Teen Childbearing in California

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Overview

- Teen birth rates in California and the U.S.
- Factors associated with teen pregnancy among Latinas
- Findings from a qualitative study exploring factors associated with teen pregnancy among Latinas in California
- A Film: A Question of Hope

Source: California Department of Public Health (2000-2006) and STD Control Branch (2007)
“Teen birth rates up in 26 states”
- USA Today, 1/7/09

• After a 14 year decline, the U.S. teen birth rate increased from 40.5 in 2005 to 42.5 in 2007 (an overall increase of 5%)

• California did not follow the national trend: after a small increase in 2006, the teen birth rate declined from 37.2 in 2005 to 37.1 in 2007 (overall decrease of 0.3%)

Source: California Department of Public Health and STD Control Branch; National Center for Vital Statistics, Preliminary Births for 2007
**California Teen Birth Rates by Race/Ethnicity & Year, 2004-2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>40.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian/Aleut/Eskimo (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>29.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Race (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>28.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California Department of Public Health (2004-2006) and STD Control Branch (2007)
Maternal Race/Ethnicity of Teen Births (n=52,770) & Percent of Teen Population (n=1,395,105) for Females Age 15-19 years, California, 2006

- **Hispanic**: 72% (represent 42% of teens)
- **White** (non-Hispanic): 13% (represent 37% of teens)
- **African American** (non-Hispanic): 8% (represent 7% of teens)
- **American Indian** (non-Hispanic): 1% (represent 1% of teens)
- **Asian/Pacific Islander** (non-Hispanic): 3% (represent 10% of teens)
- **Multiple Race** (non-Hispanic): 2% (represent 3% of teens)

Source: California Department of Public Health
California Teen Birth Rates*, Number of Teens*, & Number of Teen Births, 1997-2006

Birth rate per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19

Source: California Department of Public Health
Number of Female Teens by Race/Ethnicity, Aged 15-19 Years, California, 2000-2006

Total - 1,186,951

Source: California Department of Public Health
Teen Birth Rate* Hot Spots at the County Level
California, 2004-2006

Legend
- Statistically Significantly Higher than Rest of State (after subtracting the county's contribution to the State rate)
- Statistically Significantly Lower than Rest of State (after subtracting the county's contribution to the State rate)
- No Significant Difference or Too Few Births

*Teen birth rate is per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years.
Teen population: State of California, Department of Finance, Race/Ethnic Population with Age & Sex Detail, 2000-2050.
Sacramento, CA, July 2007. Rates have been recalculated due to the release of updated population numbers by the Department of Finance (July 2007) and cannot be compared to previously published data.
Prepared by: California Department of Public Health, Center for Family Health, Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health Program, October 2007
Short and long term impact of teen childbearing

- Teen childbearing is associated with adverse outcomes for both mother and child, including:
  - Poor birth outcomes (lower birth weight), poor academic performance, delinquency, and later substance abuse for the child
  - Lower educational attainment and persistent poverty for the mother –
    - Over two-thirds [69%] of Latina teen moms drop out of high school (vs. 58% among teen moms overall)
  - Repeat teen pregnancy in the family

Source: Hoffman & Maynard (ed), 2008
Teen pregnancy: a confluence of factors

INDIVIDUAL –
Contraceptive use, attitudes towards childbearing, life goals

FAMILY –
History of teen childbearing, parental income & education, parental expectations, communication

PARTNER -
Attitudes toward contraceptive use, age, communication

SOCIETAL/STRUCTURAL –
Access to health care services, neighborhood safety, community norms, educational and career opportunities
Data sources on Latino sexual health

- National Survey of Family Growth (2002; new data to be released in 2009) – nationally representative, in-person household survey
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2007) – administered to high-school aged youth biannually
Sexual experience

Figure 1: Sexually Experienced Teens (Aged 15-19), by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2002

Sexual experience, activity, and partners

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2007
Trends in sexual experience among high school students by race/ethnicity and gender, 1993-2001

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Contraceptive use at first sex among Latinas

Source: National Survey of Family Growth, 2002
Contraceptive use: Condoms

Figure 2: Condom Use at Last Sex Among High School Students (Aged 15-17), by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2005

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey; See #8.
Contraceptive use: the pill

Trends in pill use among high school students at last sex, by race/ethnicity and gender, 1993-2001

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002 (Chartbook).
Contraceptive use at last sex

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2007
Contraceptive failure rates

- Among all Latina contraceptive users, nearly one in six (16%) will experience a contraceptive failure during the first two years of method use. This is significantly higher than the failure rate for non-Hispanic whites (11%). [Ranjit et al., 1997]
The role of immigration & acculturation on sexual initiation

