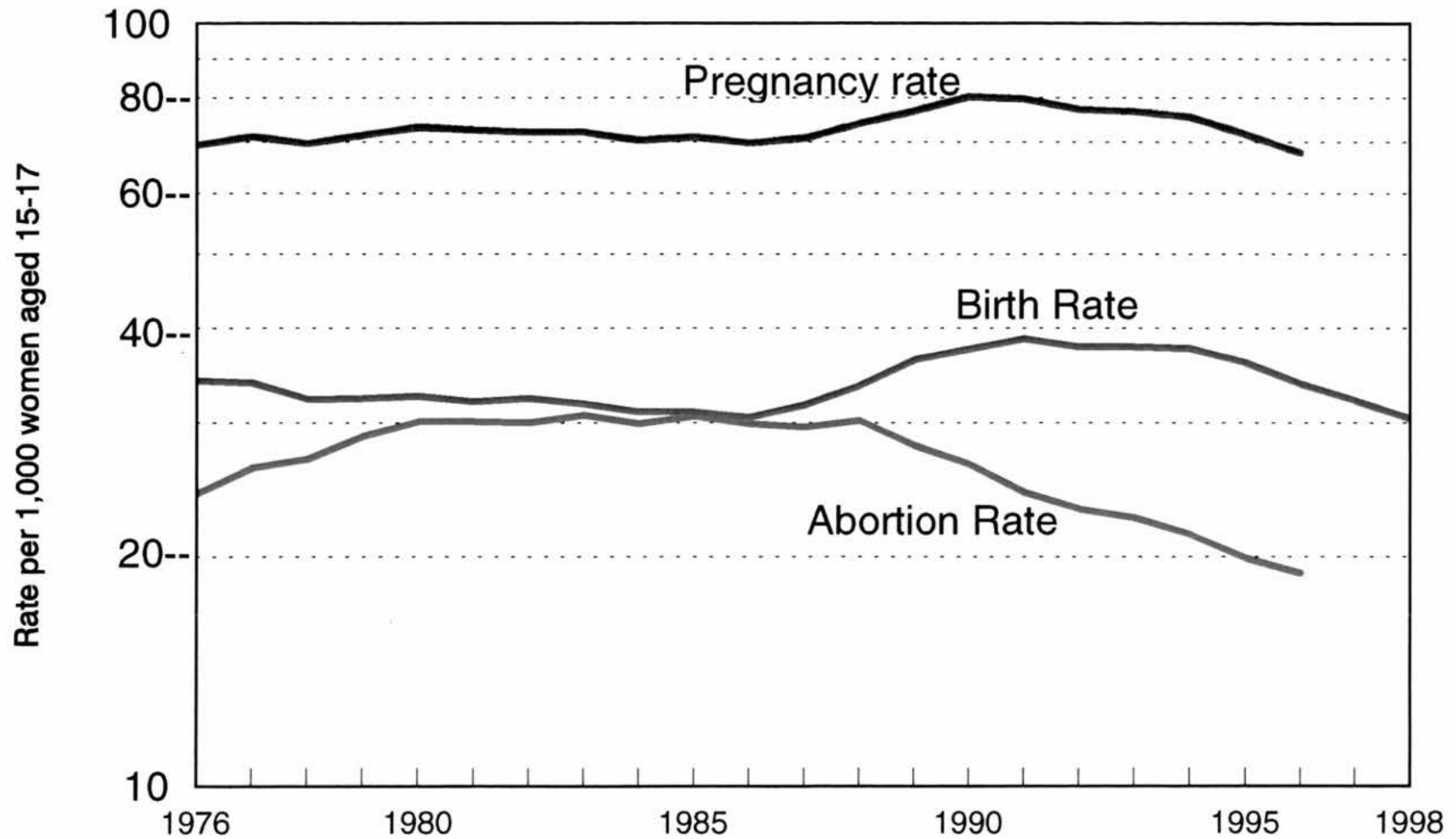
Selected Charts from:

TRENDS IN PREGNANCIES AND PREGNANCY RATES BY OUTCOME: ESTIMATES FOR THE UNITED STATES, 1976-96

by Stephanie J. Ventura, M.A., William D. Mosher, Ph.D., Sally C. Curtin, M.A.,
Joyce C. Abma, Ph.D., and Stanley Henshaw, Ph.D.

