

## Preventing Repeat Teen Births

Although teen birth rates have been falling for the last two decades, more than 365,000 teens, ages 15–19, gave birth in 2010. Teen pregnancy and childbearing can carry high health, emotional, social, and financial costs for both teen mothers and their children. Teen mothers want to do their best for their own health and that of their child, but some can become overwhelmed by life as a parent. Having more than one child as a teen can limit the teen mother's ability to finish her education or get a job. Infants born from a repeat teen birth are often born too small or too soon, which can lead to more health problems for the baby.

Repeat teen births can be prevented.

### Health care providers and communities can:

- ◇ Help sexually active teen mothers gain information about and use of effective types of birth control.
- ◇ Counsel teens that they can avoid additional pregnancies by not having sex.
- ◇ Connect teen mothers with support services that can help prevent repeat pregnancies, such as home visiting programs.

\*A repeat teen birth is the 2nd (or more) pregnancy ending in a live birth before age 20.

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Want to learn more? Visit

www <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns>



Nearly 1 in 5 births to teen mothers, ages 15 to 19, is a repeat birth\*.



About 183 repeat teen births occur each day in the US.



About 1 in 5 sexually active teen mothers use the most effective types of birth control after they have given birth.

# Problem

*Too many teens, ages 15–19, have repeat births.*

**Nearly 1 in 5 births to teens, ages 15–19, are repeat births.**

- ◇ Most (86%) are 2nd births.
- ◇ Some teens are giving birth to a 3rd (13% of repeat births) or 4th up to 6th child (2% of repeat births).
- ◇ American Indian and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and black teens are about 1.5 times more likely to have a repeat teen birth, compared to white teens.
- ◇ Infants born from a repeat teen birth are often born too small or too soon, which can lead to more health problems for the baby.

**Working together, a sexually active teen and her doctor or other health care professional can decide on the best birth control method.**

- ◇ More than 9 in 10 (91%) sexually active teen mothers used some form of birth control, but only about 1 in 5 (22%) used the most effective types of birth control.
- ◇ White (25%) and Hispanic (28%) teen mothers are almost twice as likely as black teen mothers (14%) to use the most effective types of birth control.
- ◇ Long-acting reversible birth control can be a good option for a teen mother because they do not require her to do something on a regular basis – such as take a pill each day.
- ◇ Hormonal implants and IUDs are two types of long-acting reversible birth control. These are some of the most effective forms of birth control.

