

A Look at Latinos



An Overview of Latina Teen Pregnancy & Birth Rates

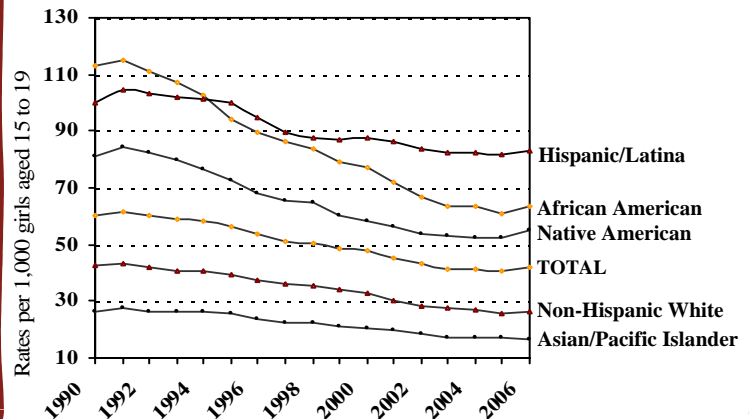
The United States has made great strides in reducing teen pregnancy and childbearing, but the success has been neither even nor uniform. Too many teens are still becoming parents, and nowhere is the problem more acute than in the Latino community.

- **53% of Latina teens get pregnant at least once before age 20**—nearly twice the national average.¹
- As of 2004, Latinas have the highest teen pregnancy rate *and* teen birth rate of any major ethnic/racial minority in the country.^{2,3}
- Latina teen birth rates have declined about half as fast as non-Hispanic white and non-Hispanic black teens (see figure).³ In fact, teen birth rates have actually *increased* in 16 states and the District of Columbia.⁴
- The Latino population is the largest and fastest growing minority group in the United States—by 2025, one-quarter of all teens will be Latino.⁵ Clearly whatever goes on among Latino teens not only affects the Latino community, but also has an extraordinary impact on the nation as a whole.

Despite having a rich culture and growing influence, the Latino community disproportionately suffers from a variety of troubling social indicators. At present, less than 6 in 10 Latino adults living in the United States have a high school diploma⁶ and Latino teens are more likely to drop out of high school than their non-Hispanic counterparts.⁷ In 2005, more than 1 in 5 Latinos were living below the poverty level compared to 8 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 24 percent of blacks.⁸ Furthermore, 30 percent of all children living in poverty are Latino.⁹ Preventing teen pregnancy and parenthood is one of the most direct and effective ways to improve these trends.

- Over two-thirds (69%) of Latina teen moms drop out of high school, compared to 58 percent of teen moms overall.¹⁰
- Half of all single mothers on welfare were teenagers when they had their first child.¹¹
- Children born to teen mothers are less likely to succeed in school, are at greater risk of poverty, and are more likely to have health problems and engage in problem behavior.¹²

Since 1995, Latina teens have had the highest teen birth rate among the major racial/ethnic groups in the U.S.³



Simply put, by continuing the progress made to date in preventing too-early pregnancy and parenthood, more Latino teens will have the opportunity to get an education, participate in the workforce, and build strong families.

SOURCES

- 1 National Campaign analysis of Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Sutton, P.D., Ventura, S.J., Menacker, F., and Kirmeyer (2006). Births: Final data for 2004. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 55 (1); Ventura, S.J., Abma, J.A., Mosher, W.D., and Henshaw, S.K. (2008). Estimated Pregnancy Rates by Outcome for the United States, 1990-2004. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 56(15).
- 2 Ventura SJ, Abma JC, Mosher WD, Henshaw SK. Estimated pregnancy rates by outcome for the United States, 1990–2004. *National vital statistics reports*; vol 56 no 15. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2008.
- 3 Hamilton, B.E., Martin, J.A., & Ventura, S.J. (2007). Births: Preliminary data for 2006. *National vital statistics reports*; vol 56 no 7. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.
- 4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. Vitalstats. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/VitalStats.htm>. [January, 2008].
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). Projections of the total resident population by 5-year age groups, race, and Hispanic origin with special age categories: Middle Series, 1999 to 2100. Tables NP-T4. Retrieved September 8, 2005, from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/natsum-T3.html>.
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau. (2005). Educational Attainment in 2002. *Population Profile of the United States: Dynamic Version*. Retrieved December 1, 2005 from www.census.gov/population/popprofile/dynamic/EdAttainment.pdf.
- 7 Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N. & Chapman, C.D. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001*. National Center for Education Statistics. (NCES 2005-046). Retrieved September 7, 2005, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005046.pdf>.
- 8 DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B.D. & Lee, C.H. (2006). Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005. *Current Population Reports*, P60-231.
- 9 Driscoll, A.K., Brindis, C.D., Biggs, M.A., & Valderrama, L.T. (2004). *Priorities, Progress and Promises: A Chartbook on Latino Adolescent Reproductive Health*. San Francisco, CA: University of California, San Francisco, Center for Reproductive Health Research and Policy, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences and the Institute for Health Policy Studies.
- 10 Manlove, J (1998). The Influence of High School Dropout and Social Disengagement on the Risk of School-Age Pregnancy. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 8(2): p. 187-220.
- 11 U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *Sources of Support for Adolescent Mothers*, Washington, D.C.: Author, September 1990. See also Jacobson, J., & Maynard, R., *Unwed Mothers and Long-Term Dependency*, Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, September 1995.
- 12 Hoffman, S. (2006). *By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing*. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

This publication made possible by the Turner Foundation.
May 2008

