



FACT SHEET

Teen Sexual Activity, Pregnancy and Childbearing Among Black¹ Teens

JUNE 2008

Highlights:

- The teen pregnancy rate among non-Hispanic Black teen girls decreased 45% between 1990 and 2004, and the teen birth rate decreased 46% between 1991 and 2006.
- 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.

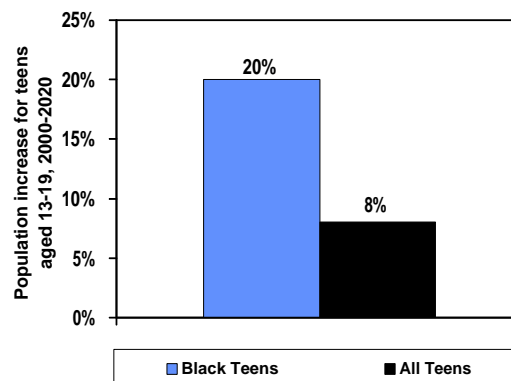


Blacks and the U.S. Population

Blacks currently constitute approximately 13% of the total U.S. population, making them the second largest minority group in the United States. In 2005, an estimated 1.7 million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 were Black, approximately 17% of all 15- to 19-year-old girls.²

From 2000 to 2020, the Black population is projected to increase to over 45 million. By 2020, approximately 14% of the U.S. population and 17% of U.S. teens aged 13 to 19 will be Black. The growth rate of the Black teen population is greater than that of the overall teen population — between 2000 and 2020 the Black population of 13- to 19-year-olds will grow 20% while the total 13- to 19-year-old population will increase only by 8%.³

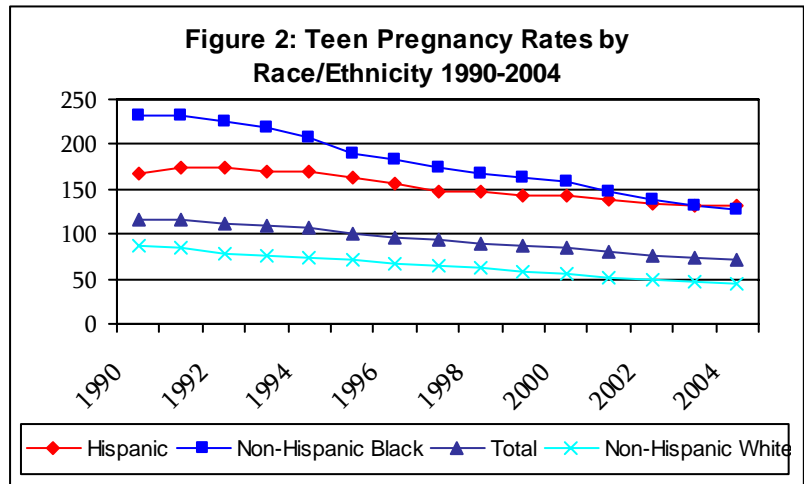
Figure 1: The growth of the Black teen population between 2000 and 2020 is expected to be more than twice that of the overall U.S. teen population during those same years.⁴



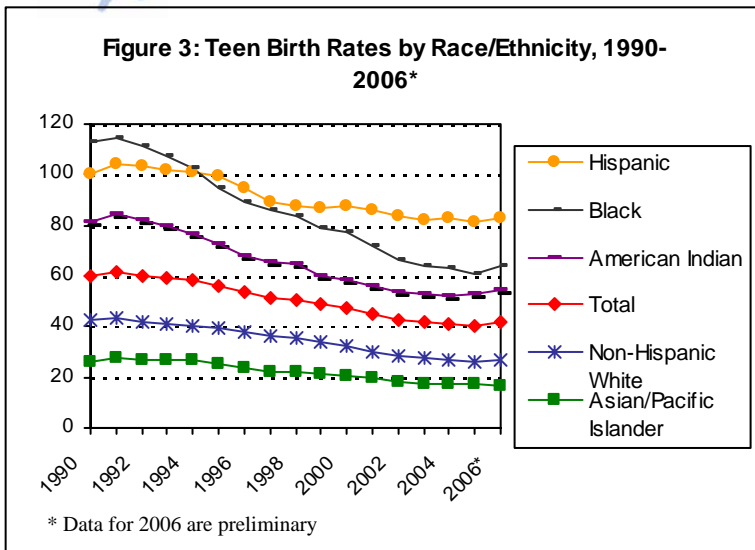
Black Teen Pregnancy Rates

In 2004 (latest year available), non-Hispanic Black girls aged 15 to 19 had a pregnancy rate of 128.0 per 1,000, well above the national average of 72.2 per 1,000 15- to 19-year-old girls.⁴ While three in ten teen girls overall in the U.S. become pregnant at least once before age 20, for non-Hispanic Black girls this proportion is 51%.⁵ 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 19.⁶

