



A Project of
The Annie E. Casey
Foundation

The Casey Foundation takes on the challenge of reducing adolescent pregnancy to pursue our goal of connecting at-risk youth to opportunities that help them succeed.

data snapshot

Number Two, September 2006



Teen Motherhood at Record Low in United States

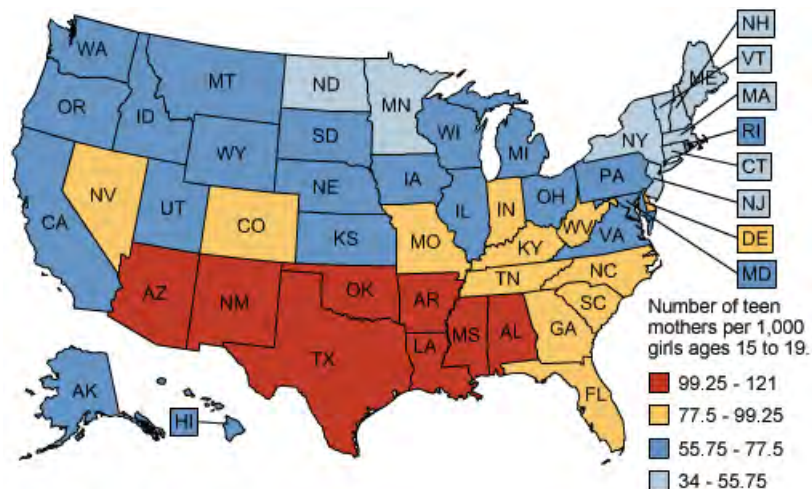
The number of teen mothers in the United States is on the decline. The downward trend in adolescent motherhood is evident in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as for White, Black, Asian, American Indian, and Hispanic teens.

Despite the good news, it is important to note that U.S. teen birth rates remain higher than those of other industrialized countries. Teen birth rates in the United States remain particularly high for teens of color and those living in low-income communities. Many of these teens have grown up in poverty, and are vulnerable – along with their children – to further disadvantage and disconnection from society.

Research shows the drop in teen pregnancy and teen birth rates over the past decade is a result of increased abstinence among teens, higher contraceptive use among teens having sex, and more effective contraception methods. Through our Plain TalkSM initiative and other investments, the Casey Foundation has found that sexually active youth who have had informed conversations with parents or other adults about contraception and other reproductive health issues are less likely to become pregnant, father a child, or contract a sexually transmitted disease. Reducing adolescent pregnancy is one part of our larger goal to connect at-risk youth to opportunities that help them succeed.

Figure 1 Number of teen mothers per 1,000 teen girls ages 15 to 19, 2003

Source: KIDS COUNT analysis of estimates of first births, Natality Data Sets, National Center for Health Statistics. Tabulations by Child Trends, Inc.



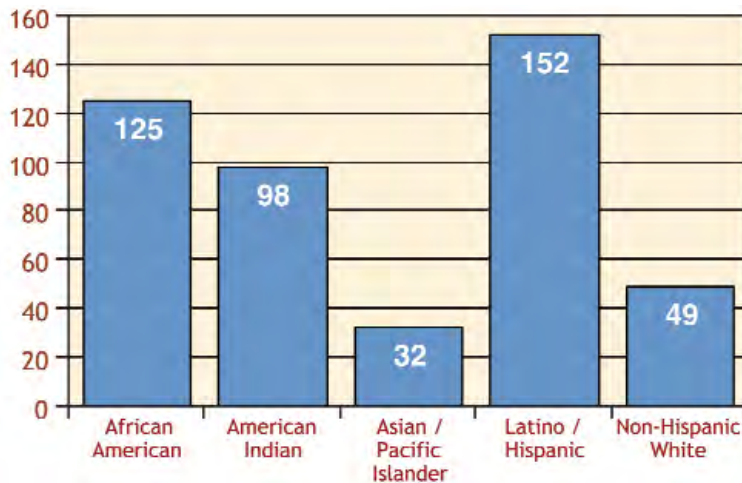
Data Highlights:

- In 2003, there were approximately 772,600 mothers between the ages of 15 and 19 in the United States. This number represents 78 girls for every 1,000 in this age group. Mothers under the age of 15 accounted for 6,511 births in the United States in 2003.

- The rate of teenage motherhood has declined in every state. The rate of teen mothers has dropped 14 percent since 2000 in the United States overall. Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire, and New Jersey have seen the biggest drop in their rates of teen mothers since 2000.
- Gaps persist across states: Girls growing up in Mississippi, New Mexico, and Texas are more than three times as likely as girls in New Hampshire and Vermont to become teen mothers.

