

# 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 both teen parents and their children. Children of teen parents have higher risk of infant mortality, preterm delivery, low birthweight, child maltreatment and placement in foster care. Children of teen parents also have, lower test scores, academic outcomes, and are less likely to complete high school compared with children of older mothers. They are also more likely to become teen parents themselves.<sup>1</sup> There are strong links between maternal education among teen mothers and educational attainment, income, and well-being in their children.<sup>2</sup>

Only 50% of teen mothers have a high school diploma by age 22, compared with 90% of young women who did not give birth as a teen.<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>

One in five births to teens are repeat births.<sup>5</sup> Repeat births to teens are more likely to be premature or have low birth weight than first teen births. In 2015, the prevalence of repeat teen births was highest among Hispanic teens (19%), non-Hispanic Black teens (18%), and non-Hispanic white teens (14%).<sup>6</sup>

Despite national declines in teen births, disparities in teen births persist. In 2016, the rate of teen birth for Hispanic teens (32 births per 1,000) and to non-Hispanic Black teens (29 per 1,000), were both more than twice the rate for non-Hispanic white teens (14 per 1,000).<sup>7</sup>

After peaking in 1991, the U.S. teen birth rate has steadily declined reaching a low in 2016, with decreases among all racial and ethnic backgrounds.<sup>8,9</sup> Despite this trend, the U.S. teen birth rate remains higher than many other developed countries.<sup>10</sup>

Rhode Island's teen birth rate mirrors national trends, peaking in 1993 at a rate of 48 per 1,000, and reaching a historic low in 2016 at a rate of 13 per 1,000.<sup>11</sup> In 2016 in Rhode Island, 474 babies were born to mothers under age 20, accounting for 4% of all babies born.<sup>12</sup> Nationally and in Rhode Island, fewer teens are having sex and those that are sexually active are more likely to use contraception.<sup>13,14</sup>

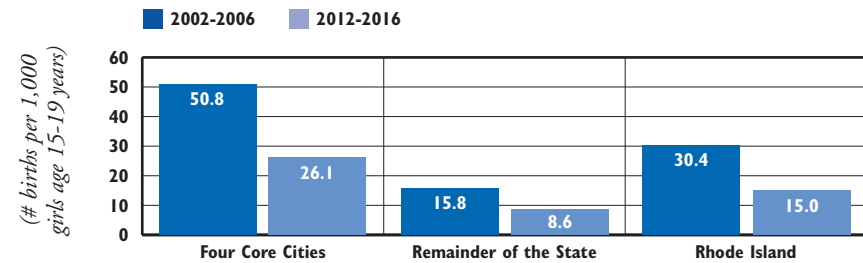
Teen Birth Rates (rate per 1,000 girls ages 15-19)		
	1991	2016
RI	44.7	12.9
US	61.8	20.3
National Rank*		7th
New England Rank**		5th

\*1st is best; 50th is worst

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

Source: For 2016: Martin, J. A., et al. (2016). Births: Final data for 2016. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 67(1), 1-54. 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.

## Teen Birth Rates, Rhode Island, Five-Year Averages Comparisons: 2002-2006, 2012-2016



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2002-2016.

◆ In 2016, the birth rate for U.S. teens (20 births per 1,000 teen girls) and Rhode Island teens (13 births per 1,000 teen girls) were the lowest ever recorded.<sup>15</sup>

◆ The Rhode Island teen birth rate declined 51% between 2002-2006 and 2012-2016, from 30.4 births per 1,000 teen girls to 15.0. The teen birth rate in the four core cities declined by 49% during that time but remains three times higher than the remainder of the state.<sup>16</sup>

◆ Disparities persist in teen birth rates.<sup>17</sup> In Rhode Island between 2012 and 2016, the teen birth rates for Hispanic (37.9 per 1,000) and Black (24.9 per 1,000) teens were higher than rates for White (9.4 per 1,000) and Asian (8.3 per 1,000) teens.<sup>18</sup>

## Repeat Births to Teens, Rhode Island, 2012-2016

AGE	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS	NUMBER OF REPEAT BIRTHS	PERCENT REPEAT BIRTHS
15-17	775	38	5%
18-19	2,212	395	18%
TOTAL 15-19	2,987	433	14%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2012-2016.

