Measuring childbearing patterns in the United States

- Birth certificates (through National Vital Statistics System)
- National Survey of Family Growth (interviews with women and men ages 15–44)
Childbearing patterns in the United States

- Teen birth and pregnancy rates now at historic lows
- Teen childbearing down among age and racial groups
- Women starting families at older ages and having fewer children
- Out-of-wedlock childbearing rates stabilizing
- Births to cohabiting women are rising

SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Center for Health Statistics.
Childbearing in the U.S. 1920–2011

NOTE: Beginning with 1959, trend lines are based on registered live births; trend lines for 1920–1958 are based on live births adjusted for underregistration.
Women are having fewer children today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Births per woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Replacement level = 2.1

Wide variation in number of children by race/ethnicity, 2010

- Hispanic
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- American Indian
- Alaska Native
- Non-Hispanic Black
- Non-Hispanic White
- All races

Replacement level = 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Births per woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Black</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All races</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First births in the United States, by age, 1975 and 2010

1975
1,319,126 births

2010
1,604,181 births

Teen births have declined sharply over the years

Number of births (in thousands)

Rate per 1,000 women aged 15–19

Birth rate

Number of births

NOTE: Data for 2010 are preliminary.
Teen birth rates have declined across all race/ethnic groups

NOTE: Data for 2010 are preliminary.

Rates per 1,000 women aged 15-19

- All races: 61.8 in 1991, 34.3 in 2010
- Non-Hispanic white: 43.4 in 1991, 23.5 in 2010
- Non-Hispanic black: 118.2 in 1991, 51.5 in 2010
- Hispanic: 104.6 in 1991, 55.7 in 2010
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 84.1 in 1991, 38.7 in 2010
- Asian or Pacific Islander: 10.9 in 2010
Teen rates higher in the sun belt and lowest in New England region

U.S. teen birth rate in 2010 was 34.3 per thousand

- **Green**: 50.0 or more
- **Light Green**: 40.0–49.9
- **Light Blue**: 30.0–39.9
- **Medium Blue**: 20.0–29.9
- **Dark Blue**: Less than 20.0

Selected birth outcomes

- Preterm birth:
  - Mothers under age 20: 13.7%
  - Mothers 20 and over: 12.0%

- Low birthweight:
  - Mothers under age 20: 9.7%
  - Mothers 20 and over: 8.0%

- Infant mortality rate:
  - Mothers under age 20: 9.6%
  - Mothers 20 and over: 6.3%

NOTE: Infant mortality rate is per 1,000 live births
Pregnancy, birth, and abortion rates for teens aged 15–19 years

Rate per 1,000 women

120
100
80
60
40
20
0


Pregnancy rate

Birth rate

Abortion rate

NOTES: Birth rate for 2010 is preliminary.
Pregnancy rates for teens by race and Hispanic origin aged 15–19 years

Rate per 1,000 women

Non-Hispanic black

Hispanic

Non-Hispanic white

Out-of-wedlock childbearing has risen over the past several decades

Most unmarried births are not to teens

1970
398,700 births

2010
1,633,785 births

More first births to cohabiting women


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2006–2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither married nor cohabiting</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Births that were intended at conception
