

SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND FERTILITY

SD 4.1 SEXUALLY EXPERIENCED TEENS

Sexual experience, and particularly the age at first intercourse, represent critical indicators of the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Youth who begin having sex at younger ages are exposed to these risks over a longer period of time. Because sexual intercourse during the teen years, especially first intercourse, is often unplanned,⁴⁷ it is not surprising that it is often unprotected by contraception.⁴⁸ In addition, research has shown that youth who have early sexual experience are more likely at later ages to have more sexual partners and more frequent intercourse.⁴⁹

The trends over the past several decades show that increasing proportions of teens have had sexual intercourse. Table SD 4.1 shows data for females in three cohorts: those who turned 20 in 1958-1960, 1970-1972, and 1985-1987. Data for males are presented for the two most recent cohorts only. Among males, the later cohort has slightly higher levels of sexual activity at young ages than those of the earlier cohort, but at older ages the increase in sexual activity becomes larger. For example, among males age 13, 9 percent of the earlier cohort had experienced sexual intercourse compared to 11 percent of the later cohort. However, at age 17, the difference between the two cohorts in the proportion of sexually active was 11 percentage points (41 percent versus 52 percent).

Among females, the percentage who were sexually experienced increased for all ages between the 1970-1972 and 1985-1987 cohorts. Percentages also increased between the 1958-1960 and 1970-1972 cohorts, but the increases were smaller and existed only for females ages 15 and older. For example, the percentage of 18 year old females who were sexually experienced increased from 27 percent for the 1958-1960 cohort to 35 percent for the 1970-1972 cohort and 52 percent for the 1985-1987 cohort.

By the late teen years, most teens are sexually experienced, however it is important to note that not all teens are sexually experienced. Among the most recent cohort of youth, it is estimated that more than half of adolescent females and nearly two-thirds of adolescent males had intercourse by age 18 (Figure SD 4.1). However, nearly one in five abstained from sexual intercourse throughout their teenage years. Age is the most important correlate of teen sexual experience. At age 13, just over 1 in 10 males and only 1 in 50 females were sexually experienced, but by age 20, about 3 in 4 females and 4 out of 5 males and females were sexually experienced.

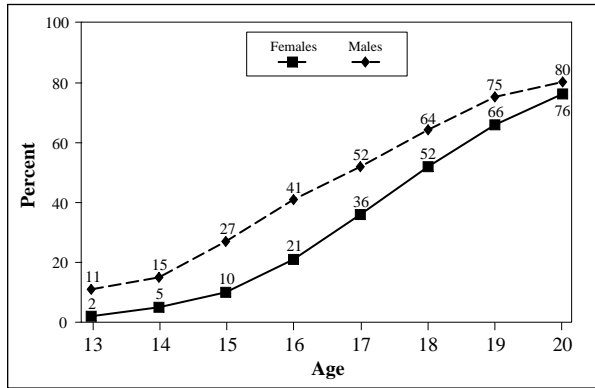
At every year of age more teen males than females report having had intercourse. The gender difference in teen sexual experience has been declining over time, but still the proportion of teen males at each year of age who report having sex is roughly equal to the number of sexually experienced teen females who are one year older.

⁴⁷Lowenstein, G. and Furstenberg, F.F. 1991. "Is teenage sexual behavior rational?" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 21(12): 957-986.

⁴⁸Forrest, J. D., and Singh, S. 1990. "The sexual and reproductive behavior of American women, 1982-1988." *Family Planning Perspectives* 22 (5): 206-214.

⁴⁹Koyle, P., Jensen, L., Olsen, J., and Cundick, B. 1989. "Comparison of sexual behaviors among adolescents having an early, middle, and late first intercourse experience." *Youth and Society* 20(4): 461-475.

Figure SD 4.1 PERCENT OF FEMALES AND MALES WHO HAVE HAD INTERCOURSE BY EACH AGE, COHORT AGED 20 IN 1985 - 1987



Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute. (1994). *Sex and America's Teenagers*, New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute. Based on data from the 1988 National Survey of Family Growth and the 1991 Survey of Men.

Table SD 4.1 PERCENT OF TEENS WHO HAVE HAD INTERCOURSE BY EACH AGE

Ages	Females Who Turned Age 20 in:		
	1958-1960	1970-1972	1985-1987
13	1	0	2
14	2	1	5
15	3	4	10
16	8	9	21
17	16	20	36
18	27	35	52
19	46	53	66
20	61	68	76

Ages	Males Who Turned Age 20 in:		
	1958-1960	1970-1972	1985-1987
13	—	9	11
14	—	13	15
15	—	20	27
16	—	30	41
17	—	41	52
18	—	55	64
19	—	67	75
20	—	74	80

Note: Data are based on females aged 30-32 and 42-44 in the 1982 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) and aged 21-23 and 36-38 in the 1988 NSFG and males aged 21-23 and 36-38 in the 1991 Survey of Men.

Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1994. *Sex and America's Teenagers*, New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute.

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SD 4.2 SEXUALLY ACTIVE TEENS

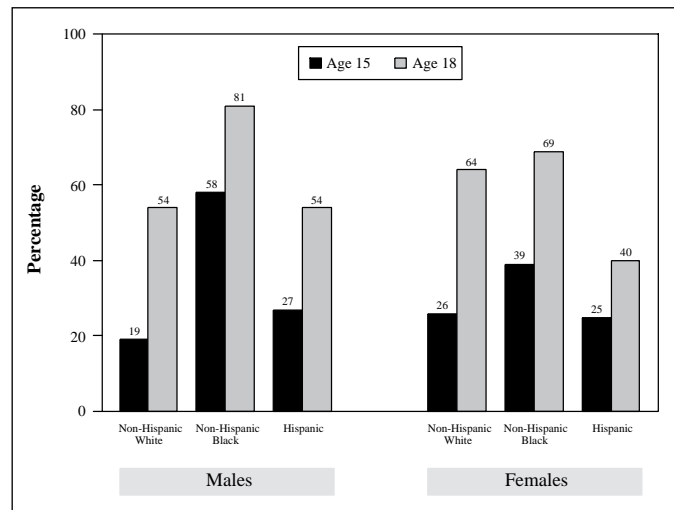
Having become sexually experienced does not necessarily mean a teenager will be sexually active from that point on. They may still abstain from intercourse out of concern for the risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, or they may experience periods in which they do not have a sexual partner and are not sexually active, and therefore are not at risk. Nevertheless, research indicates that once a person has had sex, they are likely to continue to be sexually active; among young adults aged 18-22 who had ever had intercourse, over 70 percent had a second experience of intercourse within six months of first intercourse.⁵⁰