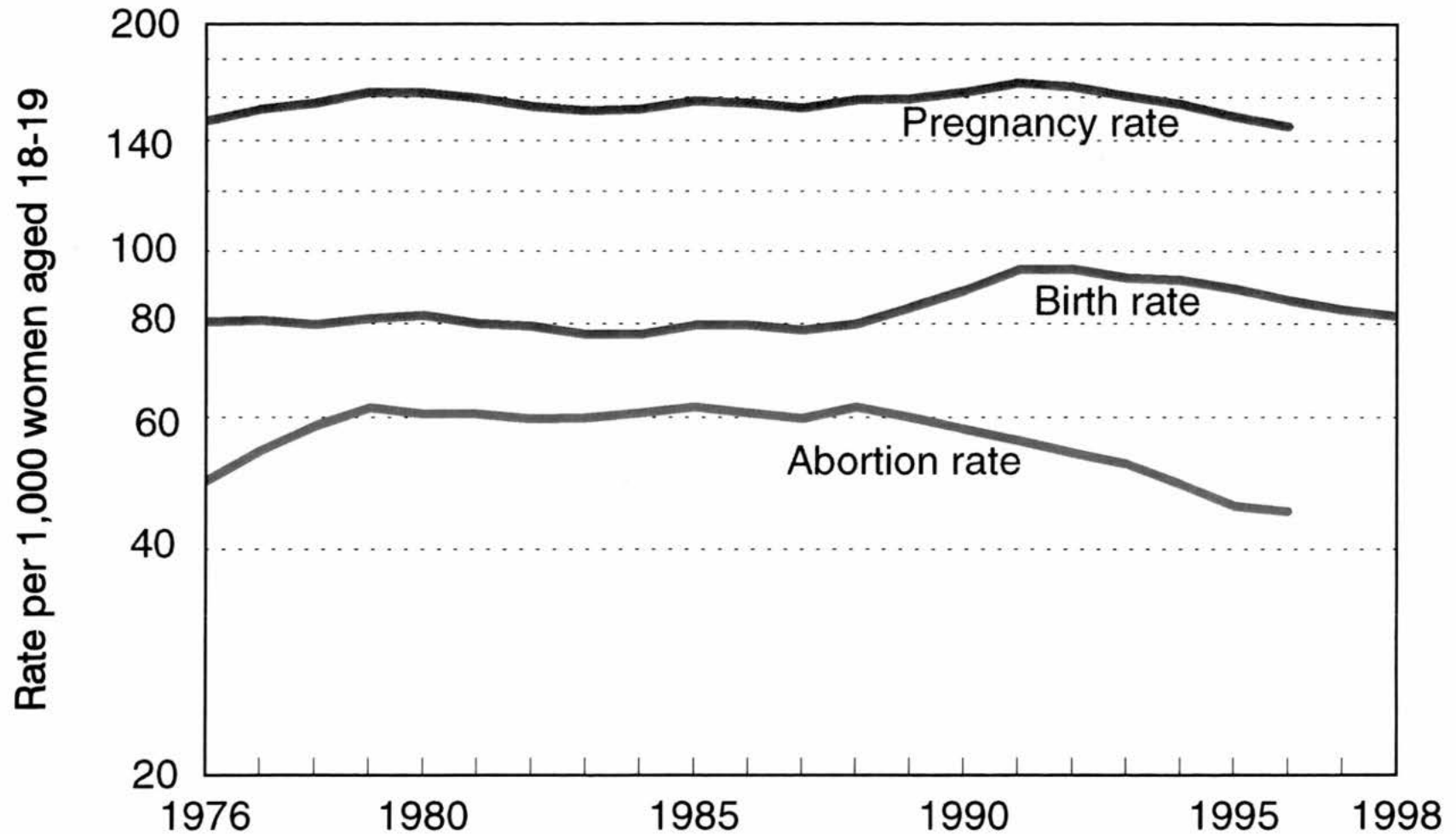
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2000.

Figure 2. Pregnancy, birth, and abortion rates for teens aged 15-17 years



NOTE: Rates are plotted on a log scale.

Figure 3. Pregnancy, birth, and abortion rates for teens aged 18-19 years



NOTE: Rates are plotted on a log scale.