## 1. How many teens have repeat births?

There were 365,000 births to teens, ages 15–19, in 2010

**66,800**  
repeat births

**57,200**

were 2nd births

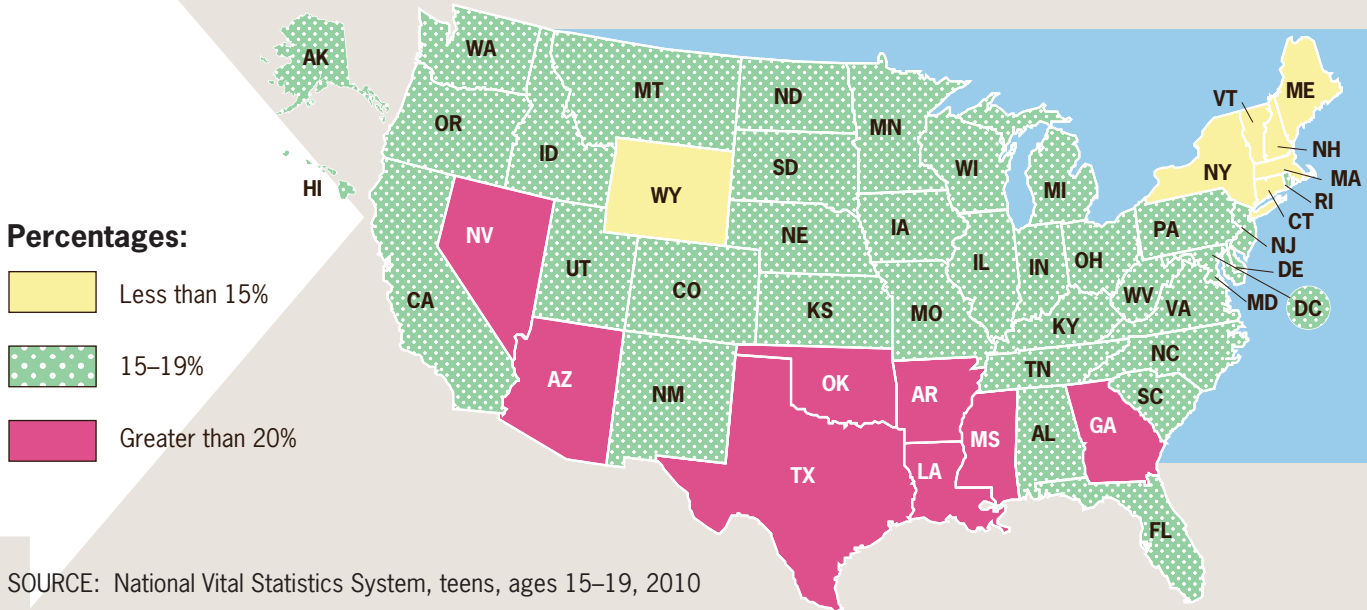
**8,400**

were 3rd births

**1,200**

were 4th births or higher

## 2. Which states have the highest percentages of repeat teen births?



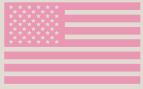
## 3. How effective are different birth control methods?

Sexually active teens should use condoms to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and consider using another type of birth control to further reduce the risk of pregnancy.

Risk of pregnancy with typical use	Type of birth control*	How to use it
Less than 1 pregnancy per 100 women in a year	<b>Implant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placed by health care provider</li> <li>Lasts up to 3 years</li> </ul>
	<b>Intrauterine devices (IUDs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placed by health care provider</li> <li>Copper IUD — Lasts up to 10 years</li> <li>Progestin IUD — Lasts 3–5 years</li> </ul>
6–12 pregnancies per 100 women in a year	<b>Injectable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given by health care provider</li> <li>1 shot every 3 months</li> </ul>
	<b>Patch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply a new patch each week for 3 weeks (21 total days)</li> <li>Don't wear a patch during the 4th week</li> </ul>
	<b>Ring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place ring into the vagina yourself</li> <li>Keep the ring in your vagina for 3 weeks, and then take it out for 1 week</li> </ul>
	<b>Pill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swallow a pill every day</li> </ul>
	<b>Diaphragm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>
18 or more pregnancies per 100 women in a year	<b>Male condom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>
	<b>Female condom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>
	<b>Sponge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>
	<b>Rhythm method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>
	<b>Spermicide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>
	<b>Withdrawal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use correctly every time you have sex</li> </ul>

\*The most effective methods also include sterilization, but because this method is very infrequently used by teens, it was not included in the table.

# What Can Be Done



## Federal government is

- ◇ Funding states and tribes through the Pregnancy Assistance Fund to provide pregnant and parenting teens with a complete network of support services.
- ◇ Promoting home visiting and other programs shown to prevent repeat teen pregnancy and reduce sexual risk behavior.
- ◇ Conducting and evaluating programs that work, as well as innovative approaches to reduce teen pregnancy and births in communities with the highest rates.
- ◇ Helping other groups with information to duplicate teen pregnancy prevention programs that have been shown to be effective through rigorous research.  
<http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/tpp/tpp-database.html>



## Doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals can

- ◇ Discuss with sexually active teens the most effective types of birth control to prevent repeat pregnancies. Refer to CDC guidelines:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/unintendedpregnancy/USMEC.htm>
- ◇ Counsel parenting teens on how they can avoid additional pregnancies by not having sex.
- ◇ Advise teen mothers that births should be spaced at least 2 years apart to support the health of the baby, and that having more than one child during the teen years can make it difficult for teen parents to reach their educational and work goals.
- ◇ Remind sexually active teens to also use a condom every time to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

## Parents, guardians, and caregivers can



- ◇ Talk about how to avoid repeat births with both male and female teens.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/parents.htm>
- ◇ Check with your insurer about coverage of preventive services. In some cases, preventive services, such as birth control methods and counseling, are available with no out-of-pocket costs.
- ◇ Talk with community leaders, including faith-based organizations, about using effective programs that can help prevent repeat teen pregnancies.

## All teens, including teen parents, can



- ◇ Choose not to have sex.
- ◇ Use birth control correctly every time if they are having sex. Use condoms every time to prevent disease.
- ◇ Discuss sexual health issues with their parents, partner, health care professionals, and other adults and friends they trust.
- ◇ Visit <http://www.hhs.gov/opa> to find a family planning clinic near them for birth control if they choose to be sexually active.

For more information, please contact

**Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)**

**TTY: 1-888-232-6348**

**E-mail: [cdeinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdeinfo@cdc.gov)**

Web: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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