Figure SD 4.2 shows the proportion of teens at each age who have had intercourse in the previous three months by gender and race/ethnicity for 1992. At age 15, 58 percent of non-Hispanic black males were sexually active compared to 19 percent of non-Hispanic white males and 27 percent of Hispanic males. Among females, 39 percent of non-Hispanic blacks are sexually active compared to about one quarter of non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics.

By age 18, a majority of teens in each of these groups reported being sexually active, with the exception of Hispanic females of whom only 40 percent reported recent sexual activity. Non-Hispanic white and Hispanic 18 year old males had rates of 54 percent; non-Hispanic white and black 18 year old females had rates of 64 and 69 percent, respectively. Among non-Hispanic black males of that age, 81 percent reported being sexually active.

⁵⁰Moore, K.A. and Peterson, J.L. August 1989. *"The Consequences of Teenage Pregnancy."* Final report to NICHD and ASPE/HHS, Grant number HD 21537.

Figure SD 4.2 PERCENT OF ALL YOUTH WHO ARE SEXUALLY ACTIVE BY AGE 15 AND AGE 18, BY GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY, 1992



Note: Sexually Active is defined as intercourse in the past 3 months.

Source: 1992 National Health Interview Survey — Youth Risk Behavior Supplement, tabulations by Child Trends, Inc., weighted analyses.

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Table SD 4.2 SEXUALLY ACTIVE TEENS: PERCENT OF TEENS AGE 15 AND 18 WHO REPORT HAVING HAD INTERCOURSE IN THE PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS, BY GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY, 1992

	Age 15	Age 18
Males		
Non-Hispanic White	19	54
Non-Hispanic Black	58	81
Hispanic	27	54
Females		
Non-Hispanic White	26	64
Non-Hispanic Black	39	69
Hispanic	25	40

Source: 1992 National Health Interview Survey — Youth Risk Behavior Supplement, tabulations by Child Trends, Inc., weighted analyses

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SD 4.3 UNPROTECTED SEX

Sexual intercourse without contraception puts a teen at risk of unintended pregnancy and of contracting a sexually transmitted disease such as HIV/AIDS. The vast majority of teens do not want to become pregnant. Data from a national survey shows that among teens who had first intercourse at age 17 or younger, only about one in one hundred wanted a pregnancy to occur at that time, and this was true for both males and females, and for both blacks and whites.⁵¹ Nevertheless, some of these sexually active teens who do not want to become pregnant do not use any contraception. The estimated risk of a female aged 15-19 becoming pregnant during one year of intercourse using no contraceptive method is 90 percent.⁵² Teens who do not use contraception account for nearly 50 percent of the unintended teen pregnancies.⁵³

Data on the level of unprotected sexual intercourse among teen females at risk of unintended pregnancy, shown in Table SD 4.3.a, indicate that older teens, white teens, and higher income female teens are more likely to use contraception. Among females at risk of an unintended pregnancy, 27 percent of those aged 15-17 and 16 percent of those aged 18-19 were using no contraception in 1988. Contraceptive use also varied by race and ethnicity. Hispanic females were the least likely to use contraception—35 percent used no method—compared to 23 percent of black females and 19 percent of white females. Higher income teen females were also somewhat more likely to use contraception. While 17 percent of teens whose family incomes were 200 percent of the poverty line or above were using no contraception, 29 percent of low-income teens (100-199 percent of poverty) and 22 percent of poor teens were using no contraception.

Data for males show that the proportion who were not using an effective contraceptive method declined substantially from 1979 to 1988, although there was still a substantial group who are not using effective contraception. In 1979, 51 percent of urban males aged 17-19 reported that neither they nor their partner were using an effective method of contraception. By 1988 the proportion had declined substantially to 21 percent. (See Table SD 4.3.b) The increase in contraceptive use over time was due to increasing levels of condom use; use of other methods actually declined. However, there was no substantial change in contraceptive use from 1988 to 1991 among males aged 17.5-19. Some have suggested that the increased awareness of AIDS and the public attention towards AIDS in the 1980s resulted in increases in condom use.

⁵¹Moore, K.A. and Peterson, J.L. August, 1989. "The Consequences of Teenage Pregnancy." Final Report to NICHD and ASPE/DHHS, Grant No. HD 21537.

⁵²Harlap, S., Kost, K., and Forrest, J.D. 1991. *Preventing Pregnancy, Protecting Health: A New Look at Birth Control Choices in the United States*. New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute, Table 8.2, p. 121.

⁵³Forrest, J.D. 1994. "Epidemiology of unintended pregnancy and contraceptive use." *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 170:1485-1489.

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Table SD 4.3.A PERCENT USING NO METHOD OF CONTRACEPTION AMONG FEMALES AGED 15-19 WHO ARE AT RISK OF UNINTENDED PREGNANCY: 1988

Percent Using No Method of Contraception	
Age Group	
15-17	27
18-19	16
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	23
Hispanic	35
White	19
Poverty Level	
< 100% of Poverty	22
100-199%	29
200% or more	17

Note: 1. The definition of “at risk” excludes females who have never had intercourse, are pregnant/postpartum/seeking pregnancy, and who are non-contraceptively sterile.

