



FACT SHEET

Teen Sexual Activity, Pregnancy, and Childbearing Among Non-Hispanic White Teens

DECEMBER 2007

Highlights:

- Non-Hispanic white teens have the lowest teen pregnancy rate among the major racial/ethnic groups in the U.S.
- Almost one half of all teen pregnancies nationwide are to non-Hispanic white teens.
- Non-Hispanic white teens have fewer sexual partners once they become sexually active than U.S. teens of other racial/ethnic groups.
- Twenty-five percent of non-Hispanic white girls in the U.S. become pregnant at least once by age 20.
- The non-Hispanic white teen pregnancy and birth rates are decreasing faster than the overall U.S. teen pregnancy and birth rates.

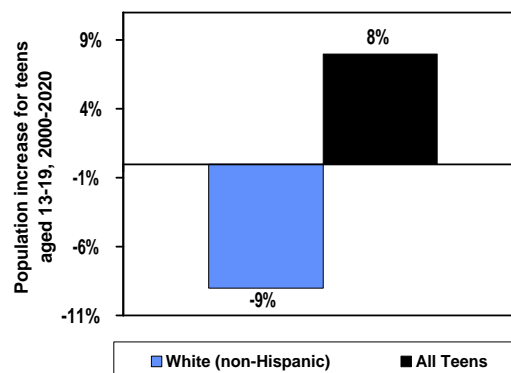


Non-Hispanic White Teens and the U.S. Population

Non-Hispanic whites currently constitute approximately 68% of the total U.S. population, comprising the largest racial/ethnic group in the United States.¹ In 2005, an estimated 6.3 million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 were non-Hispanic white, approximately 62% of all 15- to 19-year-old girls.²

From 2000 to 2020, the total non-Hispanic white population is projected to increase to over 200 million. However, its growth is projected to be less than that of other racial/ethnic groups, so that by 2020, only 64% of the U.S. population will be non-Hispanic white. In addition, all of the growth in the non-Hispanic white population is projected to occur among adults: between 2000 and 2020 the non-Hispanic white population of 13- to 19-year-olds is expected to shrink by 9%, while the total 13- to 19-year-old population will increase by 8%. As a result, in 2020, 56% of U.S. teens aged 13 to 19 will be non-Hispanic white.³

Figure 1: Between 2000 and 2020, the overall teen population is expected to grow, but the non-Hispanic White teen population is expected to shrink.³



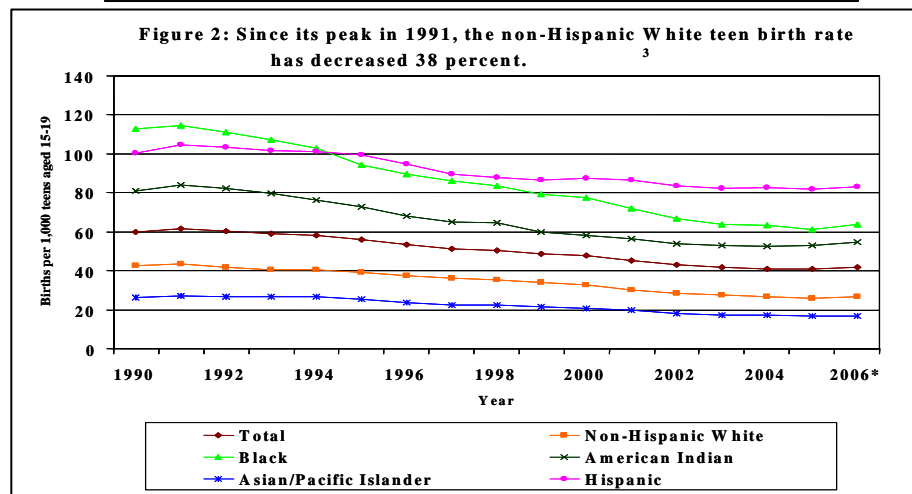
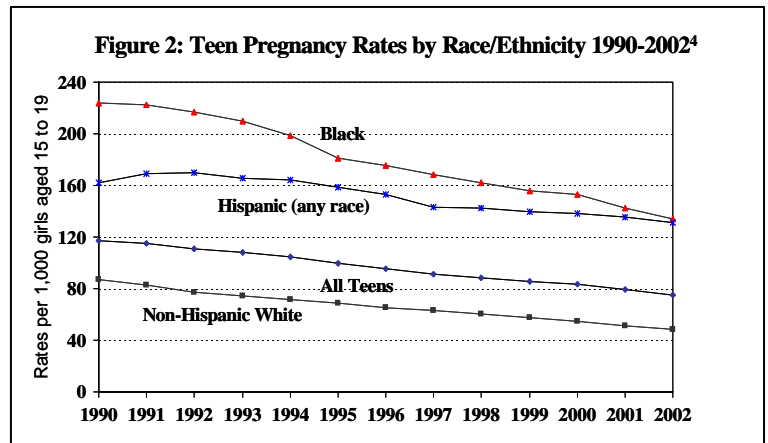


