

# Births to Teens

## DEFINITION

*Births to teens* is the number of births to teen girls ages 15 to 19 per 1,000 teen girls. Data are reported by the mother's place of residence, not the place of the infant's birth.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Teen pregnancy and parenting threaten the development of teen parents as well as their children. Teen mothers, particularly younger teen mothers, have difficulty finishing high school and continuing on to college. Only 38% of mothers who give birth before age 18 have a high school diploma by age 22, compared with 89% of young women who had not given birth as a teen. Less than 2% of teen mothers who give birth before age 18 finish college by age 30.<sup>1</sup>

Two-thirds of families headed by teen mothers live in poverty. About one-quarter of teen mothers have a second child within 24 months of the first baby, creating even greater challenges for the mothers to finish school, find and keep a job, and escape poverty.<sup>2</sup> Teen girls in foster care are more likely than their peers to get pregnant by age 19.<sup>3</sup>

Children of teen parents are at increased risk for low birthweight, preterm delivery, infant mortality, child maltreatment, and placement in foster care.<sup>4,5</sup> They score lower on measures of school readiness and on standardized

tests, are more likely to repeat a grade, and are less likely to complete high school compared with children of older mothers. Sons of teen mothers are twice as likely to spend time in prison and daughters of teen mothers are three times more likely to become teen mothers themselves.<sup>6,7</sup>

Despite improvements in recent years, the U.S. teen birth rate remains higher than many other developed countries.<sup>8</sup> After peaking in 1991, the U.S. teen birth rate reached a historic low in 2014, with decreases among all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Rhode Island's teen birth rate mirrors national trends, peaking in 1993 and reaching a historic low in 2014.<sup>9,10</sup> Nationally and in Rhode Island, fewer teens are having sex and those that are sexually active are more likely to use contraception.<sup>11,12</sup>

In 2014 in Rhode Island, 579 babies were born to mothers under age 20, accounting for 6% of all babies born.<sup>13</sup>

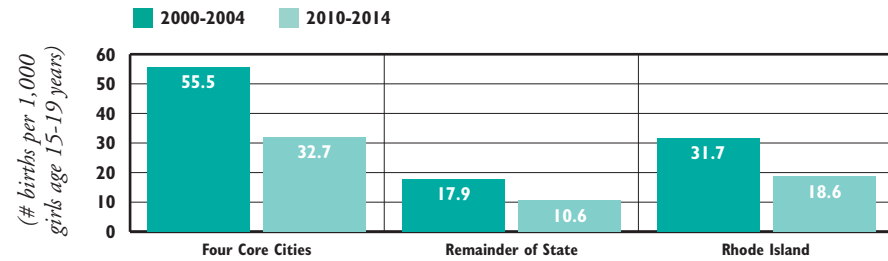
Teen Birth Rates (rate per 1,000 girls ages 15-19)		
	1991	2014
<b>RI</b>	44.7	15.8
<b>US</b>	61.8	24.2
<b>National Rank*</b>		7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>New England Rank**</b>		5 <sup>th</sup>

\*1st is best; 50th is worst

\*\*1st is best; 6th is worst

Sources: For 2014: Martin, J. A., et al. (2015). Births: Final data for 2014. *NVSR*, 64(13), 1-63. For 1991: Ventura, S. J., et al. (2014). National and state patterns of teen births in the United States. *NVSR*, 63(4), 1-33.

## Teen Birth Rates, Rhode Island, Five-Year Averages Comparisons, 2000-2004 and 2010-2014



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2000-2014. Data for births in 2014 are provisional.

- ◆ The statewide five year average teen birth rate declined 41% between 2000-2004 and 2010-2014, from 31.7 births per 1,000 teen girls to 18.6. The teen birth rate in the four core cities also declined by 41% during that time.<sup>14</sup>
- ◆ In 2014, the birth rate for U.S. teens (24.2 births per 1,000 teen girls) and Rhode Island teens (15.8 births per 1,000 teen girls) were the lowest ever recorded.<sup>15,16</sup>
- ◆ Despite declines among all racial and ethnic groups, disparities still exist in teen birth rates.<sup>17</sup> In Rhode Island between 2010 and 2014, the teen birth rates for Hispanic (45.9) and Black (33.2) teens were higher than the rates of their White (11.6) and Asian (11.5) peers.<sup>18</sup>

## Repeat Births to Teens, Rhode Island, 2010-2014

AGE	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS	NUMBER OF REPEAT BIRTHS	PERCENT REPEAT BIRTHS
15-17	1,061	69	6.5%
18-19	2,648	492	18.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,709</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>15.1%</b>

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2010-2014.