2. Methods of contraception include sterilization, oral contraceptives, IUD, diaphragm, condom, withdrawal, spermicidal foam or jelly, douche, and periodic abstinence or the rhythm method.

Source: Based on tabulations by the Alan Guttmacher Institute of data from the 1982 and 1988 National Survey of Family Growth.

Table SD 4.3.B PERCENT USING CONTRACEPTIVES AT LAST INTERCOURSE AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE YOUNG MALES: 1979-1991

	Urban Males, Aged 17-19		All Males, Aged 17.5-19	
	1979	1988	1988	1991
	NSYM	NSAM	NSAM	NSAM
Condom	20	54	53	56
Female method only	29	25	27	23
No or ineffective method	51	21	20	21

Note: Female contraceptive methods include oral contraceptives, diaphragm, IUD, contraceptive foam or jelly, and Today Sponge. When combined with condom use, these methods are classified under condom use.

Source: National Survey of Young Men; Sonenstein, Freya, Joseph Pleck, and Leighton Ku. “At Risk of AIDS,” March, 1989, Table 5; Zelnick, M., and J. Kantner, “Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use and Pregnancy Among Metropolitan-Area Teenagers: 1971-1979,” *Family Planning Perspectives*, 12(5), September/October, 1980.

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SD 4.4 NUMBER OF SEXUAL PARTNERS

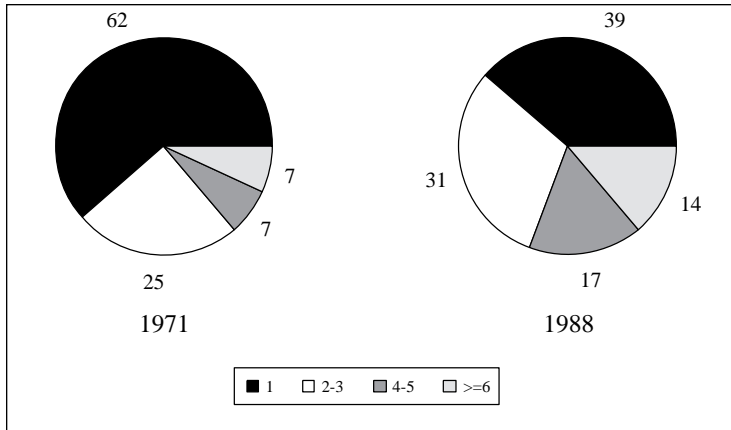
The greater the number of sexual partners a person has, the greater the risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Since the early 1970s, the number of sexual partners among sexually active females has increased (See Figure SD 4.4.a). In 1971, 62 percent of sexually active females aged 15-19 living in metropolitan areas had had one partner in their lifetime, whereas by 1988, only 39 percent had only one partner. Furthermore, the proportion of females with a high number of partners—6 or more in their lifetime—doubled over this same time period (from 7 percent to 14 percent). Black females were slightly less likely to have had only one partner than whites, but the trend is similar. (See Table SD 4.4.a)

Unfortunately, trend data for males are rather limited, but, as shown in Table SD 4.4.b, among never-married sexually experienced males aged 17.5-19, the mean number of partners over the previous 12 months increased from 2.0 in 1988 to 2.6 in 1991. There was also an increase in the percent of males with 5 or more partners in the past year from 6.3 percent in 1988 to 10.7 percent in 1991. The mean number of partners over the past 4 weeks was unchanged.

Recent data show that among sexually active teens, males, especially non-Hispanic black and poor males, are more likely to have a high number of partners than females. In 1992, among teens ages 15-19, 45 percent of non-Hispanic black males and 40 percent of all males below the poverty line had 6 or more partners in their lifetime, compared to just over a quarter of non-Hispanic white males and males who were at or above the poverty line, one-third of Hispanic males, and less than one in five females in all race/ethnic and poverty groups (See Table SD 4.4.c). It is interesting that among females, given sexually activity, there do not appear to be large differences in the numbers of sexual partners regardless of poverty status. Although Hispanic females are more likely to have only one partner and less likely to have had 6 or more partners, non-Hispanic white and non-Hispanic black females who are sexually active have rather similar patterns of numbers of partners. (See Table SD 4.4.c).

Age at first intercourse has a strong association with number of partners a person accumulates (Table SD 4.4.d); early intercourse means that over the years there is more time to accumulate partners. Figure SD 4.4.b shows that among teens who were age 20 in 1992, 74 percent of males who had sexual intercourse at age 14 or younger had 6 or more partners during their lifetime, compared to 48 percent of those who initiated sex at ages 15 or 16 and 10 percent of those who did not have intercourse until age 17 or older. The comparable figures among females were 57 percent, 34 percent, and 10 percent, respectively.

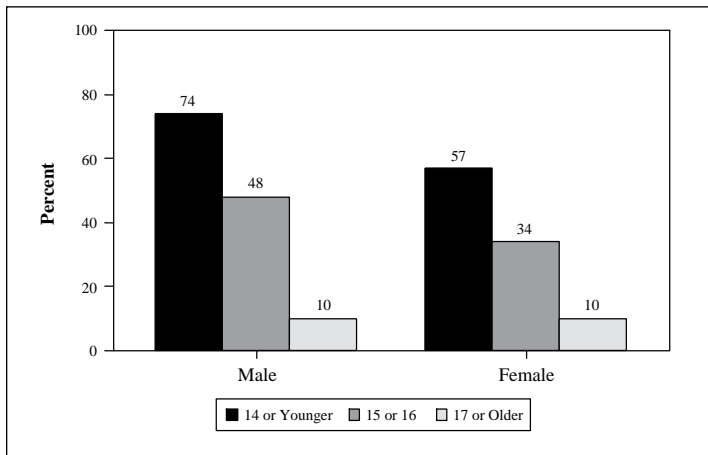
Figure SD 4.4.A PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF LIFETIME SEXUAL PARTNERS AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE FEMALES AGED 15-19 LIVING IN METROPOLITAN AREAS, 1971 AND 1988



Note: Similar time trend data are not available for males.