Non-Hispanic White Teen Pregnancy Rates

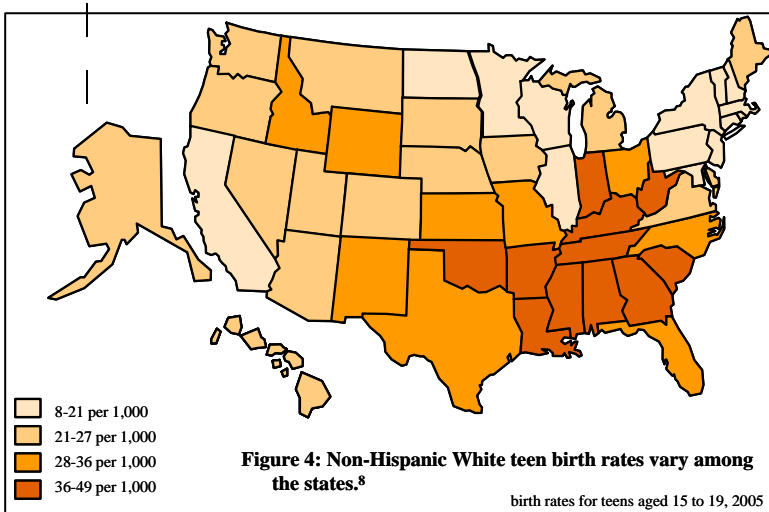
In 2002 (latest year available), non-Hispanic white teen girls aged 15 to 19 had a pregnancy rate of 48.2 per 1,000, below the national average of 75.4 per 1,000 15- to 19-year-old girls.⁴ While 31% of girls in the U.S. become pregnant at least once as a teen, for non-Hispanic white girls this proportion is 25%.⁵

In 2002, 9.1% of sexually experienced 15- to 19-year old non-Hispanic white boys reported having caused a pregnancy, versus 13.4% of all sexually experienced boys aged 15 to 19.⁶

The non-Hispanic white teen pregnancy rate has decreased 45% between 1990 and 2002, more than the overall U.S. teen pregnancy rate decrease of 36% during that same time period (Figure 2). The percent decrease of the non-Hispanic white teen pregnancy rate from 1990 to 2002 is slightly more than the decrease for the African-American teen pregnancy rate (40% decrease) and much greater than that of the Hispanic teen pregnancy rate (19%).⁴



Non-Hispanic White Teen Birth Rates



The 2006, the preliminary birth rate for non-Hispanic white teen girls age 15- to 19- was 26.6 per 1,000, up 3 percent from 25.9 in 2005 and below the national rate of 41.9 per 1,000 (Figure 3). Even so, almost half of the approximately 435,427 births in 2006 to teens aged 15 to 19 were to non-Hispanic white teens.⁷

Non-Hispanic white teen birth rates vary substantially from state to state: in 2005, birth rates for non-Hispanic white teens aged 15 to 19 ranged from 8 per 1,000 in New Jersey to 49 per 1,000 in Arkansas (Figure 4).⁸

From 1991 to 2006, the birth rate for non-Hispanic white teen girls steadily decreased from 43.4 per 1000 to 26.6 per 1,000, a cumulative drop of 38.7%. This percentage change was higher than the overall decline in birth rates for 15- to 19-year-old girls in the U.S. over the same period of time (32%).⁷

Non-Hispanic white teen birth rates declined between 1990 and 2005 in each of the 48 states for which there are data available for both 1990 and 2005 (Figure 5). Declines ranged from 19% in Mississippi to 66% in California (Figure 5).⁸