Figure 5. Pregnancy and birth rates by age: United States, 1996

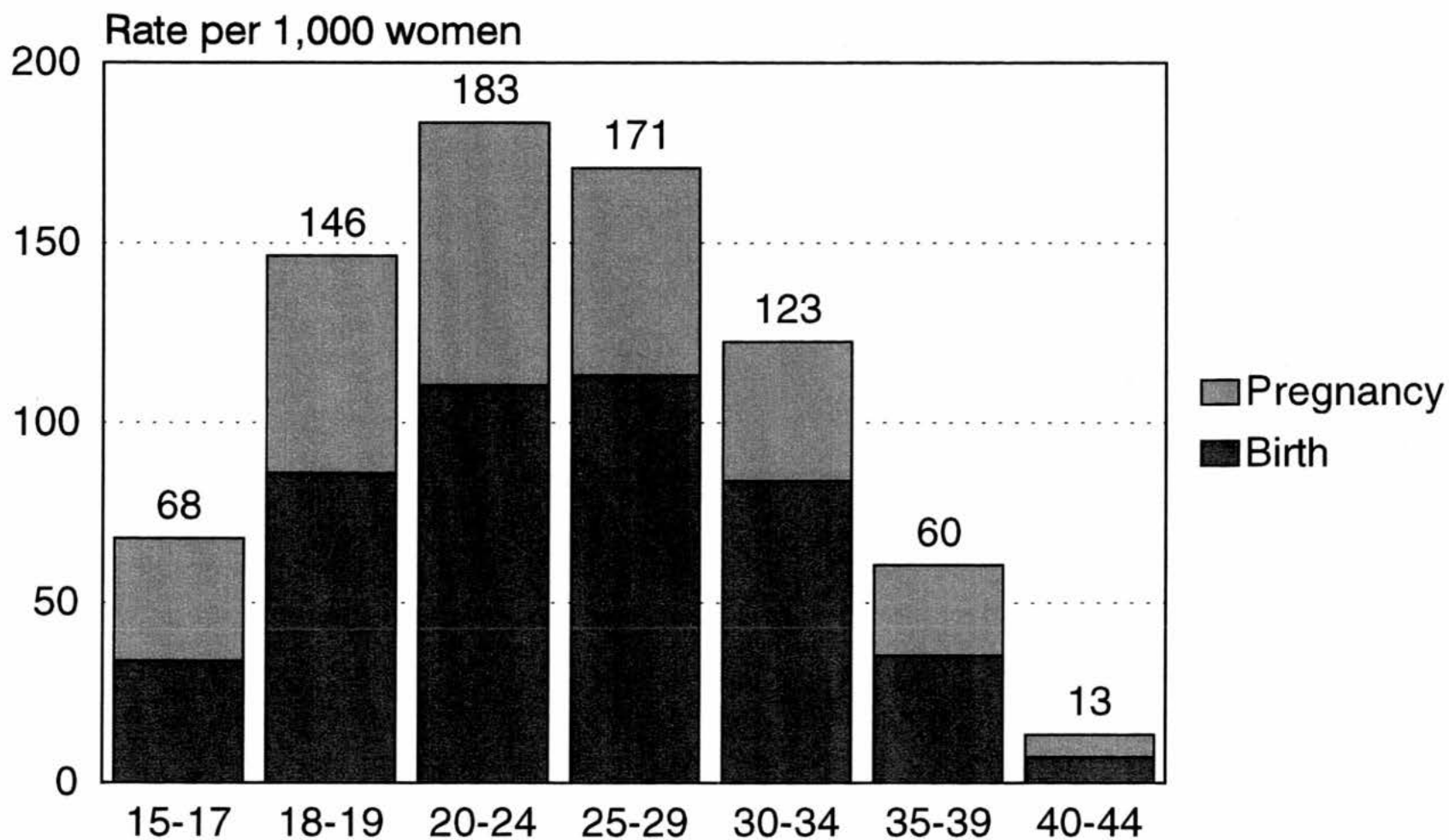


Figure 6. Pregnancy rates by age, race, and Hispanic origin of woman, 1995