Source: Kost, K. and Forrest, J.D. 1992. "American women's sexual behavior and exposure to risk of sexually transmitted disease". *Family Planning Perspectives* 24(6): 244-254. Based on data from the National Surveys of Young Women and the 1988 *National Survey of Family Growth*.

Figure SD 4.4.B PERCENT WITH 6 OR MORE LIFETIME SEXUAL PARTNERS AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE TEENS AGE 20, BY AGE AT FIRST INTERCOURSE, 1992



Source: 1992 National Health Interview Survey — Youth Risk Behavior Supplement, tabulations by Child Trends, Inc., weighted analysis.

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Table SD 4.4.A PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF SEXUAL PARTNERS AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE FEMALES AGED 15-19 LIVING IN METROPOLITAN AREAS, BY RACE, 1971, 1976, 1979, AND 1988

	1971	1976	1979	1988
All Races				
1 Partner	62	53	49	39
2-3 Partners	25	28	35	31
4-5 Partners	7	9	8	17
6 or More Partners	7	11	8	14
Whites*				
1 Partner	62	56	51	40
2-3 Partners	23	23	33	30
4-5 Partners	7	8	7	17
6 or More Partners	8	13	9	14
Blacks				
1 Partner	61	43	41	35
2-3 Partners	30	40	43	35
4-5 Partners	5	2	11	18
6 or More Partners	4	6	5	12
Total	100	100	100	100

*Includes a small number of women of other races who are not black.

Note: The National Surveys of Young Women (1971, 1976, and 1979) asked respondents about their number of premarital partners, the 1988 National Surveys of Young Women asked respondents for their lifetime number of partners.

Source: Kost, K. And Forrest, J.D. 1992. "American women's sexual behavior and exposure to risk of sexually transmitted disease." *Family Planning Perspectives* 24(6): 244-254. Based on data from the National Surveys of Young Women and the 1988 National Survey of Family Growth.

Table SD 4.4.B AVERAGE NUMBER OF SEXUAL PARTNERS AMONG NEVER-MARRIED MALES, AGED 17.5-19, 1988 AND 1991

	1988	1991
Mean No. of Partners Last 12 Months (Among those Sexually Experienced)		
Total	2.0	2.6
Black	2.4	4.3
White	2.0	2.3
Hispanic	1.8	2.1
Mean No. of Partners in Last 4 Weeks (Among those with 1 or More Partners in Last 12 Months)	0.8	0.8
Percent with 5 or More Partners in Last 12 Months	6.3	10.7

Source: Ku, L., Sonenstein, F.L. and Pleck, J.H., 1993. "Young males risk behaviors for HIV infection and sexually transmitted disease, 1988 through 1991". *American Journal of Public Health* 83(11): 1609-1615. Based on data from the 1988 and 1991 National Survey of Adolescent Males.

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Table SD 4.4.C PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF LIFETIME SEXUAL PARTNERS, AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE TEENS AGED 15-19, BY GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY AND POVERTY LEVEL: 1992

	One Partner	2-3 Partners	4-5 Partners	≥ 6 Partners
Males	27	28	15	31
Non-Hispanic white	31	19	15	26
Non-Hispanic black	12	26	17	45
Hispanic	24	31	12	33
Below poverty	22	23	15	40
At or above poverty	28	30	15	27
Females	36	32	15	18
Non-Hispanic white	36	30	16	18
Non-Hispanic black	31	37	14	19
Hispanic	43	34	13	10
Below poverty	34	33	15	18
At or above poverty	37	30	15	18

Note: Percents may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: 1992 National Health Interview Survey — Youth Risk Behavior Supplement, Tabulations by Child Trends, Inc., weighted analyses.

Table SD 4.4.D PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF LIFETIME SEXUAL PARTNERS AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE TEENS AGE 20, BY AGE AT FIRST INTERCOURSE: 1992

	Age at First Intercourse:		
	14 or Younger	15 or 16	17 or Older
Males			
One Partner	2	9	42
2-3 Partners	10	27	30
4-5 Partners	15	16	19
6 or More Partners	74	48	10
Females			
One Partner	2	10	45
2-3 Partners	26	28	33
4-5 Partners	16	28	13
6 or More Partners	57	34	10

Note: Percents may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: 1992 National Health Interview Survey — Youth Risk Behavior Supplement, Tabulations by Child Trends, Inc., weighted analyses.

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SD 4.5 TEEN PREGNANCY

From 1973 to 1990 the percent of females aged 15-19 who became pregnant generally increased, rising from 9.6% in 1973 to 11.5% in 1990. Since then, among females aged 15 to 17, the percent becoming pregnant has declined slightly from 7.6 percent in 1990 to 7.5 percent in 1991. Since 1990, among females aged 15 to 19, the percent becoming pregnant has leveled off, staying at 11.5 percent in 1991. In addition, among females aged 15 to 19, state data indicates that from 1991 through 1992, pregnancy rates decreased significantly in 30 of the 41 reporting states and the District of Columbia.⁵⁴

Pregnancy is more prevalent among older teens. Table SD 4.5 shows that the percent of all females aged 18-19 who become pregnant is more than double the corresponding percentage of all females aged 15 to 17. The overwhelming majority of U.S. teens do not want to become parents as teens.⁵⁵ Among all pregnancies to teens under age 20 at pregnancy outcome, 86 percent were unintended at conception.⁵⁶

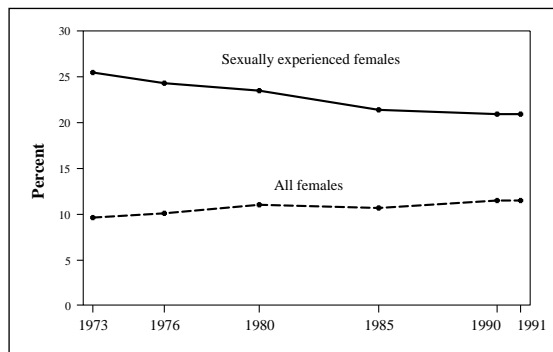
Figure SD 4.5 shows that among females aged 15 to 19 who have ever had sexual intercourse, the percent becoming pregnant declined from 25.4 percent in 1973 to 20.9 percent in 1990.