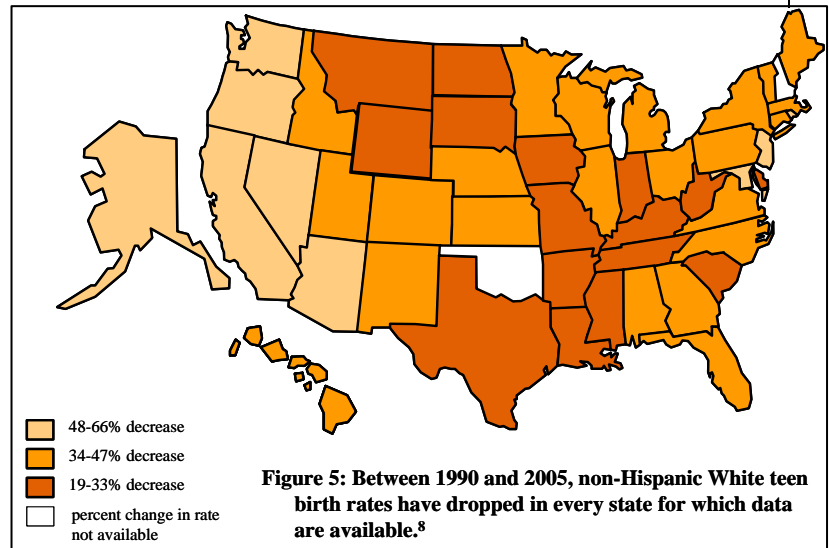
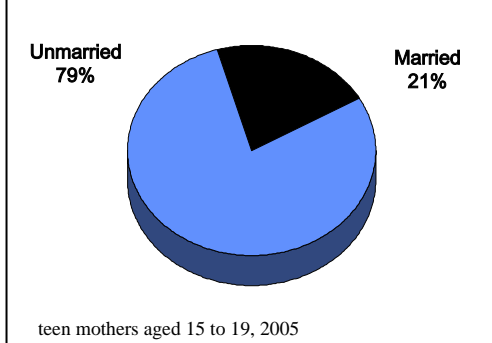


Figure 6: The majority of non-Hispanic White teen mothers are unmarried.⁷



The vast majority of non-Hispanic white teen mothers give birth out-of-wedlock (Figure 6). In 2005, 79% of non-Hispanic white teen girls aged 15 to 19 who gave birth were unmarried, versus 83% of all teens who gave birth.⁷

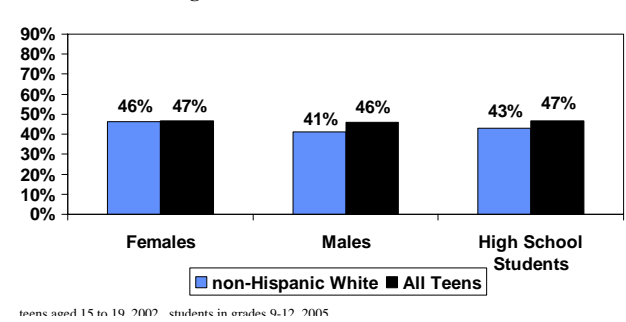


Sexual Activity and Contraceptive Use

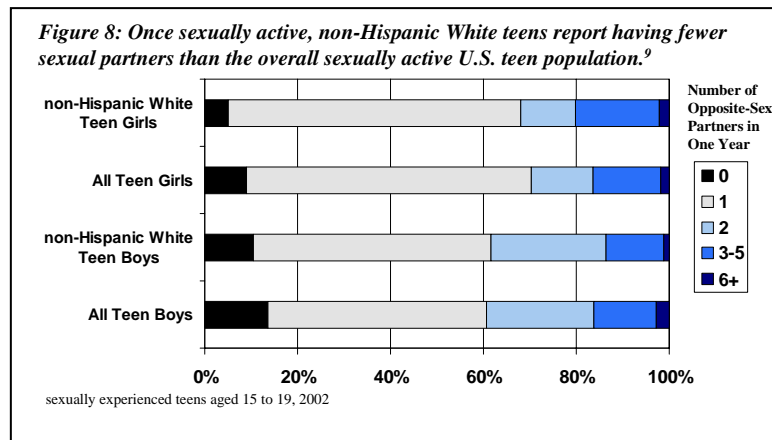
Non-Hispanic white teen girls are equally as likely, and non-Hispanic white teen boys are slightly less likely than average to report being sexually experienced. In 2002, 46.4% of all

non-Hispanic white girls aged 15 to 19 reported ever having had sexual intercourse after menarche, similar to the percentage of all girls of the same age group who reported ever having had sexual intercourse after menarche (46.8%).⁹ Also in 2002, 41.1% of non-Hispanic white males aged 15 to 19 reported ever having sex, versus 46.0% of all males aged 15 to 19 (Figure 7).⁹ A 2005 survey of high school students found that 43.0% of non-Hispanic white students were sexually experienced compared to 46.8% of all students.¹⁰

Figure 7: A lesser proportion of non-Hispanic White teens report ever having had sexual intercourse.^{9,10}



