



FACT SHEET

Teen Sexual Activity, Pregnancy, and Childbearing Among Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States

December 2007

Highlights:

- Asian/Pacific Islander teens have the lowest teen birth rate among the major racial/ethnic groups.
- Half of Asian/Pacific Islander teen births occur to those whose origin is not listed on the standard birth certificate.
- Compared to the national average, Asian/Pacific Islander high school students are about half as likely to have had sexual intercourse.



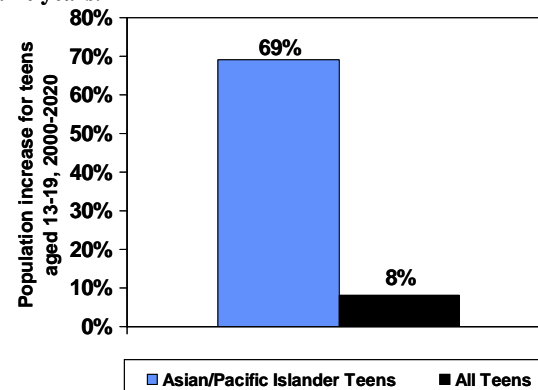
Asians/Pacific Islanders and the U.S. Population

Approximately 5 % of the U.S. population is of Asian descent and 0.3% of the population is of native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander descent.¹ In 2005, half a million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 were of Asian or Pacific Islander descent, approximately 5% of all 15- to 19-year-old girls.²

Among those of Asian descent, the largest subgroups are Chinese (23%), Filipino (20%), Asian Indian (16%), and Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese (10% each). About half (46%) of those of Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander descent are native Hawaiian; other large subgroups within the Pacific Islander category are Samoan (15%) and Guamanian (11%). Approximately half of the U.S. Asian population lives in California, New York, or Hawaii, and over half of the U.S. Pacific Islander population lives in Hawaii or California.³

From 2000 to 2020, the Asian/Pacific Islander population is projected to increase to 20 million. By 2020, 6% of the U.S. population and 7% of U.S. teens aged 13 to 19 will be of Asian/Pacific Islander descent. The growth rate of the Asian/Pacific Islander teen population is greater than that of the overall teen population — between 2000 and 2020 the Asian/Pacific Islander population of 13- to 19-year-olds will grow 69% while the total 13- to 19-year-old population will increase by only 8% (Figure 1).⁴

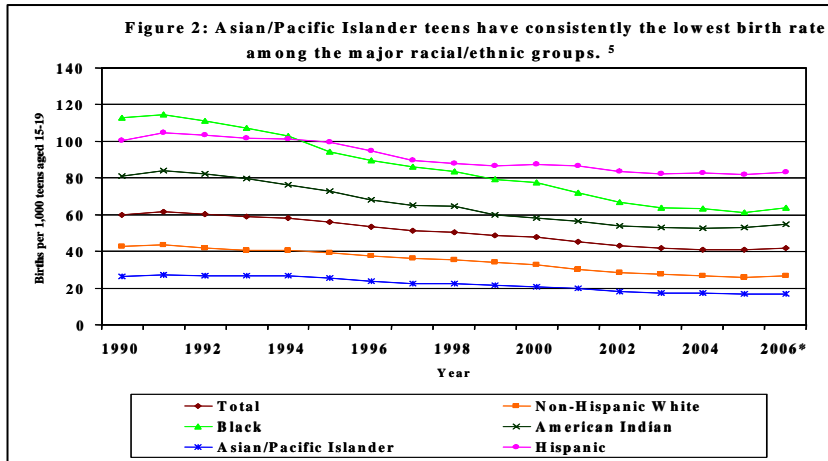
Figure 1: The growth of the Asian/Pacific Islander teen population between 2000 and 2020 is expected to be more than eight times that of the overall U.S. teen population during those same years.⁴





Asian/Pacific Islander Teen Pregnancy Rates

Teen pregnancy rates for Asian/Pacific Islander youth are not available from any of the three national pregnancy data sets. This is most likely due to a lack of available abortion data (the pregnancy rate includes all pregnancies –those ending birth, abortion, and miscarriage).