The non-Hispanic Black teen pregnancy rate decreased 45% between 1990 and 2004, more than the overall U.S. teen pregnancy rate decrease of 38% during that same time period (Figure 2). More specifically, the teen pregnancy rate among younger non-Hispanic Black teens (age 15-17) decreased 53% between 1990 and 2004 compared to a 35% decrease in the teen pregnancy rate among older non-Hispanic black teens (age 18-19).



Black Teen Birth Rates

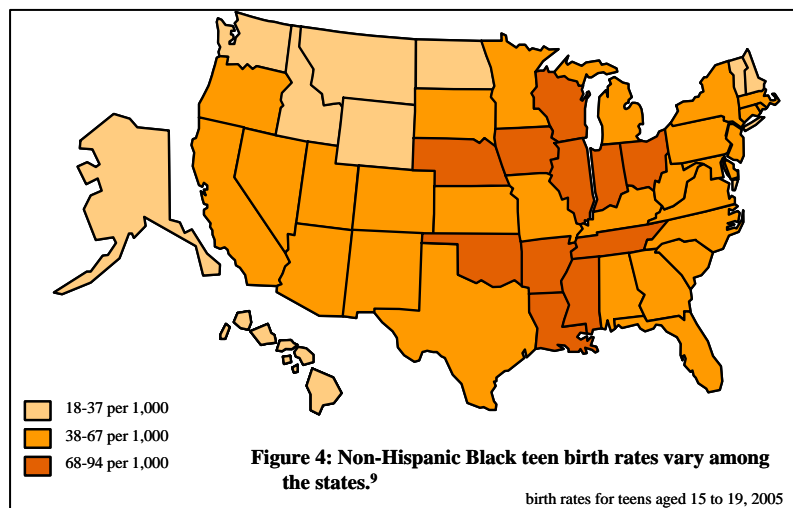


The birth rate among non-Hispanic Black teen girls decreased 46% between 1991 and 2006. Despite this amazing progress, the teen birth rates remain high, and in 2006, the teen birth rate increased for the first time since 1991. In 2006, the preliminary birth rate for non-Hispanic Black girls aged 15 to 19 was 63.7 per 1,000, up 5 percent from 60.9 in 2005, more than one-and-a-half times greater than the national rate of 41.9 per 1,000 (Figure 3).⁷

Similar to overall teen birth rates, the non-Hispanic Black teen birth rate varies substantially from state to state: in 2005, birth rates for non-Hispanic Black teens aged 15 to 19 ranged from 18.0 per 1,000 in Idaho to 94 per 1,000 in Wisconsin (Figure 4). The birth rate for non-Hispanic Black teens aged 15 to

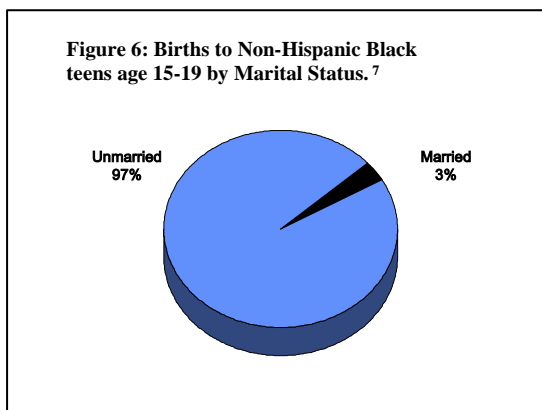
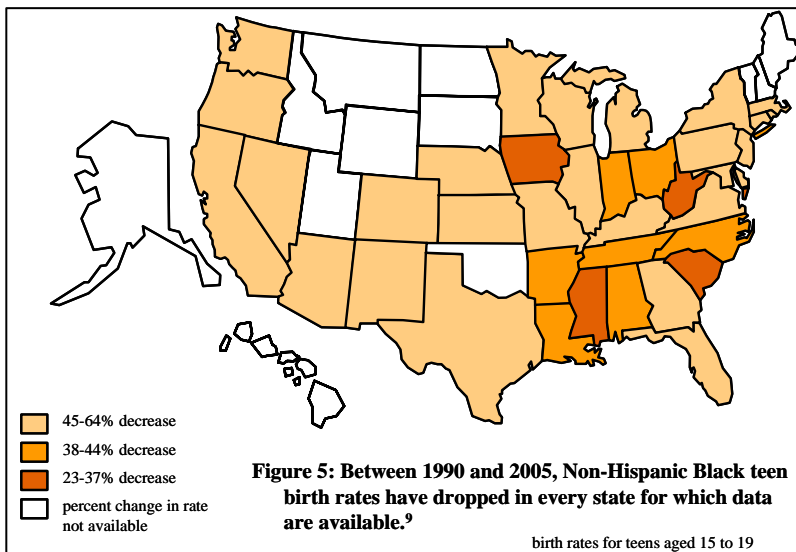
19 in the District of Columbia in 2005 was 91 per 1,000.⁸

