

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 obtain adequate prenatal care and 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 or 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 who have completed fewer years of schooling and to have mothers or older sisters who also gave birth as adolescents.⁵

Poor academic achievement is a key predictor of teen pregnancy.⁶ Nationally, three out of five teen mothers drop out

of school. Being a teen parent seriously limits subsequent education and employment prospects.⁷ Teen parents are more likely to delay or not finish school, putting them at greater risk of facing unemployment, low-wage jobs, and poverty.⁸

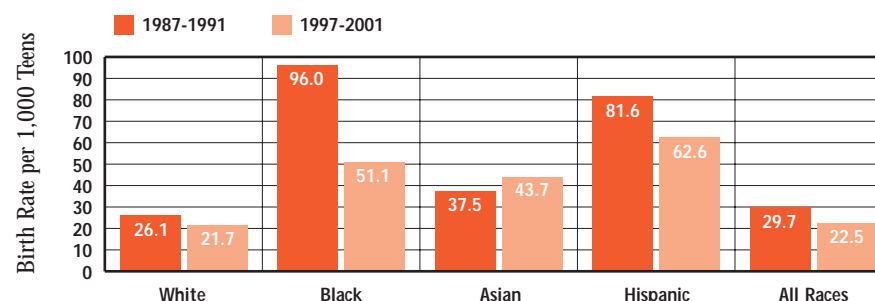
In Rhode Island between 1997 and 2001, there were 124 births to teens ages 12 to 14; 2,219 births to teens ages 15 to 17; and 4,065 births to teens ages 18 and 19. Between 1997 and 2001 in Rhode Island, 61% of teen pregnancies to girls ages 15 to 19 resulted in live births, 36% resulted in abortion, and 3% resulted in miscarriage. In the core cities, 30% of pregnant teens ages 15 to 19 had abortions, compared to 47% of pregnant teens in the rest of Rhode Island. More than one in five (21%) births to teen girls ages 15 to 19 are to girls who have already given birth at least once.⁹

Teen Birth Rate (births per 1,000 teens ages 15-17)		
	1990	1999
RI	32	22
US	37	29
State Rank	16th	

1st is best; 50th is worst

Source: *KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles in Child Well-Being 2002* (2002). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Births to Teens Ages 15-17, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 1987-1991 and 1997-2001



◆ 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 17%. The rate for Black teens decreased by nearly 50%, compared to a 23% decrease for Hispanic teens, and a 17% decrease for White, non-Hispanic teens.

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1987-1991 and 1997-2001. Data for 1999-2001 are provisional.

Repeat Births to Teens, Ages 12 to 19, Rhode Island, 1997-2001

Age	Total Number of Births	Number of Repeat Births	Percent
12-14	124	1	<1%
15-17	2,219	215	10%
18-19	4,065	1,077	27%
Total	6,284	1,292	21%

◆ Between 1997 and 2001 in Rhode Island, one in five teen births (21%) was to a teen who was already a mother. For girls ages 15-17, 10% of births were repeat births and for girls ages 18-19, more than one in four (27%) were repeat births.

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1997-2001. Data for 1999-2001 are provisional.

Table 19. Births to Teens, Ages 15-17, Rhode Island, 1997-2001

CITY/TOWN	# OF TEEN GIRLS AGES 15-17	# OF BIRTHS TO TEENS AGES 15-17	1997-2001 RATE PER 1,000 TEENS
Barrington	2,130	3	1.4
Bristol	1,860	18	9.7
Burrillville	1,785	16	9.0
Central Falls	1,875	112	59.7
Charlestown	670	11	16.4
Coventry	3,210	45	14.0
Cranston	6,890	103	14.9
Cumberland	3,125	27	8.6
East Greenwich	1,415	4	2.8
East Providence	4,565	55	12.0
Exeter	725	7	9.7
Foster	445	4	NA
Glocester	1,145	6	5.2
Hopkinton	870	12	13.8
Jamestown	565	2	3.5
Johnston	2,295	18	7.8
Lincoln	2,190	12	5.5
Little Compton	295	0	NA
Middletown	1,370	10	7.3
Narragansett	1,265	9	7.1
New Shoreham	80	0	NA
Newport	1,990	61	30.7
North Kingstown	2,660	16	6.0
North Providence	2,470	35	14.2
North Smithfield	1,015	8	7.9
Pawtucket	6,820	224	32.8
Portsmouth	1,680	8	4.8
Providence	17,055	939	55.1
Richmond	815	10	12.3
Scituate	1,215	8	6.6
Smithfield	1,750	12	6.9
South Kingstown	2,750	22	8.0
Tiverton	1,345	11	8.2
Warren	1,000	11	11.0
Warwick	7,910	91	11.5
West Greenwich	540	3	5.6
West Warwick	2,455	63	25.7
Westerly	2,170	33	15.2
Woonsocket	4,240	190	44.8
Core Cities	34,435	1,589	46.1
Remainder of State	64,215	630	9.8
Rhode Island	98,650	2,219	22.5

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1997-2001. Data for 1999-2001 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, 1997-2001.

References for Indicator

¹ *KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles in Child Well-Being 2002* (2002). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

^{2,7} *The State of America's Children Yearbook 2001* (2001). Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.

^{3,5,8} *When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends* (1999). 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.

⁹ Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1997-2001. Data for 1999-2001 are provisional.