- ◆ Nationally, 17% of all births to teens ages 15-19 in 2013 were repeat births. Since 1991, repeat teen births have declined 23% nationwide.<sup>19</sup> To continue to reduce repeat teen births, pregnant and parenting teens should be connected with evidence-based home visiting programs that address a broad range of needs and routinely offer effective postpartum contraception.<sup>20</sup>

## Teen Birth Rates by Age and Location

◆ In Rhode Island between 2010 and 2014, the rate of births to teens ages 15-17 in the core cities (22.8 per 1,000 teen girls) was more than four times higher than in the remainder of state (4.8 per 1,000 teen girls). The birth rate for teens ages 15-17 in Central Falls was 32.7, compared to Woonsocket at 26.8, Providence at 23.6, and Pawtucket at 15.7.<sup>21</sup>

◆ The rate of births to Rhode Island teens ages 18-19 was more than twice as high in the core cities (40.3 per 1,000 teen girls) than in the remainder of state (18.1 per 1,000 teen girls) between 2010 and 2014. The birth rate for teens ages 18-19 in Central Falls was 124.1, compared to Woonsocket at 101.2, Pawtucket at 59.0, and Providence at 29.3.<sup>22</sup>

Table 25. Births to Teens, Ages 15-19, Rhode Island, 2010-2014

CITY/TOWN	# OF BIRTHS TO GIRLS AGES 15-17	# OF BIRTHS TO GIRLS AGES 18-19	# OF BIRTHS TO GIRLS AGES 15-19	BIRTH RATE PER 1,000 GIRLS AGES 15-19
Barrington	1	6	7	2.3
Bristol	8	19	27	4.8
Burrillville	4	24	28	11.6
Central Falls	72	180	252	69.0
Charlestown	4	17	21	18.3
Coventry	8	46	54	9.4
Cranston	50	132	182	14.3
Cumberland	12	32	44	8.3
East Greenwich	0	13	13	5.4
East Providence	34	83	117	17.5
Exeter	7	12	19	13.5
Foster	2	5	7	9.1
Glocester	3	10	13	7.6
Hopkinton	6	8	14	11.5
Jamestown	0	2	2	2.8
Johnston	11	47	58	14.3
Lincoln	7	20	27	7.7
Little Compton	0	1	1	NA
Middletown	9	21	30	13.5
Narragansett	4	5	9	3.5
New Shoreham	0	1	1	NA
Newport	25	60	85	16.5
North Kingstown	8	29	37	8.4
North Providence	14	51	65	14.7
North Smithfield	7	8	15	8.1
Pawtucket	112	267	379	32.5
Portsmouth	7	9	16	5.3
Providence	430	946	1,376	27.2
Richmond	1	8	9	8.4
Scituate	1	7	8	4.6
Smithfield	3	12	15	2.9
South Kingstown	4	24	28	2.0
Tiverton	6	12	18	8.4
Warren	4	17	21	15.5
Warwick	42	94	136	12.2
West Greenwich	2	8	10	9.0
West Warwick	37	113	150	38.8
Westerly	14	44	58	18.9
Woonsocket	102	253	355	56.3
Unknown	0	2	2	NA
Four Core Cities	716	1,646	2,362	32.7
Remainder of State	345	1,000	1,345	10.6
Rhode Island	1,061	2,648	3,709	18.6

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, Maternal and Child Health Database, 2010-2014. Data for births in 2014 are provisional and do not include births among Rhode Island residents that occurred out-of-state.

The denominators for girls ages 15-19 are from the Census 2010 Summary File 1, which are then multiplied by five.

NA: Rates should not be calculated due to small numbers and the lack of statistical reliability.

In the 2012 Factbook, the denominators for the city/town table were updated with population data from Census 2010. Factbooks prior to 2012 used population data from Census 2000. Changes in rates are affected by the updated population data.

Factbooks published before 2007 reported only births to girls ages 15-17. The definition of teen childbearing was expanded to include teens ages 15-19 to align with reports from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics.

NA: Rates should not be calculated due to small numbers and the lack of statistical reliability.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

### References

<sup>1</sup> 2016 public policy agenda. (2016). Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

<sup>2</sup> Teen pregnancy, poverty and income disparity. (2010). Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

<sup>35</sup> Teen childbearing and child welfare. (2013). Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

<sup>411</sup> Teen births. (2015). Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>6</sup> Teen childbearing, education, and economic wellbeing. (2012). Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

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