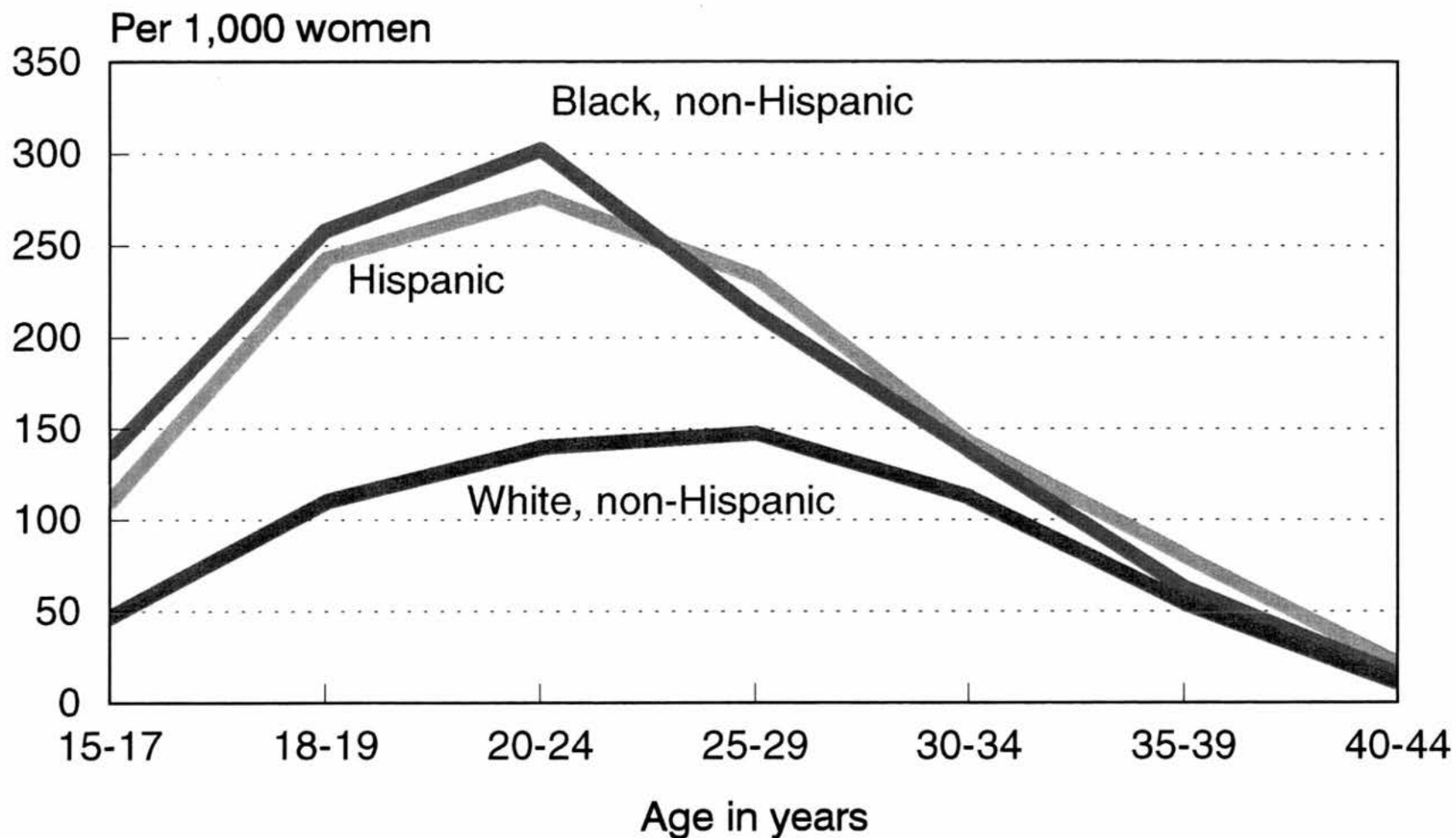


Figure 10. Percent of pregnancies ending as a live birth, induced abortion or fetal loss, by age of woman, 1996