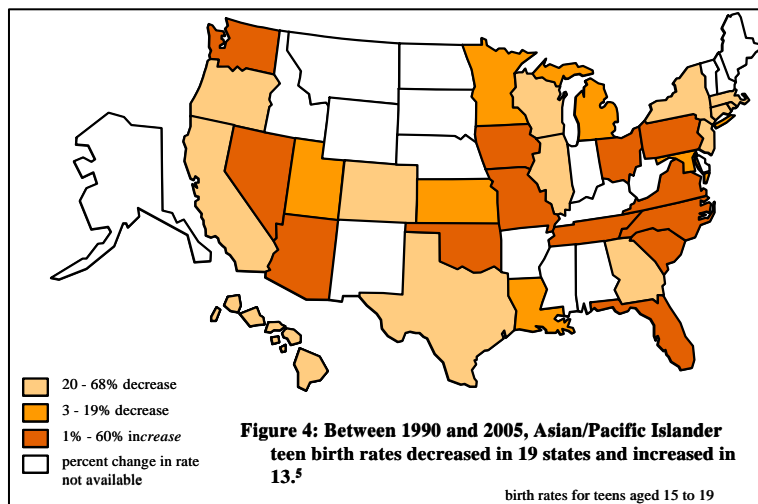
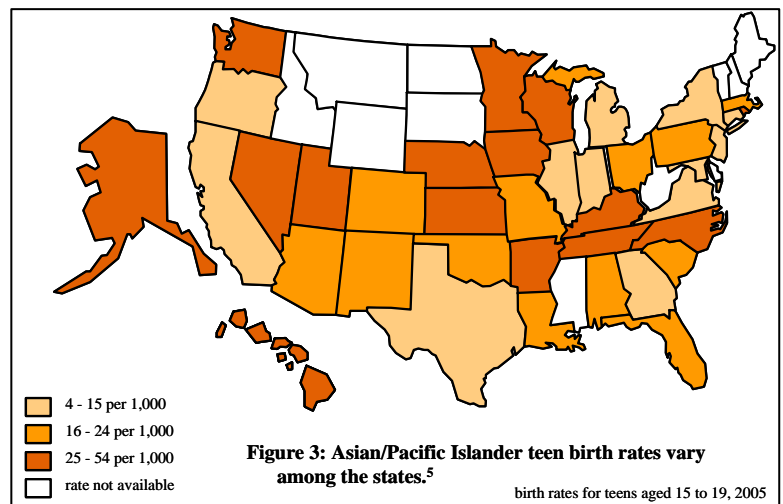
Asian/Pacific Islander Teen Birth Rates

Asian/Pacific Islander teens have the lowest teen birth rate among the major racial/ethnic groups in the United States. The 2006 preliminary birth rate for Asian/Pacific Islander teens is 16.7

* Data for 2006 are preliminary per 1,000, down 2% from 17.0 in 2005, less than half the national rate of 41.9 per 1,000 (Figure 2).⁵

Asian/Pacific Islander teen birth rates vary substantially from state to state: for the 37 states with Asian/Pacific Islander populations large enough to calculate birth rates in 2005 (latest year available), birth rates for teens aged 15 to 19 ranged from 4 per 1,000 in New Jersey to 54 per 1,000 in Alaska (Figure 3).⁶

Birth rates for Asian/Pacific Islander teens fell 39% between 1991 and 2006, from

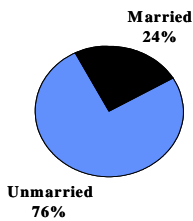


27.3 per 1000 to 16.7 per 1000. This percent change was slightly higher than the overall percent decline in birth rate for 15- to 19-year-old girls in the U.S. over the same period of time (32%).⁵

Among the 32 states for which there are data available, the majority showed a decline in Asian American/Pacific Islander teen birth rates between 1990 and 2005. Declines ranged from 3% in Louisiana and Maryland to 68% in Connecticut. An increase in the birth rate was seen among thirteen states, ranging from 16.2% in Iowa to 42.1% in Nevada (Figure 4).⁶

Very little data is available for Asian/Pacific Islander teen births by mother's origin. The standard birth certificate includes nine Asian/Pacific Islander subgroups, but many reporting areas have reduced the number of subgroups to four: Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, and Filipino (45 states and the District of Columbia reported at least one Asian/Pacific Islander teen birth in 2000 coded as the "other" category for reporting areas that use the reduced list of subgroups).

Figure 5: Over three-quarters of Asian/Pacific Islander teen mothers are unmarried.⁹



teen mothers aged 15 to 19, 2005

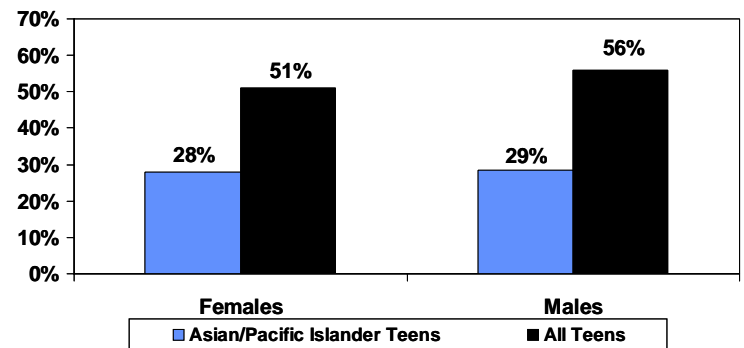
Although a smaller percentage of Asian American/Pacific Islanders teen mothers give birth out-of-wedlock compared to all teens, a majority of Asian American/Pacific Islander teen mothers are unmarried. In 2006, 76% of Asian American/Pacific Islander teens aged 15 to 19 who gave birth were unmarried, versus 83% of all teens who gave birth.⁵



