

TEEN BIRTH RATE

1. Definition:

TEEN BIRTH RATE is the number of resident live births to mothers ages 15-19 in a specified geographic area (country, state, county, etc.), divided by the number of resident women aged 15-19 for the same geographic area (for a specified time period, usually a calendar year). This figure is multiplied by 1,000 to get a rate.

2. Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Resident Live Births to Mothers Ages 15-19}}{\text{Number of Resident Women Ages 15-19}} \times 1,000$$

3. Example:

12,500= live births to mothers ages 15-19 in 2008 among state residents

365,000= population of women 15-19 in the state

$(12,500/365,000) \times 1,000 = 34.2$ teen births per 1,000 population of women 15-19

(Another way to say this is 34.2 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 had a live birth in 2008.)

4. Technical Notes:

- The national teen birth rate declined steadily from 1990 through 2005, and then rose in both 2006 and 2007. In 2007, approximately 40 in 1,000 teenage girls had a baby.
- Ages 15-19 are commonly used for calculating the teen birth rate since most births to teenagers occur within that five-year age range. Different age groups can be used as needed or preferred (e.g., 15-17, 18-19, under 20). It is highly recommended that any analysis/dissemination of a teen birth rate include the ages used in the calculation to provide accurate documentation and for further comparison purposes.
- The teen birth rate should not be confused with the percent of births to teens which is the number of births to teens (in a specific population) divided by the total number of births in the specific population and multiplied by 100.
- In less densely populated areas, annual numbers of teen births may be small which would result in a teen birth rate considered to be too unstable or unreliable for analysis. Adding additional years (three or five-year average annual rates) and/or expanding the area to be studied should result in a larger number of teen births and more reliable rates for analysis.
- Teen mothers are more likely to be unmarried, to drop out of school, to give birth prematurely, to have a low weight infant, to have pregnancy complications such as anemia and high blood pressure, to smoke while pregnant, to receive late or no prenatal care and to have an unplanned pregnancy.
- Infants born to teenage mothers are at a higher risk for various health problems as well. Children born to teenage mothers are less likely to receive proper nutrition, health care, and cognitive and social stimulation. As a result, they are at risk for lower academic achievement. Children born to teenage mothers are at increased risk for abuse and neglect. Boys born to teenage mothers are 13% more likely to be incarcerated later in life. Girls born to teenage mothers are 22% more likely to become teenage mothers themselves.

- Additional information on teen births can be found at:

http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/infosheets/infosheet_teen_preg.htm

http://www.marchofdimes.com/professionals/14332_1159.asp

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