

# Fast Facts

## Likelihood of Latinas Getting Pregnant by Age 20

Overall, nearly 3 in 10 teenage girls will become pregnant at least once before age 20. Among Latina teens this proportion is even higher—more than half of Latina teens (52%) will become pregnant at least once before age 20. How these statistics are estimated may not be obvious, so this fact sheet explains the methods and data used to calculate them.

### How do these numbers differ from the usual pregnancy rate numbers?

The typical teen pregnancy rate measures a teen's risk of pregnancy in a single year. For example, the most recent Latina teen pregnancy rate (from 2005) is 128.9 per 1,000, which means that for every 1,000 Latina girls aged 15-19 in 2005, 128.9 experienced a pregnancy that year (or 12.89%).<sup>1</sup> The 52% statistic noted above differs from a typical rate in that it measures *cumulative* risk of teen pregnancy over a Latina teen's entire life up to age 20, as opposed to the risk of pregnancy in a single year.

### How is the 52% statistic calculated?

Basically, the 52% statistic is calculated by applying the relevant age-specific pregnancy rate to a hypothetical group of Latina teens each year as they age through the teen years before age 20. Then, some of the pregnancies are subtracted at each age except the first year to account for the fact that some girls become pregnant more than once as a teen, and the 52% statistic measures the proportion of Latina teens who become pregnant *at least once* before age 20.

We begin by gathering the most recent teen pregnancy rates (by race and age), which as of February 2010 are for 2005 and are published by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) (Figure 1). These rates are then converted to percentages by dividing each rate by 1,000.

Next, we apply the Latina pregnancy rates to a group of Latina teens at each age through age 19 (Figure 2). We begin with

**FIGURE 1.** Latina Pregnancy Rates, 2005

Age	Rate per 1,000 <sup>1</sup>	Percent (Rate per 100) [column 2 ÷ 10]
Under 15	2.5	0.25%
15-17	79.8	7.98%
18-19	207.2	20.72%

**FIGURE 2.** Proportion of Latina Teens Who Become Pregnant, Each Year and Cumulatively, Without Adjusting for Subsequent Pregnancies, 2005

Age	Percent Pregnant That Year	Percent Pregnant, Cumulative
10	0.25%	0.25%
11	0.25%	0.50%
12	0.25%	0.75%
13	0.25%	1.00%
14	0.25%	1.25%
15	7.98%	9.23%
16	7.98%	17.21%
17	7.98%	25.19%
18	20.72%	45.91%
19	20.72%	66.63%

age 10, as the under 15 pregnancy rate from NCHS uses the 10-14-year-old population as the denominator. At age 14, teens' risk of pregnancy is equal to the rate for girls under 15. At ages 15, 16, and 17, the risk of pregnancy is equal to the rate for girls aged 15-17, and at ages 18 and 19 the risk of pregnancy is equal to the rate for girls aged 18-19. The sum of the percent pregnant at each year, ages 10-19, equals the gross cumulative proportion of Latina teens who become pregnant as a teen. However, at this point we are overstating the proportion because we are assuming that each pregnancy occurs to a different teen, when in fact some teens become pregnant more than once during the teen years.

Next we need to determine what proportion of pregnancies are subsequent pregnancies. The proportion of teen births that are subsequent is readily available from NCHS, but the proportions of teen abortions and miscarriages that are subsequent are not available.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, we use the proportion of teen births that are subsequent to estimate the proportion of all pregnancies that are subsequent (Figure 3).

Finally, we need to extend the calculations in Table 2 by subtracting the proportion of pregnancies that are subsequent from the percent pregnant each year (Figure 4). After subtracting subsequent pregnancies, the net result is that 52.18% of Latina teens become pregnant at least once as a teen.

**FIGURE 3.** Number of Latina Teen Births by Birth Order, 2005<sup>2</sup>

	10-14	15-17	18-19
<b>First Births</b>	2,423	44,229	62,166
<b>Subsequent Births</b>	40	5,699	24,468
<b>Order Not Stated</b>	3	118	226
<b>Total Births</b>	2,466	50,046	86,860
<b>Percent Subsequent (of those with known birth order)</b>	1.6%	11.4%	28.2%

**FIGURE 4.** Proportion of Latina Teens Who Become Pregnant, Each Year and Cumulatively, Adjusted for Subsequent Pregnancies, 2005

Age	Percent Pregnant That Year	Proportion of Those Pregnancies That Are Subsequent	Percent Pregnant for the First Time That Year	Percent Pregnant for the First Time, Cumulative
<b>10</b>	0.25%	–	0.250%	0.25%
<b>11</b>	0.25%	0.004%	0.246%	0.50%
<b>12</b>	0.25%	0.004%	0.246%	0.74%
<b>13</b>	0.25%	0.004%	0.246%	0.99%
<b>14</b>	0.25%	0.004%	0.246%	1.23%
<b>15</b>	7.98%	0.91%	7.07%	8.30%
<b>16</b>	7.98%	0.91%	7.07%	15.37%
<b>17</b>	7.98%	0.91%	7.07%	22.44%
<b>18</b>	20.72%	5.85%	14.87%	37.31%
<b>19</b>	20.72%	5.85%	14.87%	<b>52.18%</b>

## Sources

1. Ventura, S.J., Abma, J.A., Mosher, W.D., and Henshaw, S.K. (2009). Estimated Pregnancy Rates by Outcome for the United States, 1990-2005: An Update. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 58(4).
2. 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).