

# Births to Teens

## DEFINITION

*Births to teens* is the number of births to teen girls ages 15 to 19 per 1,000 teen girls.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Teen pregnancy and parenting threaten the development of teen parents as well as their children. Children of teen parents have higher rates of infant mortality, premature birth, and low birth weight. Children of teens have lower test scores, academic outcomes, and are more likely to have a teen birth themselves compared with children of older mothers.<sup>1</sup> There are strong intergenerational links between maternal education among teen mothers, and educational attainment, income, and well-being in the next generation.<sup>2</sup>

Teen mothers are less likely to graduate from high school or go to college.<sup>3</sup> Teen girls in foster care are more than twice as likely as their peers to become pregnant by age 19.<sup>4</sup>

Nationally, one in six births to teens are repeat births (two or more children born before the mother is 20 years old). Repeat teen births are more likely to be preterm or low birthweight than first teen births.<sup>5</sup> Teens mothers who have repeat births are more likely to experience additional negative outcomes, including increased health issues, lower educational attainment, and less economic independence.<sup>6</sup>

Despite downward national trends of teen births, including among all racial and ethnic groups, disparities in teen births persist. In 2017 in the U.S., the rate of teen birth for Hispanic teens (28.9 births per 1,000) and to non-Hispanic Black teens (27.56 per 1,000), were both more than twice the rate of non-Hispanic white teens (13.2 per 1,000).<sup>7</sup>

After peaking in 1991, the U.S. teen birth rate steadily declined, reaching a historic low in 2017. Despite these declines, the U.S. teen birth rate remains higher than other developed countries.<sup>8,9,10</sup>

Rhode Island's teen birth rate mirrors national trends, peaking in 1993 at a rate of 47.6 per 1,000, and reaching a historic low in 2017 at a rate of 11.4 per 1,000.<sup>11,12</sup> In 2018 in Rhode Island, 4% (395) of all babies were born to teen mothers.<sup>13</sup> Nationally and in Rhode Island, fewer teens are having sex and those that are sexually active are more likely to use contraception.<sup>14,15</sup>

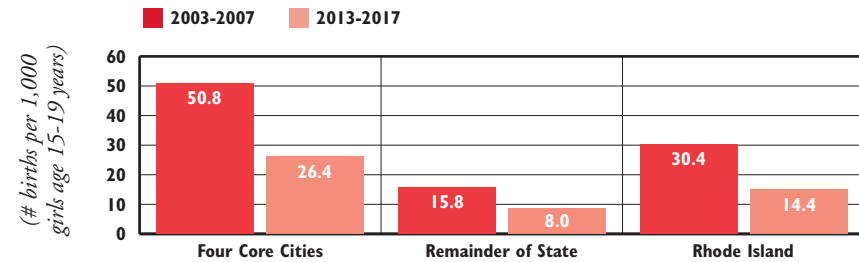
Teen Birth Rates (rate per 1,000 girls ages 15-19)		
	1991	2017
RI	44.7	11.4
US	61.8	18.8
National Rank*		6th
New England Rank**		5th

\*1st is best; 50th is worst

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

Source: For 1991: Ventura, S. J., et al. (2014). National and state patterns of teen births in the United States, 1940-2013. *NVSR*, 63(4), 1-33. For 2017: Martin, J. A., Hamilton, B. E., Osterman, M. J. K., Driscoll, A. K., & Drake, P. (2018). Births: Final data for 2017. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 67(8), 1-49.

## Teen Birth Rates, Rhode Island, Five-Year Average Comparisons: 2003-2007, 2013-2017



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2003-2017.

- ◆ In 2017, the birth rate for U.S. teens (18.8 births per 1,000 teen girls) and Rhode Island teens (11.4 births per 1,000 teen girls) were the lowest ever recorded.<sup>16</sup>
- ◆ The statewide five-year average teen birth rate declined 53% between 2003-2007 and 2013-2017, from 30.4 births per 1,000 teen girls to 14.4. The teen birth rate in the four core cities declined by 54% during that time but remains more than three times higher than the rest of the state.<sup>17</sup>
- ◆ Despite declines among all racial and ethnic groups, disparities still exist in teen birth rates.<sup>18</sup> In Rhode Island between 2013 and 2017, the teen birth rates for Hispanic (35.2 per 1,000), Native American (27.1 per 1,000), and Black (16.4 per 1,000) teens were higher than the rates of their White (7.9 per 1,000) and Asian (4.0 per 1,000) peers.<sup>19</sup>

## Repeat Births to Teens, Rhode Island, 2013-2017

AGE	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS	NUMBER OF REPEAT BIRTHS	PERCENT REPEAT BIRTHS
15-17	664	34	5%
18-19	1,995	350	18%
TOTAL 15-19	2,659	384	14%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2013-2017.