**FIGURE 1.** Sexual Initiation Among Latino Teens, by Generation Status (NLSY)

Source: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2008
The role of immigration & acculturation on contraceptive use

**FIGURE 2.** Contraceptive Use Among Latino Teens by Generation Status, (NLSY)

- Contraceptive Use at First Sex - Girls +: 64% First, 70% Second, 77% Third
- Contraceptive Use at First Sex - Boys*: 61% First, 72% Second, 79% Third
- Consistent Contraceptive Use at Age 17 - Girls**: 37% First, 42% Second, 61% Third
- Consistent Contraceptive Use at Age 17 - Boys*: 36% First, 58% Second, 61% Third

\*p < 0.05 + p < 0.10

Source: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2008
Variation in teen births by country of origin

**FIGURE 6.** Proportion of Latina Teen Girls who Have a Birth by Country of Origin, NLSY

Source: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2008
What can explain lower levels of contraceptive use?

- Higher levels of pregnancy intendedness, in particular among immigrant teens (*Frost & Oslak, 1999*)
- Concerns about the short and long term side effects of hormonal methods of contraception (*Gilliam et al., 2004; Guendelman et al., 2000*); less social support for contraceptive use (*Sangi-Haghpeykar et al., 2006*)
- Parental hesitance to discussing sex and sexuality (*Gilliam, 2007; Talashek et al., 2004*)
- Barriers regarding financial and geographic access to reproductive health services; concerns about citizenship/confidentiality (*Rew, 1998*)
Partners

• In a telephone survey, more than half (53%) of Latina teens agreed that it’s acceptable to be in a relationship with someone 3 or more years older.

• More than one-third of Latina teens report that their first sexual partner was four or more years older (compared to one in five among white and African American youth).

• As age differences increase, the likelihood of early sexual initiation increases, while the likelihood of using contraception decreases.

Family history of teen childbearing

Percentage of 15-18 year olds born to a teen mother, by race/ethnicity

Source: Wirt et al., 1998 (Chartbook)
The role of the family and community

• More traditional gender-role expectations and a strong cultural value placed on motherhood can make it difficult for Latina teens to consider educational and career goals beyond parenthood (*Driscoll et al.*, 2001)

• Focus groups with Latino parents, teachers, and community leaders reveal that although Latino parents prefer that their children defer childbearing to have greater educational opportunities, the value placed on the role of motherhood and the attention showered on teen mothers sends mixed messages (*GRATP*, 2007)

At the same time...

• A strong feeling of neighborhood cohesion, social capital, and community has been shown to be protective against teen childbearing among Latinas (*Way et al.*, 2006; *Denner et al.*, 2001)
Poverty

Median income of families with 15-18 year olds, by race/ethnicity

Source: Wirt et al., 1998 (Chartbook)
Access to health care services

Health Insurance Coverage among Latinos by Place of Birth and National Origin, 1997

Source: Schur and Feldman, 2001 (Chartbook)
Latina Voices: A qualitative study on Latina Teen Childbearing in the Fresno and Los Angeles Areas

• **Study goals:**
  
  – Guide the California Department of Public Health in their efforts to reduce Latina teen pregnancy
  
  – Research both risk *and* protective factors associated with teen pregnancy
  
  – Address gaps in knowledge – including the role of nativity/acculturation and influence of perceived socioeconomic opportunities on behavior and goals
Study Design

1st time expectant Latina women

Immigrant & U.S. born

65 2 hour, in-person interviews

2 age groups: Teens (15-19) Adults (22-35)

2 study sites: Los Angeles Fresno
Research domains

**Pregnancy**

- Their feelings and attitudes towards childbearing and reasons for current pregnancy

**Neighborhood and community**

- The influence of neighborhood environments, community norms, family, partners, peers, and mentors on Latina teen childbearing

**Socioeconomic opportunities**

- Their perception and characterization of their current and future educational and career opportunities, aspirations, and expectations

**Birth control**

- Their attitudes about birth control, experiences using birth control methods, and access to birth control services
Key study findings

- Many participants – especially teens – were misinformed about fertility and birth control and used birth control ineffectively.
- Many Latina teen pregnancies were intended. Contraception, while essential to prevent unintended pregnancy, will not address this issue.
- Male partners played an influential role in the childbearing decisions of Latino youth.
- Parents and other family members generally played an important role in guiding the lives of Latino youth, but often had limited resources.
- Many Latina teens have – and perceive themselves to have – few socioeconomic opportunities; for some, pregnancy represents an opportunity for a brighter future.
Available at:
http://bixbycenter.ucsf.edu/videos/video-hi-1.html

For more information:
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References