

Births to Teens

DEFINITION

Births to teens is the number of births to teen girls ages 15 to 17 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 threatens the development of teen parents as well as their children. Teen mothers are less likely to have the financial resources, social supports and parenting skills needed for healthy child development.¹ Children born to teen parents are more likely to suffer poor health, experience learning and behavior problems, live in poverty, go to prison, and become teen parents themselves.²

While teen pregnancy occurs in families of all income levels, teens who give birth are more likely to come from economically-disadvantaged families and communities.³ In the U.S., 83% of teens who give birth are from poor or low-income families.⁴ Teen moms are more likely to have mothers with low educational attainment and to have mothers or older sisters who became pregnant as an adolescent.⁵

Poor academic achievement is a key predictor of teen pregnancy.⁶ Half of teen mothers drop out of school before becoming pregnant.⁷ Nationally, only

one-third of teen mothers go on to receive a high school diploma.⁸ Being a teen parent seriously limits subsequent education and employment prospects.⁹ Teen parents are more likely to delay or not finish school, putting them at greater risk of facing unemployment, low-wage jobs, and poverty.¹⁰

In Rhode Island between 1998 and 2002, there were 117 births to teens ages 12 to 14, 2,099 births to teens ages 15 to 17 and 4,077 births to teens ages 18 and 19. Of all births to teens ages 15 to 17 in Rhode Island from 1998-2002, 72% occurred in the core cities. Between 1998 and 2002 in Rhode Island, 61% of teen pregnancies to girls ages 15 to 19 resulted in live births, 36% resulted in abortion, and 3% resulted in miscarriage.¹¹

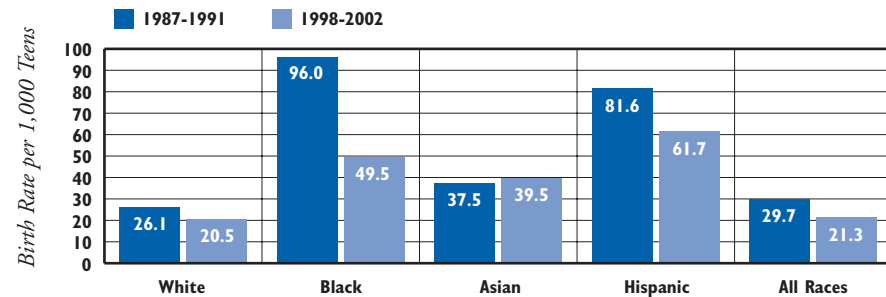
Teen Birth Rate (births per 1,000 teens ages 15-17)		
	1990	2000
RI	32	21
US	37	27
National Rank*	18th	
New England Rank**	6th	

*1st is best; 50th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: *KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK: State Profiles in Child Well-Being 2003*. (2003). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Births to Teens Ages 15-17, by Race and Ethnicity, Core Cities and Rhode Island, 1987-1991 and 1998-2002



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1987-1991 and 1998-2002. Data for 2000-2002 are provisional.

◆ Between the late 1980s and the late 1990s, teen birth rates for Rhode Island girls ages 15 to 17 declined for all racial and ethnic groups except Asian, which increased by 5%. The rate for Black teens decreased by nearly 50%, compared to a 24% decrease for Hispanic teens, and a 21% decrease for White, non-Hispanic teens.¹²

Repeat Births to Teens, Ages 12 to 19, Rhode Island, 1998-2002

Age	Total Number of Births	Number of Repeat Births	Percent
12-14	117	1	<1%
15-17	2,099	199	9%
18-19	4,077	1,089	27%
Total	6,293	1,289	20%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1998-2002. Data for 2000-2002 are provisional.

◆ Between 1998 and 2002 in Rhode Island, one in five teen births (20%) was to a teen who was already a mother. For girls ages 15 to 17, 9% of births were repeat births and for girls ages 18-19, more than one in four (27%) were repeat births.¹³ Repeat births can further impede teen mothers' ability to finish school and keep a job.¹⁴

Table 20.

Births to Teens, Ages 15-17, Rhode Island, 1998-2002

CITY/TOWN	# OF TEEN GIRLS AGES 15-17	# OF BIRTHS TO TEENS AGES 15-17	1998-2002 RATE PER 1,000 TEENS
Barrington	2,130	2	0.9
Bristol	1,860	17	9.1
Burrillville	1,785	11	6.2
Central Falls	1,875	115	61.3
Charlestown	670	10	14.9
Coventry	3,210	50	15.6
Cranston	6,890	93	13.5
Cumberland	3,125	26	8.3
East Greenwich	1,415	6	4.2
East Providence	4,565	54	11.8
Exeter	725	7	9.7
Foster	445	2	NA
Glocester	1,145	6	5.2
Hopkinton	870	12	13.8
Jamestown	565	2	3.5
Johnston	2,295	19	8.3
Lincoln	2,190	14	6.4
Little Compton	295	0	NA
Middletown	1,370	9	6.6
Narragansett	1,265	10	7.9
New Shoreham	80	0	NA
Newport	1,990	52	26.1
North Kingstown	2,660	14	5.3
North Providence	2,470	35	14.2
North Smithfield	1,015	7	6.9
Pawtucket	6,820	223	32.7
Portsmouth	1,680	10	6.0
Providence	17,055	867	50.8
Richmond	815	7	8.6
Scituate	1,215	7	5.8
Smithfield	1,750	11	6.3
South Kingstown	2,750	23	8.4
Tiverton	1,345	11	8.2
Warren	1,000	7	7.0
Warwick	7,910	90	11.4
West Greenwich	540	2	3.7
West Warwick	2,455	53	21.6
Westerly	2,170	24	11.1
Woonsocket	4,240	191	45.0
<i>Core Cities</i>	<i>34,435</i>	<i>1,501</i>	<i>43.6</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>64,215</i>	<i>598</i>	<i>9.3</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>98,650</i>	<i>2,099</i>	<i>21.3</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1998-2002. Data for 2000-2002 are provisional.

Core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

NA: Rates were not calculated for cities and towns with less than 500 teen girls ages 15-17, as rates for small denominators are statistically unreliable.

The denominator is the number of girls ages 15 through 17 according to the 2000 Census of Population, multiplied by five to compute a rate over five years, 1998-2002.

References for Indicator

^{1,8} *KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK: State Profiles in Child Well-Being 2003*. (2003). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

^{2,9} *The State of America's Children Yearbook 2001*. (2001). Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.

^{3,5,10} Shore, R. (2003). *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief: Preventing Teen Births*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

⁴ *Facts in Brief: Teen Sex and Pregnancy*. (1999). New York, NY: Alan Guttmacher Institute.

⁶ *Why the Education Community Cares About Preventing Teen Pregnancy: Notes From the Field*. (2002). Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

^{7,14} *Not Just Another Single Issue: Teen Pregnancy Prevention's Link to Other Critical Social Issues*. (February 2002). Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

^{11,12,13} Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1987-2002. Data for 2000-2002 are provisional.