

One In 5 Teen Moms Who Gives Birth Already Has a Child

Editor's Choice

Almost one in 5 teen moms who gives birth already has a child, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Over **365,000 teenagers**, ranging in age from 15 to 19 years, gave birth in 2010, and nearly 67,000 (18.3%) of those girls had given birth to at least one child before, also referred to as a repeat birth, a new Vital Signs report from the CDC revealed.

Almost any pregnancy during the adolescent years can have a serious impact on the lives and futures of everyone involved, such as the mother, child, and family. However, babies born as an outcome of a repeat pregnancy have an increased likelihood to be premature and have a low birth weight.

CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H., said:

"Teen birth rates in the United States have declined to a record low, which is good news. But rates are still far too high. Repeat births can negatively impact the mother's education and job opportunities as well as the health of the next generation. Teens, parents, health care providers, and others need to do much more to reduce unintended pregnancies."

Substantial racial and geographic disparities

Repeat teen births in the U.S. have reduced by over 6% between 2007 and 2010, data from CDC's National Vital Statistics System demonstrated. However, the number of repeat births is still elevated and there are considerable differences between racial/ethnic and geographic groups.

Repeat teen births were lowest among non-Hispanic whites (14.8%) and highest among:

- American Indian/Alaska Natives - 21.6%
- Hispanics - 20.9%
- Non-Hispanic blacks - 20.4%

Geographic disparities ranged from:

- a high of 22% in Texas
- a low of 10% in New Hampshire

How can we prevent repeat teen births?

Data revealed that almost 91% of teen moms who were sexually active during the postpartum period used some type of contraception. However, just 22% used a form of birth control that is considered to be the most effective - meaning the probability is less than one pregnancy per 100 uses in one year.

In order to help prevent repeat teen births, **parents, guardians, caregivers, and doctors can talk to adolescent boys and girls** about avoiding pregnancy by refraining from sex.

Teens who are sexually active should also be informed about the most effective forms of contraception to prevent repeat teen pregnancy.

A previous study published in *JAMA Pediatrics* found that intervention can reduce the risk of pregnancy. The report showed that girls at increased risk of pregnancy documented more regular use of condoms, oral contraception, or both, after participating in a youth development intervention.

Written by Sarah Glynn

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