From 1991 to 2006, the birth rate for non-Hispanic Black teens steadily decreased from 118.2 per 1,000 to 63.7 per 1,000, a cumulative drop of 46%. This percent change was 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%).⁷ This decrease has been highest among the younger teens (aged 15-17). For Black teens aged 15-17 the teen birth rate has decreased 51 percent and among older Black teens (18-19) the teen birth rate has decreased 36 percent.



Black teen birth rates declined between 1990 and 2005 in each of the 38 states for which there are data available for both 1990 and 2002 (Figure 5). Declines in these 38 states ranged from 23% in West Virginia to 64% in California and Washington; the rate in the District of Columbia decreased 27% in the same time period.⁸

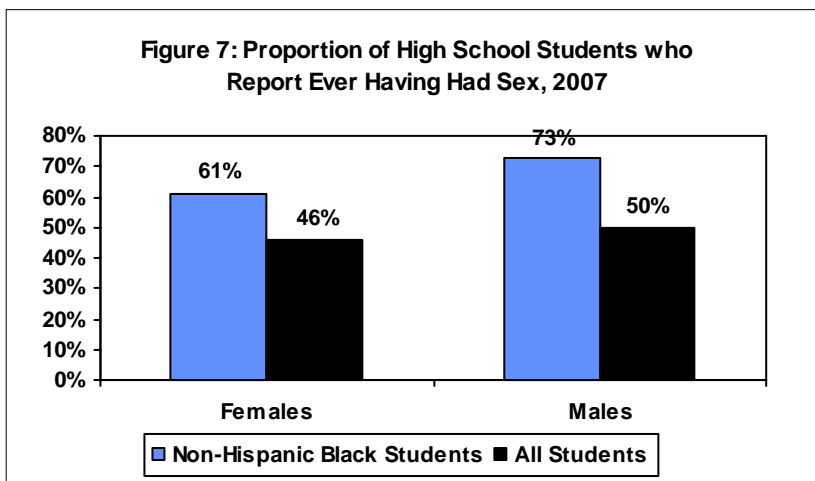
The vast majority of teen mothers are unmarried at the time of birth, and this is true among non-Hispanic black teens as well (Figure 6). In 2006, 97% of non-Hispanic Black teens aged 15 to 19 who gave birth were unmarried (83% of all teens who gave birth were unmarried).⁷



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).⁹ In fact, non-Hispanic Black teen boys were the most likely compared to their peers to report ever having had sex.¹⁰ (Keep in mind that in-school surveys miss some Black teens – in 2000, 7% of Blacks aged 14-19 had dropped out of school.¹¹)

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 among non-



Hispanic Black (65%) teen boys than for all teen boys (52%).⁹ 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.¹⁰

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. 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%).⁹ Among non-Hispanic Black high school students, the proportion of sexually experienced students decreased from 82% in 1991 to 67% in 2007.

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. 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.⁹ Condom use at most recent intercourse among Black high school students increased from 48% to 67% between 1991 and 2007.¹⁰

NOTES

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1. Note that the population section contains data for all Blacks, the sexual activity sections provide data for non-Hispanic Blacks only, and the data in the pregnancy and birth sections are mixed.
 2. 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 Black or African American alone or in combination for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-04-BAC) Retrieved October 17, 2006 from <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/>
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 5. Ventura, SJ, Abma, JA, Mosher, WD, and Henshaw K (2008). Estimated Pregnancy Rates by Outcome for the United States, 1990-2004. *National Vital Statistics Report*, 56(15); and 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).
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 8. 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>
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