

US teen birth rate drops to record low

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US teen births have dropped to a record low, but the country still has one of the highest rates among developed nations, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday.

"The overall rate declined 25 percent from 41.5 per 1,000 teenagers aged 15-19 in 2007 to 31.3 in 2011—a record low," the CDC report said.

"The number of births to teenagers aged 15-19 also fell from 2007 to 2011, by 26 percent to 329,797."

The decline in teenagers [giving birth](#) has been "sustained, widespread, and broad-based," the CDC said.

The declines "have been attributed to a number of factors, including strong teen pregnancy prevention messages."

According to the most recent [National Survey](#) of Family Growth, teens are increasingly using contraception during their first sexual encounter, and sexually active females and males are using dual measures—mainly condoms and hormonal methods.

Teenage birth rates have been falling steeply since 1991, with the brief exception of 2006 and 2007.

"Births to teenagers are at elevated risk of [low birth weight](#), preterm birth, and of dying in infancy compared with infants born to women

aged 20 and over," the CDC said.

Teenage births are also "associated with significant public costs, estimated at \$10.9 billion annually."

In 2011, Hispanic teens reported the highest rate of births among teenagers—49.4 per 1,000—slightly ahead of teenage African-Americans, at 47.4. Non-Hispanic whites registered a teen birthrate of 21.8.

"Despite this substantial impact," the CDC report cautions, "the US teen birth rate remains one of the highest among [Western countries](#)."

For a comparison, the teen pregnancy rate in Britain in 2009 was 25 per 1,000, while in 2008 in France it was 10.2, according to UN figures.

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