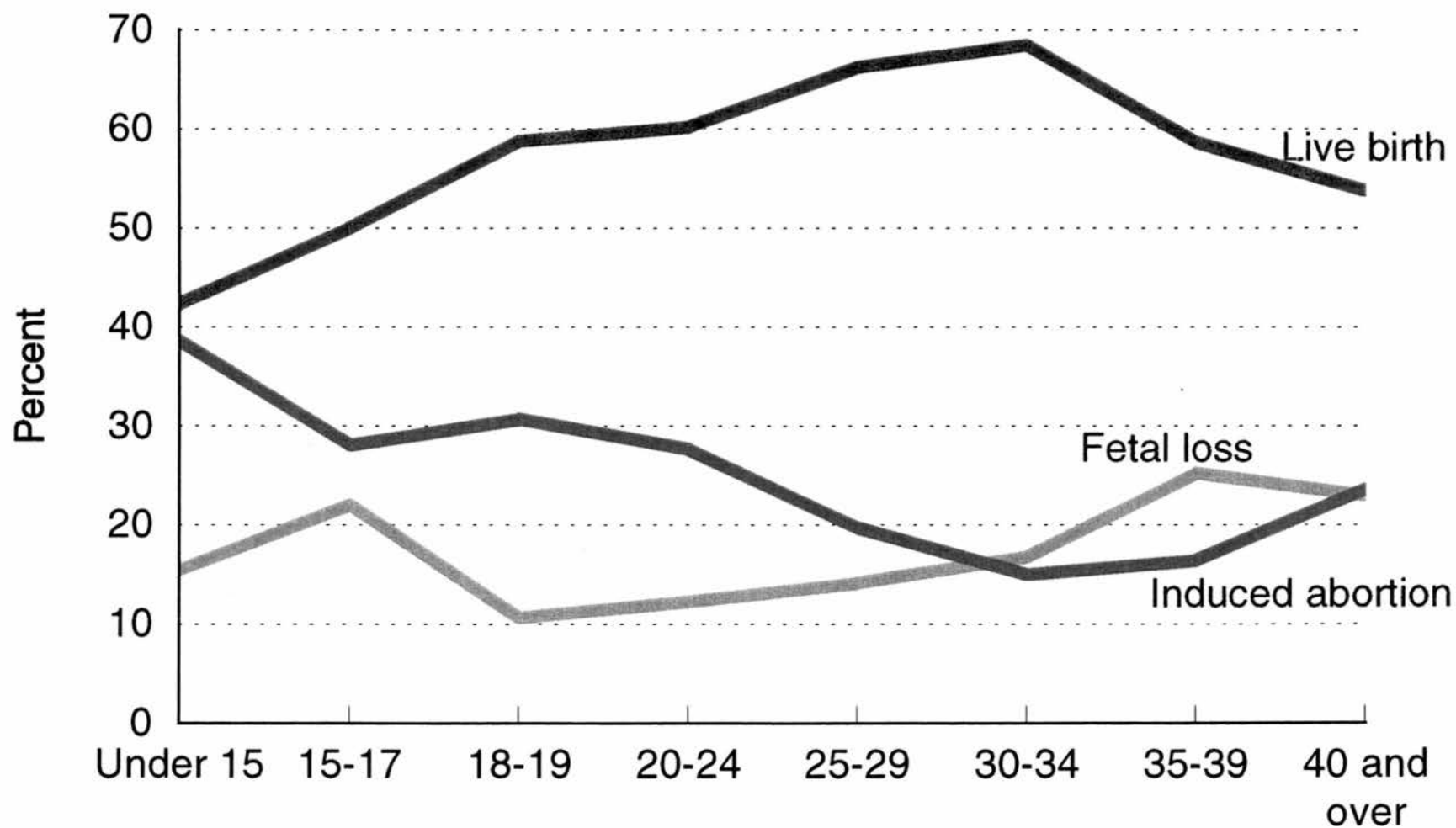
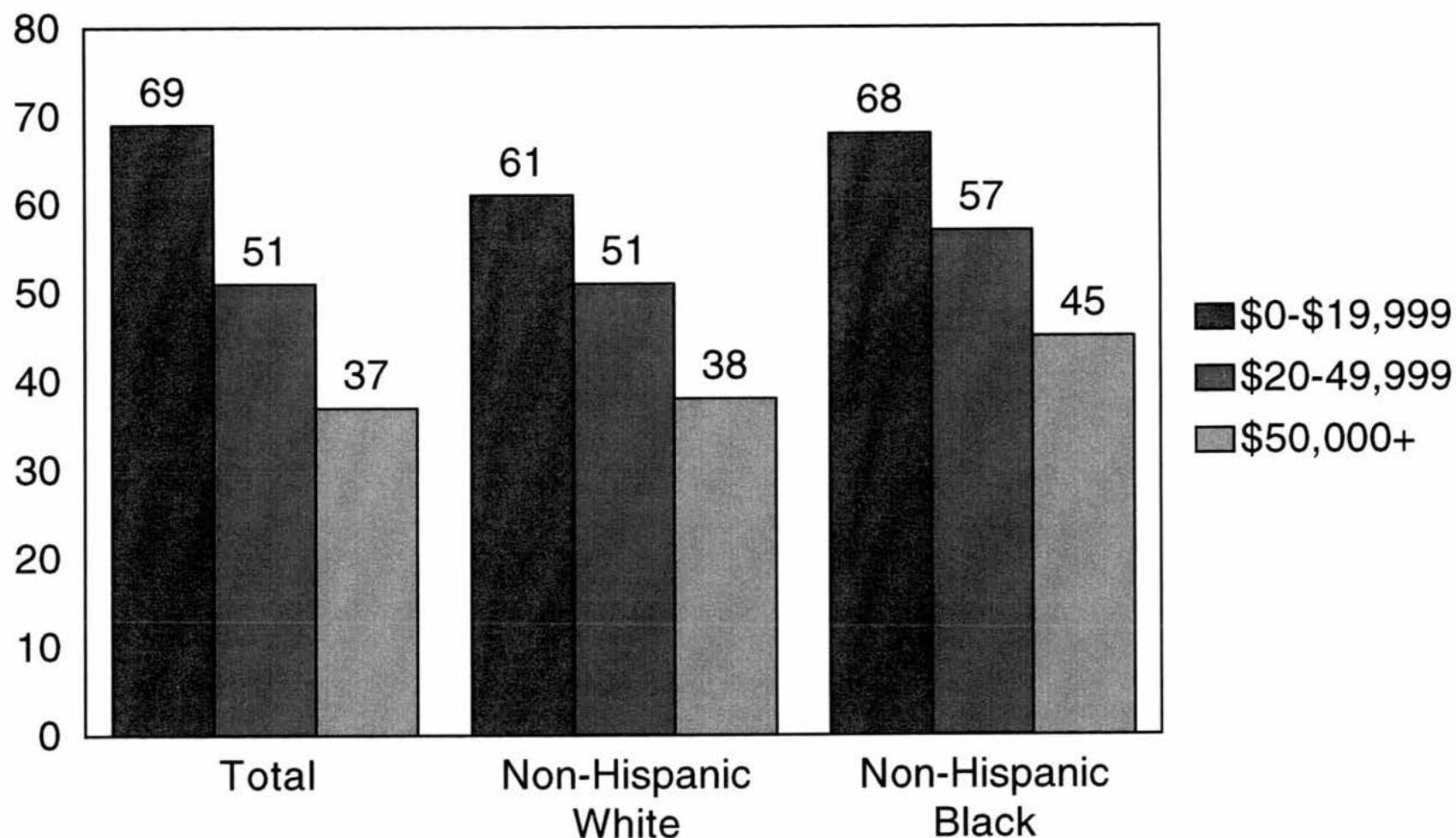