⁵⁴State-specific Pregnancy and Birth Rates Among Teenagers—United States, 1991, 1992,” MMWR, Sept. 22, 1995.

⁵⁵Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1994. “Sex and America’s Teenagers.” New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute.

⁵⁶Unintended pregnancies tabulated by Alan Guttmacher Institute based on National Survey of Family Growth in “Facts at a Glance,” Washington, D.C.: Child Trends, Inc., 1995.

Figure SD 4.5 PERCENT EXPERIENCING PREGNANCY EACH YEAR AMONG FEMALES AGED 15-19, BY SEXUAL EXPERIENCE 1972 - 1991



Note: Pregnancies are calculated by summing the number of live births, the number of abortions, and the estimated number of spontaneous fetal losses. Spontaneous fetal losses are based on data from the National Survey of Family Growth conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics.

Source: All data for 1973, and sexually experienced female data for 1976, are from Henshaw, S.K. (1994) U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics, New NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute; and Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1994. All other data from Ventura, S.J., Taffel S.M., Mosher, W.D., Wilson, J.B., and Henshaw, S.K. (1995). “Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates: Estimates for the United States, 1980-92,” *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Volume 43, No. 11(S), May 25, 1995.

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Table SD 4.5 PERCENT OF TEEN FEMALES EXPERIENCING PREGNANCY, BY AGE GROUP: 1973 - 1991

Percent Becoming Pregnant Each Year:	1973	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991
All Females Aged 14 or Less*	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7
All Females Aged 15-17	6.7	6.9	7.3	7.1	7.6	7.5
All Females Aged 18-19	14.1	14.9	16.2	15.8	16.6	17.1
All Females Aged 15-19	9.6	10.1	11.0	10.7	11.5	11.5
All Sexually Experienced Females Aged 15-19	25.4	24.3	23.5	21.4	20.9	20.9

*Denominator is females aged 14.

Note: Pregnancies are calculated by summing the number of live births, the number of abortions, and the estimated number of spontaneous fetal losses. Spontaneous fetal losses are based on data from the National Survey of Family Growth conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics.

Source: All data for 1973, and sexually experienced female data for 1976, are from Henshaw, S.K. (1994) U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics, New NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute; and Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1994. All other data from Ventura, S.J., Taffel S.M., Mosher, W.D., Wilson, J.B., and Henshaw, S.K. (1995). "Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates: Estimates for the United States, 1980-92," *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Volume 43, No. 11(S), May 25, 1995.

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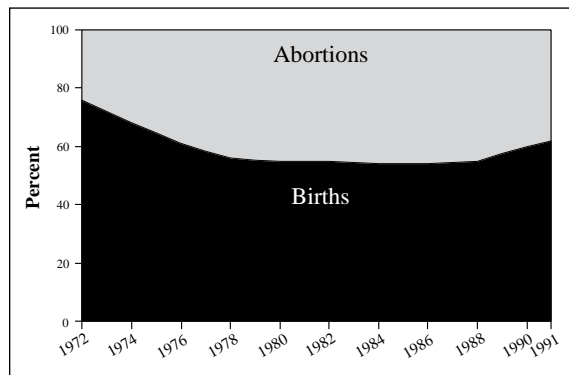
SD 4.6 ABORTION AMONG TEENS

The proportion of teen females aged 15-19 who obtained an abortion increased from 2.3 to 4.3 percent between 1973 and 1980, presumably influenced both by the legalization of abortion and increasing levels of sexual activity and pregnancy. (See Table SD 4.6) By 1991, the proportion obtaining abortions had dropped slightly to 3.8 percent. Similar patterns occurred among both younger teens (ages 15-17) and older teens (ages 18-19).

The percent of teens who are sexually experienced has increased during the past several decades, and therefore it is reasonable to consider abortion in light of this trend. When abortion rates are calculated among females age 15-19 who have ever had intercourse, the data indicate that the proportion obtaining abortions increased from 5.9 percent in 1973 to 9.1 percent in 1980, then declined to 6.8 percent in 1991. Thus, although a larger proportion of teen females were sexually experienced in 1990 than in 1980, a smaller proportion of those who were at risk of pregnancy obtained abortions.

Figure SD 4.6 depicts trends in the propensity to give birth versus obtaining an abortion given pregnancy over the past several years. In 1972, the proportion of pregnancies (excluding miscarriages) to females aged 15-19 which ended in birth was 76 percent. During the rest of the 1970s this proportion declined as abortion increased. However, throughout most of the 1980s, the proportion of pregnancies ending in birth remained fairly stable at around 55 percent. By 1991, there was an increase to 62 percent in the proportion of pregnancies ending in birth.

Figure SD 4.6 PERCENT OF PREGNANCIES AMONG FEMALES AGED 15-19 ENDING IN BIRTH AND ABORTION, 1972 - 1991



Note: Pregnancies do not include miscarriages

Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute. (1991) *Sex and America's Teenagers*. New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute, Figure 33. Based on birth data from the National Center for Health Statistics and abortion data from the Alan Guttmacher Institute. Data for 1991 are from Ventura, S.J., Taffel, S.M., Mosher, W.D., Wilson, J.B., and Henshaw, S., "Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates: Estimates for the United States, 1980-92," *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Vol. 43, No. 11(S), May 25, 1995.

