

FACT SHEET

Teen Sexual Activity, Pregnancy and Childbearing Among African-American Teens

APRIL 2010

Highlights:

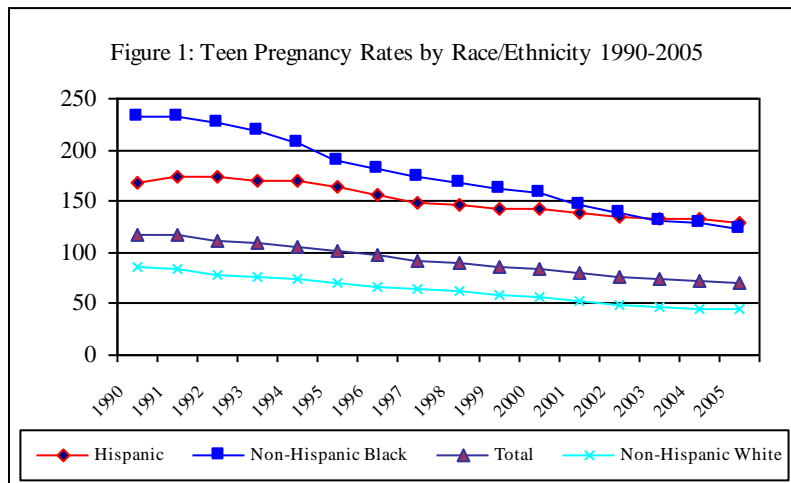
- The teen pregnancy rate among non-Hispanic Black teen girls decreased 47% between 1990 and 2005, and the teen birth rate decreased 47% between 1991 and 2008.
- Non-Hispanic Black high school students are more likely than their peers to report using a condom at last sex, and non-Hispanic black teen boys are more likely than their peers to report using a condom consistently.



Teen Pregnancy Rates

In 2005, non-Hispanic Black girls aged 15 to 19 had a pregnancy rate of 123.8 per 1,000, well above the national average of 70.6 per 1,000 15- to 19-year-old girls.¹ While three in ten teen girls overall in the U.S. become pregnant at least once before age 20, about half of non-Hispanic Black teen girls will experience a pregnancy before age 20.² Moreover, in 2002, 19% of sexually experienced 15- to 19-year old Black males reported having caused a pregnancy, versus 13% of all sexually experienced males aged 15 to 19.³

The non-Hispanic Black teen pregnancy rate decreased 45% between 1990 and 2005, more than the overall U.S. teen pregnancy rate decrease of 38% during that same time period (Figure 1). More specifically, the teen pregnancy rate among younger non-Hispanic Black teens (age 15-17) decreased 53% between 1990 and 2005 compared to a 35% decrease in the teen pregnancy rate among older non-Hispanic black teens (age 18-19).

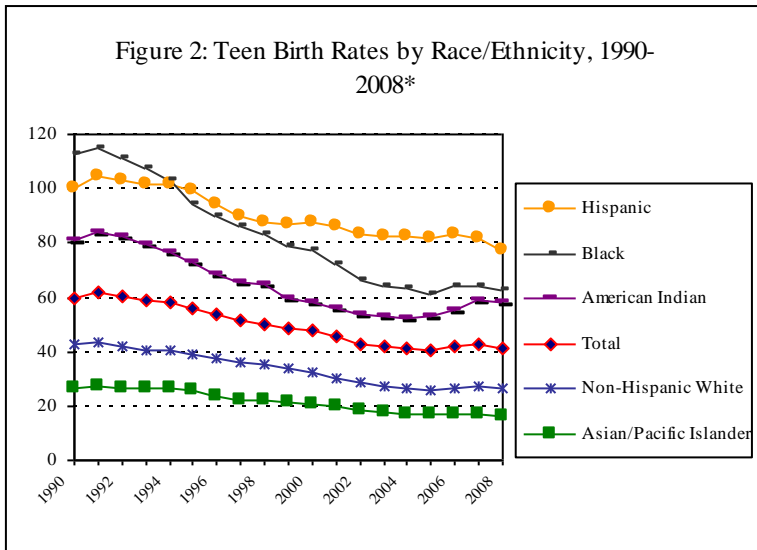


Teen Birth Rates

The birth rate among non-Hispanic Black teen girls decreased 47% between 1991 and 2008 (Figure 2).⁴ Despite this progress, the teen birth rate remains high, and between 2005 and 2007, the teen birth rate increased 6% among non-Hispanic black teen girls. Despite the 2% decrease in the non-Hispanic black

teen birth rate between 2007 and 2008, it remains the case that fully one-quarter of non-Hispanic black teen girls will become a mother before the age of 20.⁵

Similar to teen birth rates overall, there is a large difference in the birth rate among non-Hispanic black teens age 15-17 and those age 18-19 (34.9 per 1,000 versus 104.7 per 1,000 respectively). In addition, the birth rate among non-Hispanic black teens age 15-17 has decreased 59% between 1991 and 2008 compared to a 35% decrease in the birth rate among non-Hispanic black teens age 18-19 during the same time period.⁶