Figure 2
Number of teen mothers per 1,000 teen girls ages 15 to 19 by race and Hispanic origin, 2003

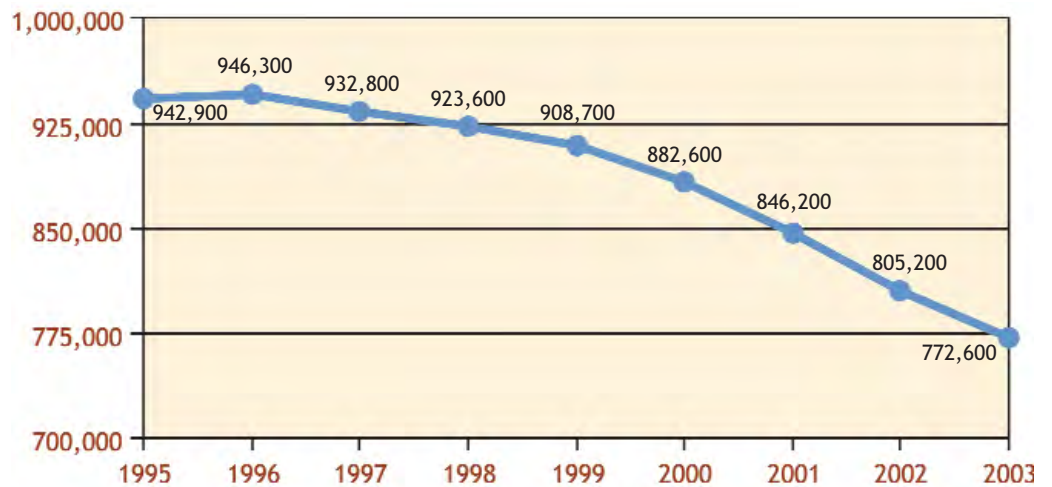
Source: KIDS COUNT analysis of estimates of first births, Natality Data Sets, National Center for Health Statistics. Tabulations by Child Trends, Inc.



- The incidence of becoming a teen mother varies by race. Although teen motherhood rates have dropped across all major race groups, American Indian, African-American and Latino teens are still two to four times as likely as Non-Hispanic White and Asian Pacific Islander teens to bear a child before they enter adulthood.

Figure 3
Number of teen mothers ages 15 to 19, 1995 to 2003

Source: KIDS COUNT analysis of estimates of first births, Natality Data Sets, National Center for Health Statistics. Tabulations by Child Trends, Inc.



- The current decline in the rate of teen motherhood actually began in the mid-1990s. In 1995, there were 942,900 mothers between the ages of 15 and 19 in the United States. The rate of teen motherhood was 106 per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19. The rate in 2003 was 27 percent lower than it was in 1995 and represents approximately 170,000 fewer teen mothers over this eight-year period.

Background on Teenage Childbearing

Teenage childbearing can have long-term negative effects on both the adolescent mother and the newborn. The well-documented challenges for teen mothers and their children include the following:

- Teen parenthood greatly increases the risk of educational failure. Nearly one in three girls cited pregnancy as the reason they dropped out of school in 2004. Even after controlling for race, economic status, and other characteristics, having a child before the age of 20 reduces academic attainment by almost 3 years.
- Given their lower educational attainment, young mothers often find themselves at a distinct disadvantage in the labor market. When they do work, they have lower family incomes and higher rates of poverty than women who gave birth at a later age. The poverty rate for children born to teenage mothers who have never married and who did not graduate from high school is 78 percent. This compares to 9 percent of children born to women over age 20 who are currently married and did graduate from high school.
- Children born to young adolescent mothers are at higher risk of being born low birthweight and dying within their first year of life. They are also more likely to miss out on emotional and cognitive stimulation crucial to healthy child development.

How Your State Ranks

The table below show the states ranked by the number of mothers per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19 in 2003.

Figure 4
Number of teen mothers per 1,000 teen girls ages 15 to 19, 2003

Source: KIDS COUNT analysis of estimates of first births, Natality Data Sets, National Center for Health Statistics. Tabulations by Child Trends, Inc.