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Table SD 4.6 PERCENT OF TEEN FEMALES OBTAINING AN ABORTION DURING THE YEAR, BY AGE GROUP: 1973 - 1991

	1973	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991
Females Aged 14 or Less*	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7
Females Aged 15-17	1.9	2.4	3.0	3.1	2.7	2.4
Females Aged 18-19	2.9	4.2	6.1	6.2	5.8	5.6
Females Aged 15-19	2.3	3.1	4.3	4.4	4.0	3.8
Sexually Experienced Females Aged 15-19	5.9	7.5	9.1	8.5	7.3	6.8

*Denominator is females aged 14.

Source: Data for 1973 and 1975 are from Henshaw, S.K. (1994). *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics*. New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute; Alan Guttmacher Institute 1994. *Sex and America's Teenagers*. New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute 1994; Based on data from abortion providers and sexual experience data from the National Survey of Family Growth. Data for 1980 - 1991 based on calculations from Ventura, S.J., Taffel, S.M., Mosher, W.D., Wilson, J.B., and Henshaw, S.K. (1995). "Trends in Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rates: Estimates for the United States, 1980-92," *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Volume 43, No. 11(S), May 25, 1995. Data for 1985 were interpolated from 1980 and 1988 data.

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SD 4.7 TEEN BIRTHS

Although much of the discussion around teen fertility focuses on nonmarital birth, research indicates that having a teen birth can have negative impacts on both mothers and their children regardless of the marital status of the mother. Giving birth at an early age can limit a young women's options regarding education and employment opportunities, increase the likelihood of receiving welfare, and can have negative impacts on the development of her children.⁵⁷

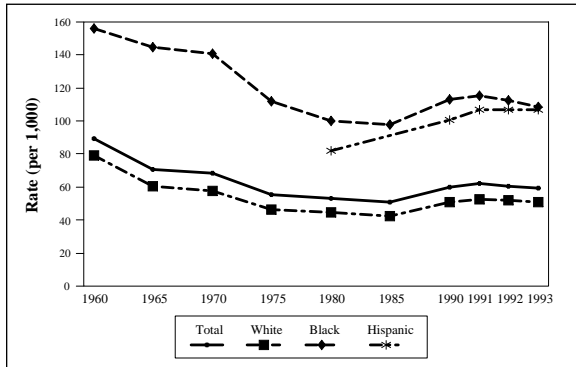
Figure 4.7.a shows trends in the number of teen births per 1000 teen women ages 15-19 from 1960 to 1993. Data are shown for all teens, and separately for white, black, and Hispanic teens ages 15-19. Between 1960 and 1985 the trend in teen birth rates was steadily downward from 89.1 to 51.0 births per 1000. Between 1985 and 1991, this trend reversed and the teen birth rate increased to 62.1 per 1000. Between 1991 and 1993, the rate fell modestly to 59.6 per 1000.

These basic historical trends are evident for white, black, and Hispanic teens as well. (See Table 4.7.a) Among whites age 15-19, rates went from 79.4 to 43.3 between 1960 and 1985, and rose to 52.8 in 1991 before dipping slightly to 51.1 in 1993. Rates for black teens have been consistently higher but follow the same pattern going from 156.1 to 95.4 per 1000 from 1960 to 1985, then increasing to a high of 115.5 in 1991 before dropping to 108.6 in 1993. Trends for Hispanic teens ages 15-19, which have been available only since 1980, indicate that the teen birth rate has risen steadily from 82.2 per 100 in 1980 to 106.7 in 1991, and continued to rise to 107.1 in 1992 before dropping slightly to 106.8 in 1993.

An important issue for policy purposes, and one that has received little attention, is the question of who are the fathers of these children born to teen mothers. Figure 4.7.b shows estimates of the percent of these fathers who were not themselves teenagers by age of mother for 1988. The data clearly reveal that the majority of these fathers were not teenagers. Even for mothers who were age 15 at the time their child was born, 39 percent of the fathers were age 20 or older. By mother's age 17, over half (55 percent) of the fathers were age 20 or older, rising to 78 percent by mother's age 19.

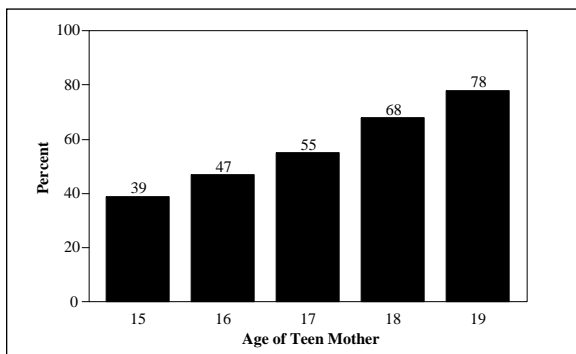
⁵⁷Moore, K.M. 1993. *Teenage Childbearing: A Pragmatic Perspective*. Child Trends, Inc. Washington, D.C.

Figure SD 4.7.A TEEN FERTILITY RATES (BIRTHS PER 1,000 TEEN WOMEN) BY RACE/ETHNICITY: 1960 - 1993



Source: Compiled by Child Trends, Inc., with data from annual Natality volumes of the Vital Statistics Branch of the National Center for Health Statistics.