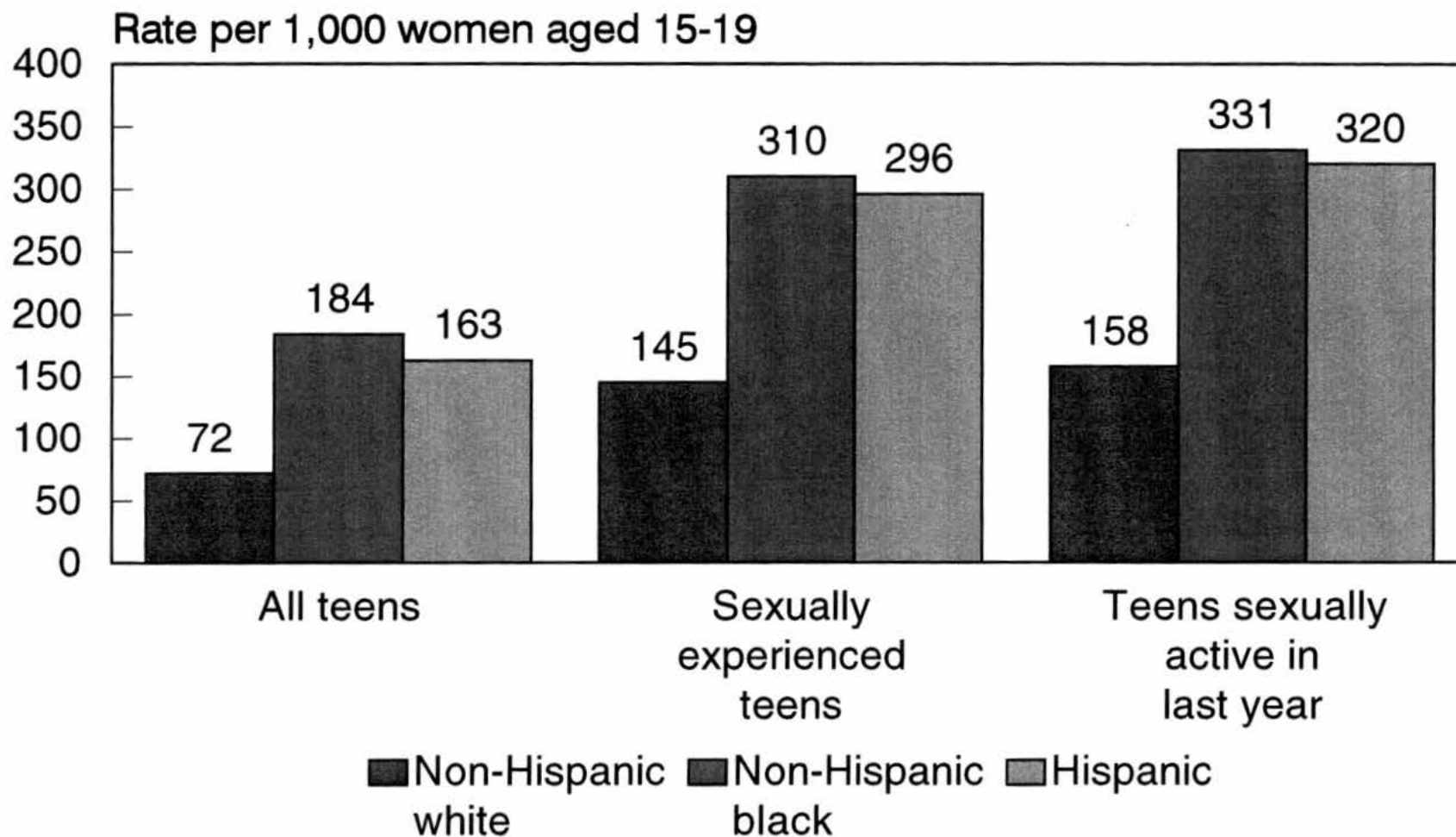