Rank	State	Number of Teen Mothers	Number of Teen Mothers per 1,000
	United States	772,600	78
1	New Hampshire	1,500	34
2	Vermont	800	37
3	Massachusetts	8,900	44
4	Maine	2,100	45
5	North Dakota	1,100	47
6	Connecticut	5,500	48
7	New Jersey	13,600	49
8	Minnesota	9,100	50
9	New York	34,400	55
10	Pennsylvania	23,900	58
10	Wisconsin	11,600	58
10	Washington	12,500	58
13	Iowa	6,100	59
14	Rhode Island	2,100	61
15	Utah	6,000	63
15	South Dakota	1,900	63
15	Montana	2,200	63
18	Michigan	22,600	64
19	Nebraska	4,200	65
19	Oregon	7,800	65
19	Maryland	12,300	65
22	Virginia	16,300	66
23	Alaska	1,800	67
24	Idaho	3,600	68
25	Hawaii	2,800	69

Rank	State	Number of Teen Mothers	Number of Teen Mothers per 1,000
26	Wyoming	1,400	70
27	Ohio	28,700	73
28	Kansas	7,500	75
29	California	93,600	76
30	Illinois	33,200	77
31	Missouri	15,700	78
32	Indiana	17,100	79
32	Florida	42,500	79
34	West Virginia	4,600	80
35	Colorado	12,700	83
36	Delaware	2,300	85
37	Kentucky	12,200	90
38	North Carolina	24,800	92
39	Nevada	6,500	93
40	Tennessee	18,500	97
41	South Carolina	13,800	98
42	Georgia	29,400	99
43	Oklahoma	12,500	100
44	Alabama	15,600	101
45	Louisiana	18,100	106
45	Arkansas	10,100	106
47	Arizona	21,100	112
48	Texas	93,000	114
49	New Mexico	8,500	117
50	Mississippi	12,900	121
NR	District of Columbia	1,800	127

NR=Not Ranked

Find out how your state rates in KIDS COUNT State-Level Data Online:

- ***Rate of teen motherhood, Ages 15 – 19 (2003)***
(www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=25)
- ***Teen births, by Age Group (2003)***
(www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=10)
- ***Percent of all Births to Females Less than 20 Years of Age (2003)***
(www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=12)
- ***Disconnected Young Adults Ages 18 – 24 (2004)***
(www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=130)

Many of the state KIDS COUNT grantees have produced state reports focused on the issue of adolescent childbearing. Visit the KIDS COUNT issues library (www.aecf.org/kidscount/kcnetwork/issues/#young).

What You Can Do

The following publications and organizations address strategies to reduce adolescent pregnancy.

- ***Plain TalkSM: A Community-based Strategy to Reduce Teen Pregnancy***
(www.plaintalk.org) The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Plain TalkSM project is a neighborhood-based initiative aimed at helping adults, parents and community leaders communicate effectively with young people about reducing adolescent sexual risk-taking.
- ***Approaches for Helping Young Parents Succeed***
(www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/essay.htm and www.aecf.org/publications/data/05_essay.pdf) The essays in the 2004 and 2005 *KIDS COUNT Data Books* discuss the importance of supporting young mothers and fathers achieve economic security for their families.
- ***National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy***
(www.teenpregnancy.org) The goal of the Campaign is to reduce the rate of teen pregnancy by one-third between 2006 and 2015.
- ***Guttmacher Institute State Center***
(www.guttmacher.org/statecenter) The Guttmacher Institute State Center provides research and analysis on data and policy at the state level for a wide range of reproductive health issues including adolescent childbearing.

Sources

Annie E. Casey Foundation, "Moving Youth From Risk to Opportunity," *2004 KIDS COUNT Data Book* Essay accessed at www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/essay.htm (August 2006)

Annie E. Casey Foundation's analysis of estimates of first births from 1990 – 2003 Natality Data Sets, Series 21, Numbers 2 – 16 (SETS versions), and 16H (ASCII Version), National Center for Health Statistics. Tabulations by Child Trends. Link to longer version of the definition and data source for adolescent motherhood.

Child Trends, *Facts At A Glance April 2006*, Publication #2006-03.

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, *America's Children 2005*, accessed at www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/ (June 2006)

National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2006*, accessed at nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/ (August 2006).

The Allen Guttmacher Institute, *The Guttmacher Report on Public Policy*, Vol. 5, No. 1, February 2002, accessed at <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/tgr/05/1/gr050107.html>

About the KIDS COUNT Data Snapshot Series:

The Data Snapshot series highlights specific indicators of child well-being contained in the KIDS COUNT State-Level Data Online system (www.kidscount.org/sld).

KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States.

KIDS COUNT exemplifies the Foundation's commitment to using the best available data to measure the well-being of children and to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.