Figure SD 4.7.B PERCENT OF CHILDREN OF TEEN MOTHERS WHO WERE FATHERED BY MEN AGES 20 AND OLDER, BY AGE OF MOTHER, 1988



Source: 1988 National Maternal and Infant Health Survey tabulations by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, calculations by Child Trends, Inc.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND FERTILITY

Table SD 4.7.A TEENAGE FERTILITY RATES (Births Per 1,000 Teen Women) BY AGE OF MOTHER AND RACE/ETHNICITY: 1960 - 1992

	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980 ^a	1985 ^a	1990 ^a	1991 ^a	1992 ^a	1993 ^a
All Races										
Age 15-17	—	—	38.8	36.1	32.5	31.0	37.5	38.7	37.8	37.8
Age 18-19	—	—	114.7	85.0	82.1	79.6	88.6	94.4	94.5	92.1
Age 15-19	89.1	70.4	68.3	55.6	53.0	51.0	59.9	62.1	60.7	59.6
White										
Age 15-17	—	—	29.2	28.0	25.5	24.4	29.5	30.7	30.1	30.3
Age 18-19	—	—	101.5	74.0	73.2	70.4	78.0	83.5	83.8	82.1
Age 15-19	79.4	60.6	57.4	46.4	45.4	43.3	50.8	52.8	51.8	51.1
Black										
Age 15-17	—	—	101.4	85.6	72.5	69.3	82.3	84.1	81.3	79.8
Age 18-19	—	—	204.9	152.4	135.1	132.4	152.9	158.6	157.9	151.9
Age 15-19	156.1	144.6	140.7	111.8	97.8	95.4	112.8	115.5	112.4	108.6
Hispanic										
Age 15-17	—	—	—	—	52.1	—	65.9	70.6	71.4	71.7
Age 18-19	—	—	—	—	126.9	—	147.7	158.5	159.7	159.1
Age 15-19	—	—	—	—	82.2	—	100.3	106.7	107.1	106.8

Notes: Data for Hispanics have been available only since 1980, with 22 states reporting in 1980, representing 90% of the Hispanic population. Hispanic birth data were reported by 23 states and DC in 1985, 48 states and DC in 1990; and 49 states and DC in 1991 and 1992.

^aBirths by race of mother. Tabulations prior to 1980 for black and whites (and for 1980 for Hispanics) are by race/ethnicity of child, which assigns the child to the race/ethnicity of the non-white parent, if any, or to the race/ethnicity of the father if both are non-white.

Source: Compiled by Child Trends, Inc., with data from annual Natality volumes of the Vital Statistics Branch of the National Center for Health Statistics.

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Table SD 4.7.B PERCENT OF BIRTHS TO TEEN MOTHERS BY AGE OF MOTHER AND AGE OF FATHER, 1988

Age of Mother	Age of Father		
	≤ 17	18 - 19	20+
15	30	31	39
16	25	28	47
17	15	30	55
18	5	27	68
19	4	18	78
Total ≤ 19	10	25	65

Source: 1988 National Maternal and Infant Health Survey tabulations by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, calculations by Child Trends, Inc.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND FERTILITY

SD 4.8 TEEN NON-MARITAL BIRTH RATE

While teen sexual behavior, pregnancy and parenthood have received increased attention for several decades, even more attention has been focussed on the increase in non-marital teen childbearing.⁵⁸ Potential explanations for this trend are varied. One reason may be a decrease in the stigma of non-marital childbearing.⁵⁹ The traditional response to premarital pregnancy—marriage before the birth of the child—has become much less common.⁶⁰ Others argue that high unemployment, particularly among black males, has diminished the attractiveness of young men as marriage partners.⁶¹ Also, the availability of abortion may cause men to feel less responsible and less willing to marry the mother of their child because abortion is an alternative.

Non-marital childbearing among teens is a concern because of the personal, economic, and social consequences for the child, the teen parent, and society. Raising a child is a challenging task, even for two parents. A large body of research suggests that the absence of a father is associated with negative outcomes for children when they grow up.⁶² For example, studies have linked growing up with a single parent to lower educational attainment for the child.⁶³ This trend is not isolated to teens. Rather, non-marital childbearing has increased among women of all ages. The issue of non-marital childbearing has focussed on teens because these young women often have little education and lack the ability to support their families economically, especially as a single parent.

Figure SD 4.8 shows the percent of births to women aged 15-19 which occurred outside of marriage by race/ethnicity group. The increase in non-marital childbearing has occurred among teens of all ages and across all race/ethnic groups. Among all teens aged 15-19, 15 percent of births were non-marital in 1960, compared to 70 percent in 1992. Non-marital childbearing is higher among blacks; in 1992, 93 percent of births to black females aged 15-19 were non-marital, compared to less than two-thirds among whites and Hispanics. Non-marital births were more prevalent among younger teens. For example, in 1992, 79 percent of births to 15-17 year olds were non-marital, compared to 65 percent among 18-19 year olds. This (See Table SD 4.8) pattern occurs across all race/ethnicity subgroups. However, increases in non-marital childbearing have been particularly dramatic among whites. In 1960, only 7 percent of births to white females age 15-19 were non-marital, compared to 60 percent of births in 1992.

⁵⁸Furstenberg, F.F., Jr. 1991. "As the pendulum swings: Teenage childbearing and social concern." *Family Relations* 40(2):127-138.

⁵⁹Pagnini, D.L. and Rindfuss, R.R. 1993. "The divorce of marriage and childbearing: Changing attitudes and behavior in the United States." *Population and Development Review* 19(2):331-347.

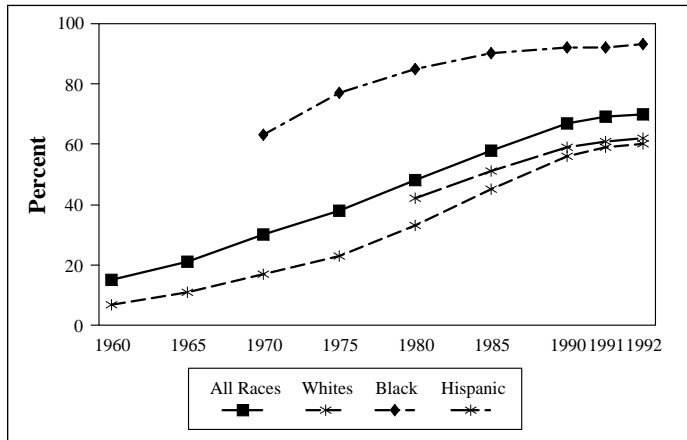
⁶⁰Furstenberg, F.F., Jr. 1991. "As the pendulum swings: Teenage childbearing and social concern." *Family Relations* 40(2):127-138.