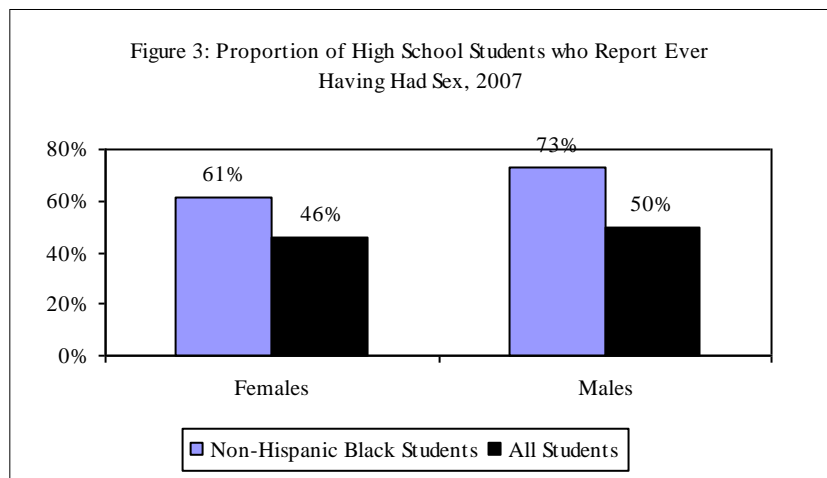
The vast majority of teen mothers are unmarried at the time of birth, and this is true among non-Hispanic black teens as well. In 2006, 97% of non-Hispanic Black teens aged 15 to 19 who gave birth were unmarried (83% of all teens who gave birth were unmarried).⁷



Sexual Activity and Contraceptive Use

In 2007, two-thirds (67%) of non-Hispanic Black high school students reported ever having had sexual intercourse. Non-Hispanic Black boys were much more likely than non-Hispanic Black girls to report being sexually experienced (73% vs. 61% respectively).⁸ In fact, non-Hispanic Black teen boys were the most likely compared to their peers to report ever having had sex. (Keep in mind that in-school surveys miss some teens).

Patterns of contraceptive use by Black teens are sometimes similar to patterns among all teens, but are sometimes strikingly different. In 2002, 71% of all Black girls aged 15 to 19 reported that they used a form of contraception at first sex, versus 75% of all girls in this age bracket.⁹ However, among never-married *sexually active* girls aged 15 to 19 (those who reported having had sex in the past three months), 75% of non-Hispanic Black teen girls reported that they



used contraception the last time they had sex, versus 83% of all sexually active teen girls. In 2002, consistent use of condoms (100% of the time) by sexually active boys aged 15 to 19 was more likely

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among non-Hispanic Black (65%) teen boys than for all teen boys (52%).¹⁰ Furthermore, in 2007, 67% of non-Hispanic Black high school students used a condom at most recent sex, compared to 62% of high school students overall.¹¹

Recent trends in sexual activity have been mixed for non-Hispanic Black teens. The overall proportion of sexually experienced teen girls decreased from 52% in 1995 to 47% in 2002.¹² For non-Hispanic Black teen girls more specifically the proportion who had ever had sex decreased from 60% in 1995 to 57% in 2002.⁹ The percentage of non-Hispanic Black teen boys aged 15 to 19 that report ever having intercourse decreased from 81% in 1995 to 63% in 2002, more than the decrease in sexual activity among all male teens (from 55% to 46%).¹³ Among non-Hispanic Black high school students, the proportion of sexually experienced students decreased from 82% in 1991 to 67% in 2007.¹⁴

Trends in contraceptive use are also mixed. Between 1995 and 2002, contraceptive use at first sex increased from 58.7% to 71.0% for non-Hispanic Black girls aged 15 to 19, more than the increase from 68.2% to 74.5% for all girls aged 15 to 19.¹⁵ Contraceptive use at most recent sex increased from 70.7% to 83.2% for all never-married sexually active teen girls and from 73.3% to 74.8% for never-married sexually active non-Hispanic Black teen girls in the same time period.¹⁶ Condom use at most recent intercourse among Black high school students increased from 48% to 67% between 1991 and 2007.¹⁷

NOTES

¹ Ventura, S.J., Abma, J.A., Mosher, W.D., and Henshaw K (2009). Estimated Pregnancy Rates by Outcome for the United States, 1990-2005. *National Vital Statistics Report*, 58(4).

² Ventura, S.J., Abma, J.A., Mosher, W.D., and Henshaw K (2009). Estimated Pregnancy Rates by Outcome for the United States, 1990-2005. *National Vital Statistics Report*, 58(4); and Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Sutton, P.D., Ventura, S.J., Menacker, F., Kirmeyer, S., and Munson, M (2007). Births: Final data for 2005. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 56 (6).

³ Suellentrop, K. & Flanigan, C. (2006). Pregnancy Among Sexually Experienced Teens, 2002. *Science Says* (23). Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

⁴ Hamilton, B.E., Martin, J.A., and Ventura, S.J. (2010). Preliminary Births for 2008. *National Vital Statistics Report*, 58(16).

⁵ Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Sutton, P.D., Ventura, S.J., Menacker, F., Kirmeyer, S., & Mathews, T.J. (2009). Births: Final data for 2006. *National Vital Statistics Reports*: 57 (7)

⁶ See cite #4.

⁷ See cite #5.

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2008). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 2007. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 57(SS-4); Brener, N., Lowry, R., Kann, L., Kolby, L., Lehnerr, J., Janssen, R., & Jaffe, H. (2002). Trends in sexual risk behaviors among high school students – United States, 1991-2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Monthly Report*, 51(38), 856-9

⁹ Tabulations, 1988, 1995 and 2002 National Survey of Family Growth.; Abma, J.C., Martinez, G.M., Mosher, W.D., & Dawson, B.S. (2004). Teenagers in the United States: Sexual activity, contraceptive use, and childbearing. *Vital Health Statistics*, 23(24). National Center for Health Statistics.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ See cite #8.

¹² See cite #9.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ See cite #8.

¹⁵ See cite #9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ See cite #8.