Sexual Activity and Contraceptive Use

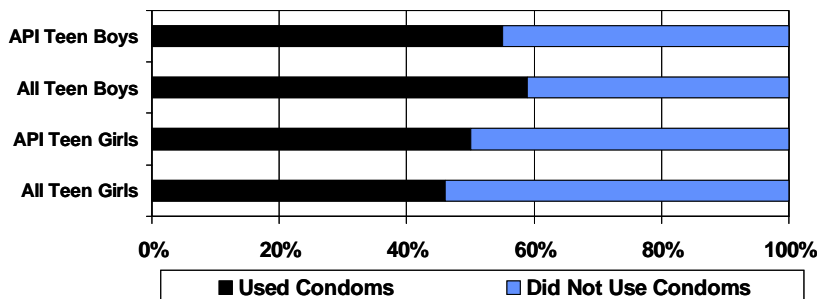
Because Asian/Pacific Islander youth make up such a small proportion of the overall teen population, surveys measuring teen sexual activity and contraceptive use typically do not include enough Asians and Pacific Islanders to calculate reliable statistics. However, an analysis published in 2000 combined data from the 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (a periodic, nationally representative survey of high school students), resulting in an Asian/Pacific Islander sample size large enough to produce reliable, nationally representative statistics.⁷ According to this paper, just over one-quarter (27.9%) of Asian/Pacific Islander high school females reported having had sexual intercourse, a little more than half the national rate of teen girls (49.9%). Asian/Pacific Islander high school males also reported far lower sexual activity than the national average (28.5% versus 53.5%).

Figure 6: Fewer Asian/Pacific Islander teens report ever having had sexual intercourse.⁸



Students in grades 9-12, 1991-1997

Figure 7: Asian/Pacific Islander students are about as likely the general high school population to have used a condom at most recent sex.⁸



Students in grades 9-12, 1991-1997

Condom use at last sex among Asian/Pacific Islander students was not significantly different from use among the total student population. Female Asian/Pacific Islander students were slightly more likely than average to use condoms at last sex (49.9% vs. 45.6%), and male Asian/Pacific Islander students were slightly less likely than average to do so (54.8% versus 59.3%), but for both males and females the difference between Asian/Pacific Islander

students and the total student population is not statistically significant.

NOTES

1. U.S. Census Bureau. Table 1: Annual Estimates of the Population by Sex and Five-Year Age Groups for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-01) and Table 4: Annual Estimates of the Population by Age and Sex of Asian alone or in combination for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-04AAC) and Table 4: Annual Estimates of the Population by Age and Sex of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone or in combination for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-04-NAC).
2. U.S. Census Bureau. Table 4: Annual Estimates of the Population by Age and Sex of Asian alone or in combination for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-04AAC) and Table 4: Annual Estimates of the Population by Age and Sex of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone or in combination for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-04-NAC). Washington, DC: Author.
3. Barnes, J.S., & Bennett, C.E. (2002). The Asian population: 2000. *Census 2000 Brief*, 01-16. Grieco, E.M. (2001). Grieco, E.M. (2001). The Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander population: 2000. *Census 2000 Brief*, 01-14. Note: in statistics from the federal government, race and ethnicity are usually treated separately. In a change from previous Census surveys, the 2000 Census allowed the option of choosing more than one race.
4. Day, J.C. (1996). Population projections of the United States by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin: 1995 to 2050. *Current Population Reports*, P25-1130. Available online at <http://www.census.gov/prod/1/pop/p25-1130/>.
5. Hamilton, B.E., Ventura, S.J., & Martin, J.A.. (2007). Preliminary Births for 2006. NCHS *Health E-Stats* retrieved December 12, 2007 from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/nvsr/nvsr.htm#vol56>.
6. Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Sutton, P.D., Ventura, S.J., Menacker, F., Munson, M.L., & Munson, M.L. (2005). Births: Final data for 2005. *National Vital Statistics Reports*: 56 (6)
7. Grunbaum, J.A., Lowry, R., Kann, L., & Paterman, B. (2000). Prevalence of health risk behaviors among Asian American/Pacific Islander high school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 27(5), 322-330.
9. National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol 56, No. 6, December 5, 2007