◆ Nationally, 17% of all births to teens ages 15-19 in 2015 were repeat births. Since 2004, repeat teen births have declined 54% 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 their needs and educate mothers about effective contraception.<sup>20</sup>

## Teen Birth Rates by Age and Location

◆ In Rhode Island between 2012 and 2016, the rate of birth to teens ages 15-19 in the core cities (26.1 per 1,000) was more than three times higher than the remainder of the state (8.6 per 1,000). Among the core cities, Central Falls (at a rate of 59.5 per 1,000 teen births) and Woonsocket (at a rate of 43.7 per 1,000 teen births) have significantly higher rates than Pawtucket (26.1 per 1,000) and Providence (21.6 per 1,000).<sup>21</sup>

◆ Thirteen percent of teen births in the core cities were repeat births, while 7% of teen births in the rest of the state were repeat births.<sup>22</sup>

◆ Health care 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>23</sup>

Table 26. Births to Teens, Ages 15-19, Rhode Island, 2012-2016

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	2	3	*
Bristol	6	18	24	*
Burrillville	7	20	27	11.2
Central Falls	59	158	217	59.5
Charlestown	4	19	23	20.1 ^
Coventry	9	35	44	7.7
Cranston	36	92	128	10.1
Cumberland	6	25	31	5.8
East Greenwich	0	9	9	*
East Providence	27	65	92	13.8 ^
Exeter	5	10	15	10.7 ^
Foster	2	3	5	*
Glocester	3	8	11	*
Hopkinton	3	5	8	*
Jamestown	0	1	1	*
Johnston	9	39	48	11.9
Lincoln	2	22	24	6.9 ^
Little Compton	0	1	1	*
Middletown	9	15	24	10.8 ^
Narragansett	2	3	5	*
New Shoreham	0	1	1	*
Newport	17	45	62	12.1
North Kingstown	9	23	32	7.2
North Providence	17	61	78	17.6
North Smithfield	4	6	10	*
Pawtucket	83	222	305	26.1
Portsmouth	6	5	11	*
Providence	303	787	1090	21.6
Richmond	2	11	13	11.2 ^
Scituate	1	9	10	*
Smithfield	1	9	10	*
South Kingstown	1	21	22	1.6 ^
Tiverton	5	8	13	6.0 ^
Warren	2	16	18	13.3 ^
Warwick	31	87	118	10.6
West Greenwich	1	10	11	10.8 ^
West Warwick	27	94	121	26.6
Westerly	10	30	40	18.6
Woonsocket	65	211	276	43.7
Unknown	0	6	6	-
Four Core Cities	510	1,378	1,888	26.1
Remainder of State	265	834	1,099	8.6
Rhode Island	775	2,212	2,987	15.0

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, Maternal and Child Health Database, 2012-2016.

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

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

The denominators for girls ages 15-19 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 15-17. 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 were Rhode Island residents, but specific city/town information was unavailable.

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

### References

<sup>1,8,13</sup> *Teen births: Indicator of child and youth well-being.* (2016). Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>2</sup> Moore, K.A., Sacks, V.H., Manlove, J., Sawhill, I. (2014). *Research brief: "What if" you earned a diploma and delayed parenthood?* Bethesda, MD: Child Trends.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention . (2017). *About teen pregnancy.* Retrieved March 2, 2018, from [cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/about](http://cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/about)

<sup>4</sup> Matta Oshima, K. M., Narendorf, S. C., and McMillen, J. C. (2013). Pregnancy risk among older youth transitioning out of foster care. *Child Youth Services Review*, 35(10), 1760-1765.

(continued on page 181)