Figure 14. Percent of females aged 15-19 who have ever had sexual intercourse by median family income of community and race, 1995



NOTE: Community unit of aggregation = block group. Data are not shown for Hispanic teenagers because the sample size was insufficient to compute these statistics reliably.

Figure 16. Teen pregnancy rates by race and Hispanic origin, 1995



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No. 56



Vital and Health Statistics

From the CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION / National Center for Health Statistics

Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates by Outcome: Estimates for the United States, 1976-96

January 2000



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics



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National Vital Statistics Reports

From the CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
National Center for Health Statistics
National Vital Statistics System



Volume 47, Number 12

December 17, 1998

Declines in Teenage Birth Rates, 1991–97: National and State Patterns

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Division of Vital Statistics

Abstract

This report presents data on the numbers of teenage births and teenage birth rates for the United States for the period 1950–97 and State-specific birth rates for teenagers for 1991–96. After increasing sharply in the late 1980's, birth rates declined for American teenagers from 1991 through 1997. Rates fell overall by 16 percent for teenagers 15–17 years and by 11 percent for teenagers 18–19 years. Declines were reported for all race and ethnic origin groups, with the largest declines found for black teenagers, especially those aged 15–17 years.

Particularly noteworthy has been the 21-percent decline in the rate of second births for teenagers who have had one child. Rates have fallen for first births as well, but the reductions are more modest, about 6 percent. Teenage mothers and their babies continue to be at greater risk of adverse health consequences compared with older mothers, including higher rates of preterm birth and low birthweight.

While teenage birth rates vary considerably by State, rates fell in all States in the 1990's with nearly all declines statistically significant. Rates for black and non-Hispanic white teenagers dropped in most States from 1991 to 1996. Birth rate trends for Hispanic teenagers by State were not consistent. The proportion of second and higher order births among all teenage births declined substantially in most States. Data are from the National Center for Health Statistics' (NCHS) National Vital Statistics System.

Keywords: teenage fertility • State-specific birth rates • fertility trends • teenage pregnancy

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared in the Division of Vital Statistics (DVS). The authors appreciate the helpful comments of Kenneth G. Keppel, Acting Branch Chief, Reproductive Statistics Branch, DVS. This report was edited by Demarius V. Miller, typeset by Jacqueline M. Davis, and graphics produced by Jarmila Ogburn of the Publications Branch, Division of Data Services.

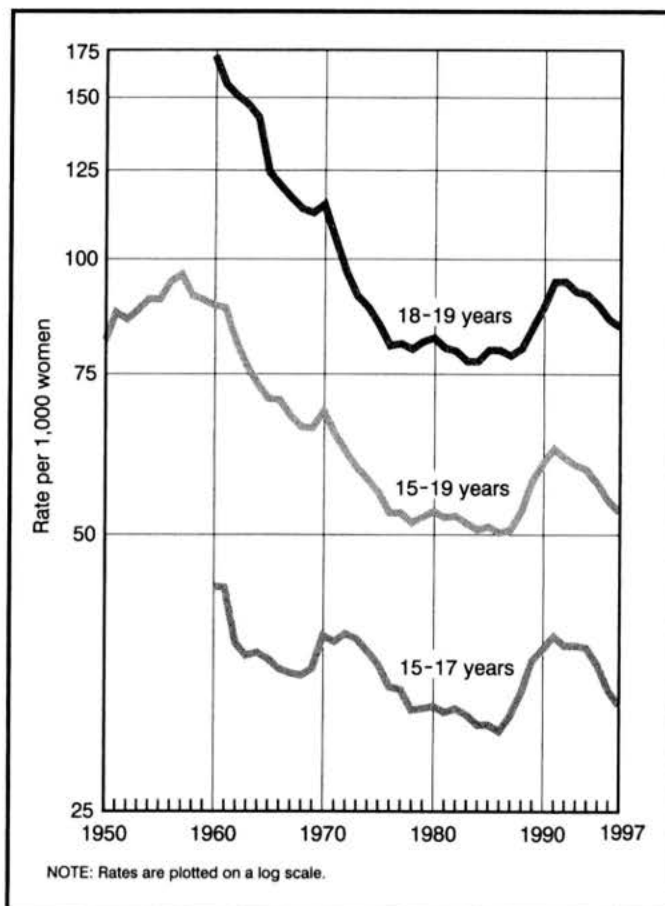


Figure 1. Birth rates for teenagers by age: United States, 1950–97

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National Vital Statistics Reports

From the CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
National Center for Health Statistics
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Volume 47, Number 29

December 15, 1999

Highlights of Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates by Outcome: Estimates for the United States, 1976–96

by Stephanie J. Ventura, M.A.; William D. Mosher, Ph.D.; Sally C. Curtin, M.A.; Joyce C. Abma, Ph.D.;
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Abstract

Objectives—This report presents key findings from a comprehensive report on pregnancies and pregnancy rates for U.S. women. The study incorporates birth, abortion, and fetal loss data to compile national estimates of pregnancy rates according to a variety of characteristics including age, race, Hispanic origin, and marital status. Summary data are presented for 1976–96. Data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) are used to show information on sexual activity and contraceptive practices, as well as women's reports of pregnancy intentions.

Methods—Tabular and graphic data on pregnancy rates by demographic characteristics are presented and interpreted. Birth data are from the birth registration system for all births registered in the United States and reported by State health departments to NCHS; abortion data are from The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI) and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and fetal loss data are from pregnancy history information collected in the NSFG.

Results—In 1996 an estimated 6.24 million pregnancies resulted in 3.89 million live births, 1.37 million induced abortions, and 0.98 million fetal losses. The pregnancy rate in 1996 was 104.7 pregnancies per 1,000 women aged 15–44 years, 9 percent lower than in 1990 (115.6), and the lowest recorded since 1976 (102.7). Since 1990 rates have dropped 8 percent for live births, 16 percent for induced abortions, and 4 percent for fetal losses.

