

Declines, Disparities in Teen Births

Efforts to prevent teen pregnancy have been remarkably successful in recent years. The national teen birth rate reached a record low in 2015—22.3 births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19. That’s down 64 percent since the most recent peak of 61.8 births per 1,000 teen girls in 1991.

The rates for all racial and ethnic groups reached record lows in 2015. Even groups with historically high rates experienced declines similar to or greater than the national average—70 percent among black teens, and 64 percent among Hispanic teens—since the early 1990s.

Yet despite these declines, the birth rate for black and Hispanic teens is still more than twice the rate for white teens nationally, and more than four times greater in some states. Disparities in the health status of babies born to teens also persist among racial and ethnic

groups. In 2014, for example, black, Asian and Pacific Islander teens were more likely than other teen parents to have babies born three weeks or more prematurely.

Research from several sources suggests that efforts to reduce teen pregnancy—estimated to have cost the public \$9.4 billion in 2010—can have significant social and economic benefits for teens and states.

Some states are addressing teen birth disparities by supporting evidence-based programs that have successfully reached young women and men at a higher risk of becoming parents. These programs may incorporate a combination of strategies that build relationship skills, encourage delaying sex and avoiding risky behaviors, and provide information and access to effective birth control options.

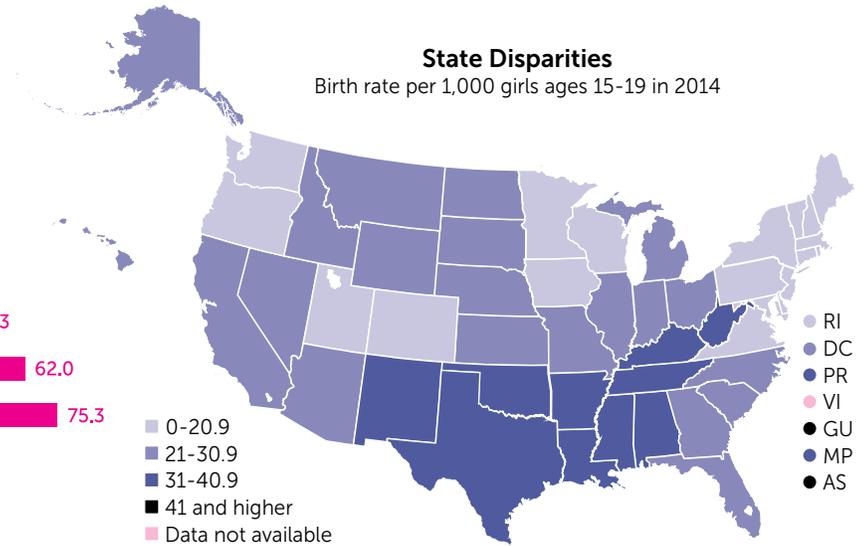
—Emily Heller and Kate Blackman

Record Lows for All Ethnicities
Birth rate per 1,000 girls ages 15-19

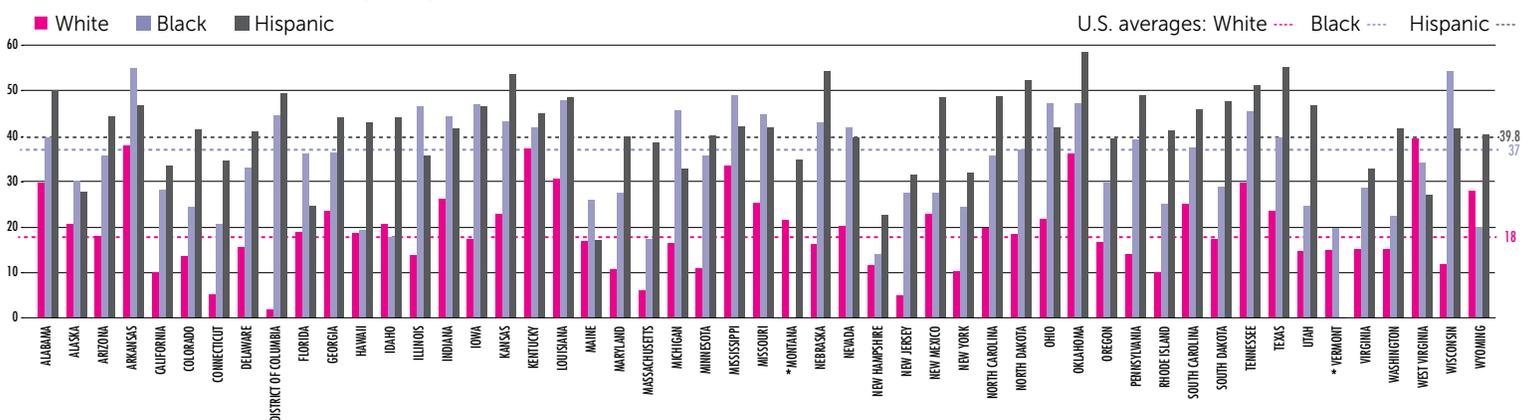


State Disparities

Birth rate per 1,000 girls ages 15-19 in 2014



States Birth Rates Per 1,000 girls ages 15-19, 2013-14



*Note: Inadequate data to calculate rate among black teens in Montana and Hispanic teens in Vermont.

Source for all data: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.