

Repeat births by teen girls still too high: CDC

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20 percent are repeat births and these babies face health risks, agency says.

(HealthDay)—Nearly 20 percent of American teens who give birth have already had one or more babies, a federal study released Tuesday says.

In 2010, more than 365,000 teens aged 15 to 19 gave birth and about 67,000 (18.3 percent) of those were repeat births, according to the April *Vital Signs* report from the U.S. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Repeat births among teens decreased by more than 6 percent between 2007 and 2010, but the number of repeat births remains high, according to the study.

In 2010, repeat teen births were highest among American Indian/Alaska Natives (nearly 22 percent), Hispanics (21 percent) and blacks (about 20

percent). They were lowest among whites (just under 15 percent).

Repeat births ranged from a high of 22 percent in Texas to 10 percent in New Hampshire, according to the report.

Although 91 percent of [teen mothers](#) who were sexually active used some form of contraception, only 22 percent used contraceptives considered to be "most effective," meaning that, with those forms of birth control, the risk of pregnancy was less than one pregnancy per 100 users per year.

Teen pregnancies can change the lives and futures of the mother, child and family. Infants born as a result of repeat [teen pregnancy](#) are also more likely to be born too soon and too small, the report stated.

"[Teen birth rates](#) in the United States have declined to a record low, which is good news," CDC director Dr. Thomas Frieden said in an agency news release. "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."

Parents, health-care providers and other adults need to talk to both male and female teens about avoiding pregnancy by not having sex. With sexually active [teens](#), the discussion can focus on the most effective types of birth control, according to the report.

More information: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy offers parents [10 tips to help their children avoid teen pregnancy](#).

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