The teenage pregnancy rate has declined considerably in the 1990's, falling 15 percent from its 1991 high of 116.5 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 to 98.7 in 1996. Among the factors accounting for this decline are decreased sexual activity, increases in condom use, and the adoption of the injectable and implant contraceptives.

Keywords: pregnancy rates, teenage pregnancy, birth, sexual activity, contraception

Introduction

This report summarizes the key findings from a comprehensive report on pregnancies and pregnancy rates for U.S. women (1). The study incorporates birth, abortion, and fetal loss data to compile national estimates of pregnancy rates according to characteristics such as age, race and Hispanic origin, and marital status. Trends and variations in pregnancy rates are described and interpreted. Summary data on pregnancies by age are presented for 1976–96; 1996 is the most recent year for which abortion data by age are available. Pregnancy estimates by age, race, Hispanic origin, and marital status are shown for 1995, the latest year for which national abortion data are available by these characteristics.

U.S. pregnancies decline

An estimated 6,240,000 pregnancies resulted in a live birth, induced abortion, or fetal loss in the United States in 1996, half a million fewer than the number estimated for 1990 (6,778,000), when the number of pregnancies reached its peak (**table 1**). Since 1990 the total number of pregnancies has declined steadily, by an average of more than 1 percent per year.

The 1996 total of 6.24 million pregnancies included 3.89 million live births, 1.37 million induced abortions, and 0.98 million fetal losses. This means that 62 percent of pregnancies in the United States ended in live birth, 22 percent ended in induced abortion, and 16 percent ended in fetal loss.

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared in the Division of Vital Statistics. The authors gratefully acknowledge the special tabulations prepared by Anjani Chandra and Linda J. Piccinino of the Reproductive Statistics Branch and the thoughtful review of the manuscript by Christine A. Bachrach of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. This report was edited by Demarius V. Miller, typeset by Jacqueline M. Davis, and graphics produced by Jarmila Ogburn of the Publications Branch, Division of Data Services.

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Declines in Teenage Birth Rates, 1991–98: Update of National and State Trends

by Stephanie J. Ventura, M.A., T. J. Mathews, M.S., and Sally C. Curtin, M.A., Division of Vital Statistics

Abstract

Objectives—This report presents national birth rates for teenagers for 1991–98; the percent change, 1991–98; State-specific teenage birth rates for 1991 and 1997; and the percent change, 1991–97.

Methods—Tabular and graphical descriptions of the trends in teenage birth rates by age group, race, and Hispanic origin of the mother are discussed.

Results—Birth rates for teenagers 15–19 years declined nationally between 1991 and 1998 for all age, race, and Hispanic origin populations, with the steepest declines recorded for black women. State-specific rates by age fell in all States, with most declines statistically significant; overall declines ranged from 9 to 32 percent.

Keywords: teenage fertility • State-specific birth rates • fertility trends • teenage pregnancy

Teenage birth rate down 18 percent since 1991, close to record low

The birth rate (preliminary) for U.S. teenagers in 1998 was 51.1 live births per 1,000 women aged 15–19 years, 2 percent lower than the rate in 1997, and 18 percent lower than in 1991 (**table 1 and figure 1**) (1). The 1998 rate (preliminary) is close to the 1986 record low of 50.2 (2). The U.S. teen birth rate rose 24 percent from 1986 to 1991, when it reached 62.1, the highest level recorded in 20 years (64.5 in 1971). The previous peak period for teen birth rates was the late 1950's; the birth rate was highest in 1957, at 96.3 births per 1,000 (2).

The total of 484,975 births (preliminary number) to women aged 15–19 years in 1998 was slightly higher than the number in 1997 (483,220), but still 7 percent lower than the recent high in 1990 of 521,826. The small 1997–98 increase in the number reflects the 3-percent increase in the number of teenage females in the population between 1997 and 1998 (3).

Details of trends and variations in teenage childbearing in the 1990's, including some discussion of the health consequences and the demographic and behavioral changes accounting for the recent trends, have been published in a recent report (2). This report updates the findings through 1998 for national data and through 1997 for State statistics.

Most teenage births are to unmarried women

The proportion of births to teenagers that were to unmarried teens continued to increase in 1998, according to preliminary data. The proportion unmarried rose to 78.8 percent for all teenage births, up from 78.2 percent in 1997. For teenagers 15–17 years, the percent increased from 86.7 to 87.4 percent, while for older teens, it rose from 72.5 to 73.5 percent (**table A**).

The total number of births to teenagers 15–17 years and the number of births to unmarried teenagers 15–17 years declined from 1997 to 1998. However, the total number declined even more than the number of nonmarital births. As a result the percent unmarried for teenagers 15–17 years continued to increase.

Although the proportion of teenage births that are nonmarital continues to rise, it is still the case that most births to unmarried women are not to teenagers. In 1998, 70 percent were to women aged 20 and older.

Teenage birth and pregnancy rates fall

When data on live births are combined with information for induced abortions and fetal losses, pregnancy rates can be computed.

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