- ◆ Nationally, 17% of all births to teens ages 15-19 in 2016 were repeat births.<sup>20</sup> To continue to reduce repeat teen births, pregnant and parenting teens should be connected to patient-centered primary care that address a variety of needs and integrate a range of tailored services for young mothers and families.<sup>21</sup>

## Teen Birth Rates by Location

◆ In Rhode Island between 2013 and 2017, the rate of births to teens ages 15-19 in the core cities (26.4 per 1,000) was more than three times higher than the remainder of the state (8.0 per 1,000).<sup>22</sup>

◆ Fifteen percent of teen births in the core cities were repeat births, while 14% of teen births in the rest of the state were repeat births.<sup>23</sup>

◆ Healthcare providers play a key role in reducing teen births, by integrating comprehensive reproductive health counseling to all women and men of reproductive age, to help reduce unintended pregnancies.<sup>24</sup>

◆ In 2017, 19% of Rhode Island high school students who reported ever having sexual intercourse used no method (or were not sure) to prevent pregnancy, and 40% percent did not use a condom, the last time they had sexual intercourse.<sup>25</sup>

◆ Among 15 to 19-year-olds in Rhode Island between 2008 and 2017, the rates of chlamydia have increased by 36% (1,388 to 1,880 per 100,000) and the rates of gonorrhea have increased by 147% (89 to 219 per 100,000).<sup>26</sup>

Table 27. Births to Teens, Ages 15-19, Rhode Island, 2013-2017

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	3	4	*
Bristol	4	13	17	2.8 <sup>^</sup>
Burrillville	7	18	25	9.2
Central Falls	53	139	192	47.4
Charlestown	3	17	20	17.3 <sup>^</sup>
Coventry	6	29	35	6.5
Cranston	27	87	114	9.0
Cumberland	7	19	26	5.2
East Greenwich	0	7	7	*
East Providence	22	54	76	18.1
Exeter	4	9	13	15.9 <sup>^</sup>
Foster	2	3	5	*
Glocester	0	9	9	*
Hopkinton	1	7	8	*
Jamestown	0	1	1	*
Johnston	5	34	39	10.6
Lincoln	3	24	27	11.4
Little Compton	0	0	0	0
Middletown	7	11	18	12.9 <sup>^</sup>
Narragansett	2	2	4	*
New Shoreham	0	1	1	*
Newport	16	38	54	8.9
North Kingstown	9	23	32	7.2
North Providence	16	49	65	17.2
North Smithfield	3	5	8	*
Pawtucket	62	197	259	26.6
Portsmouth	4	7	11	*
Providence	268	715	983	22.1
Richmond	1	9	10	*
Scituate	1	7	8	*
Smithfield	1	4	5	*
South Kingstown	2	18	20	1.3 <sup>^</sup>
Tiverton	4	10	14	13.3 <sup>^</sup>
Warren	2	18	20	18.4 <sup>^</sup>
Warwick	30	90	120	12.6
West Greenwich	1	8	9	*
West Warwick	24	79	103	34.2
Westerly	7	26	33	10.7
Woonsocket	59	199	258	44.6
Unknown	0	6	6	
Four Core Cities	442	1,250	1,692	26.4
Remainder of State	222	739	961	8.0
Rhode Island	664	1,995	2,659	14.4

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, Maternal and Child Health Database, 2013-2017.

\* The data are statistically unreliable and rates are not reported and should not be calculated.

<sup>^</sup> The data are statistically unstable and rates or percentages should be interpreted with caution.

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

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 to 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.

Births to teens ages 14 and younger are collected by the Rhode Island Department of Health but are not reported in the *Factbook*.

Unknown births include three births with missing maternal residence data.

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

### References

<sup>1,14</sup> *Teen births: Indicator of child and youth well-being.* (2016). Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>2,10,20</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Adolescent Health. (2016). *Trends in teen pregnancy and childbearing.* Retrieved March 1, 2019, from www.hhs.gov

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *About teen pregnancy.* Retrieved March 1, 2019, from cdc.gov

<sup>4</sup> Brooks, K. (2019). *Teen pregnancy and foster care.* Washington, DC: National Center for Health Research.

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