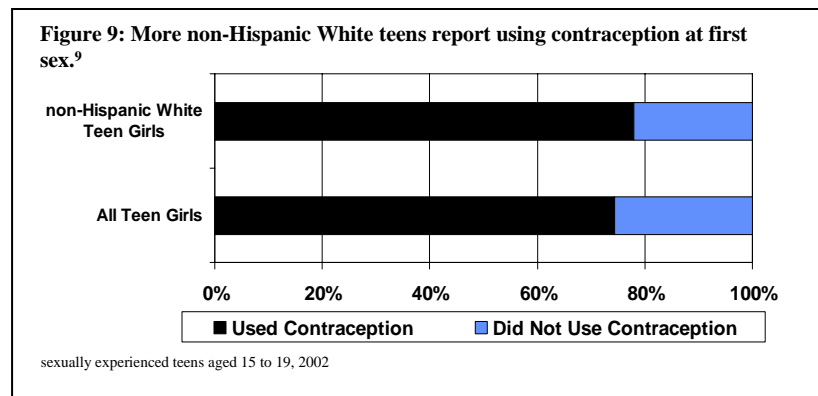
Non-Hispanic white girls are slightly more likely, and boys are slightly less likely, to have multiple recent sexual partners, compared to the national average (Figure 8). In a 2002 survey, 31.9% of sexually experienced non-Hispanic white females aged 15 to 19 reported having two or more male partners in the last year, as did 29.7% of all sexually experienced female teens. For sexually experienced non-Hispanic white males aged 15 to 19, 38.3% reported having two or more female partners in the last year, while 39.4% of all teen males reported two or more partners.⁹



Non-Hispanic white teens are more likely than average to use contraception. In 2002, 78.0% of non-Hispanic white teen girls aged 15 to 19 reported that they used some form of contraception at first sex after menarche, versus 74.5% of all girls in this age bracket (Figure 9). Among *sexually active* girls aged 15 to 19 (those who reported having had sex in the past three months), 78.2% of non-Hispanic white teens reported that they used contraception the last time

they had sex, versus 74.8% of all sexually active teen girls.⁹ However, in 2002, only 45.5% of sexually active non-Hispanic white males aged 15 to 19 reported using condoms consistently (100% of the time) in the previous 12 months, compared to 51.5% of all sexually active teen males aged 15 to 19.⁹

The proportion of non-Hispanic white girls aged 15 to 19 who had sex after menarche decreased from 50.9% to 46.4% between 1995 and 2002, in line with the national trend for 15- to 19-year-old girls which decreased from 51.7% to 46.8%.⁹ Similarly, the percentage of non-Hispanic white males aged 15 to 19 that reported ever having intercourse, decreased from 49.9% in 1995 to 41.1% in 2002. This was slightly less than the decrease among all male teens (55.3% to 46.0%).⁹ Between 1991 and 2005, the proportion of all high school students who were sexually experienced decreased 13%, while the proportion of non-Hispanic white students who were sexually experienced decreased 14%.¹⁰



Between 1995 and 2002, contraceptive use at first sex increased only marginally from 77.6% to 78.0% for non-Hispanic white girls aged 15 to 19 and from 70.7% to 74.4% for all teen girls aged 15 to 19. Contraceptive use at most recent sex increased from 68.2% to 74.8% for all sexually active teen girls and from 71.0% to 78.2% for sexually active non-Hispanic white teen girls in the same time period.⁹ Condom use at most recent sex among non-Hispanic white high school students increased from 46.5% to 62.6% between 1991 and 2005, similar to the increase among all students (from 46.2% to 62.8%).¹⁰

NOTES

1. Grieco, E.M., & Cassidy, R.C. (2001). Overview of race and Hispanic origin. *Census 2000 Brief, 1*(1). 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.
2. 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 White alone not Hispanic for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (NC-EST2005-04-WANH) Retrieved October 17, 2006 from <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/> Washington, DC: Author.
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4. The Guttmacher Institute. (2006). *U.S. teenage pregnancy statistics National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*
5. National Campaign analysis of Ventura, S.J., Martin, J.A., Curtin, S.C., Menacker, F., & Hamilton, B.E. (2001). Births: Final data for 1999. *National Vital Statistics Reports, 49*(1); Ventura, S.J., Abma, J.C., Mosher, W.D., & Henshaw, S. (2003). Revised pregnancy rates, 1990-97, and new rates for 1998-99: United States. *National Vital Statistics Reports, 52*(7).
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7. 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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10. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2004). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 2005. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 55*(SS-5); Brener, N., Lowry, R., Kann, L., Kolby, L., Lehnher, 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.