⁶¹Wilson, W.J. 1987. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press; Lichter, D.T., McLaughlin, D.K., Kephart, G., and Landry, D.J. 1992. "Race, local mate availability, and transitions to first marriage among young women." Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Population Association of America, Denver, CO, April 30 - May 2.

⁶²McLanahan, S. and Sandefur, G. 1994. *Growing up with a single parent: What hurts, what helps*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Haveman, R. and Wolfe, B. 1994. *Succeeding generations: On the effects of investments in children*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

⁶³Knox, V. and Bane, M.J. 1994. "Child support and schooling." In I. Garfinkel, S. McLanahan, and P. Robins (Eds.). *Child Support and Child Well-Being*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Figure SD 4.8 PERCENT OF ALL TEEN BIRTHS TO UNMARRIED TEENS AGES 15-19: 1960 - 1992



Source: Compiled by Child Trends, Inc., with data from annual Natality volumes of the Vital Statistics Branch of the National Center for Health Statistics

Table SD 4.8 PERCENT OF ALL TEEN BIRTHS TO UNMARRIED TEENS, BY AGE OF MOTHER AND RACE/ETHNICITY^a OF CHILD: 1960 - 1992

	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990 ^b	1991 ^b	1992
All Races									
Ages 15-17	24	33	43	51	61	71	78	79	79
Ages 18-19	11	15	22	30	40	51	61	63	65
Ages 15-19	15	21	30	38	48	58	67	69	70
White									
Ages 15-17	12	17	25	33	45	58	68	70	71
Ages 18-19	5	9	14	17	27	38	51	53	55
Ages 15-19	7	11	17	23	33	45	56	59	60
Black									
Ages 15-17	—	—	76	87	93	95	96	96	96
Ages 18-19	—	—	52	68	79	86	89	90	90
Ages 15-19	—	—	63	77	85	90	92	92	93
Hispanic ^a									
Ages 15-17	—	—	—	—	51	61	68	69	69
Ages 18-19	—	—	—	—	36	46	54	56	57
Ages 15-19	—	—	—	—	42	51	59	61	62

Note: ^aData for Hispanics have been available only since 1980, with 22 states reporting in 1980, representing 90% of the Hispanic population. Hispanic birth data was reported by 23 states and DC in 1985, 48 states and DC in 1990; and 49 states and DC in 1991 and 1992.

^b Births by race of mother. Tabulations prior to 1989 were by race of child, which assigns the child to the race of the non-white parent, if any, or to the race of the father, if both are non-white.

Source: Compiled by Child Trends, Inc., with data from annual Natality volumes of the Vital Statistics Branch of the National Center for Health Statistics.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND FERTILITY

SD 4.9 SECOND AND HIGHER ORDER BIRTHS TO TEENS

Experiencing a birth during the teen years has been associated with poorer outcomes for young women,⁶⁴ and giving birth to a second child while still a teen increases the risk of poor outcomes for the young women (e.g., school dropout),⁶⁵ as well as their children. In addition, among teen mothers on AFDC, the occurrence of a subsequent teen birth reduces the likelihood of getting off of welfare.⁶⁶ In terms of personal, social, and economic costs to the teen, to the child, and to society, it seems that delaying subsequent childbearing would be preferable. However, recent analyses of nationally representative data indicate that these young mothers proceed to have a second birth at about the same pace as older mothers.⁶⁷

As shown in Table SD 4.9, the proportion of teen births which are second or higher order has increased in recent years. In fact, in 1991, nearly one-quarter of all teen births involved a second or higher order birth. Between 1985 and 1991, the proportion of teen births that were second or higher order births rose from 22 to 25 percent.

Subsequent teen births are more common among certain subgroups of the population. In 1991, a higher proportion of births among married teens were second or higher order births (28 percent) than births to unmarried teens (23 percent). Moreover, births to teens with lower educational attainment are more likely to be subsequent births; 27 percent of births to teens who had not graduated from high school were second or higher order births compared to 19 percent for teens who had a high school education. Finally, births to black and Hispanic teens were more likely to be subsequent births than births to whites, with black teens at 32 percent, Hispanic teens at 26 percent, and white teens at 21 percent.

⁶⁴Moore, K.A., Myers, D.E., Morrison, D.R., Nord, C.W., Brown, B.B., and Edmonston, B. 1993. "Age at first childbirth and later poverty." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 3(4):393-422.

⁶⁵Kalmuss, D. and Namerow, P.B. 1992. "The mediators of educational attainment among early childbearers." Unpublished manuscript. Columbia University, Center for Population and Family Health.

⁶⁶Moore, K.A. and Hofferth, S. 1978. "The consequences of age at first childbirth: Female-headed families and welfare reciprocity." Working paper 1146-05. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

⁶⁷Moore, K.A., Myers, D.E., Morrison, D.R., Nord, C.W., Brown, B. and Edmonston, B. 1993. "Age at first childbirth and later poverty." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 3(4):393-422.

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Table SD 4.9 PERCENT OF ALL TEEN BIRTHS THAT ARE SECOND OR HIGHER ORDER, BY MARITAL STATUS, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND RACE/ETHNICITY: 1985 AND 1991

	1985	1991
All Births	22	25
Race/Ethnicity		
White	20	21
Black	27	32
Hispanic	25	26
Other	26	25
Educational Attainment		
High school graduate	16	19
Not high school graduate	25	27
Marital Status		
Married	26	28
Single	20	23

Source: Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of Natality data for 1985 and 1991 from the National Center for Health Statistics.