

More US women hope for motherhood, with two kids ideal

October 13 2016



(HealthDay)—More American women want to become mothers, and

their dream family consists of two children, a new U.S. government report shows.

Half of women aged 15 to 44 expect to have a [child](#) at some point, according to a 2013-2015 [national survey](#). That's up from 2002, when only 46 percent of women said they anticipated motherhood.

"Women who have not yet had any [children](#), [younger women](#), and women who have never been married were more likely to expect to have a child in the future compared with other groups," reported researchers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics.

The National Survey of Family Growth has tracked birth expectations for four decades to gain insight into future birth rates and family sizes. The 2013-2015 survey involved interviews with nearly 6,000 women.

Reporting that most women wanted 2.2 kids in their lifetime, the researchers said this is down slightly from a 2002 survey.

Exactly when the women expect to have those kids varied depending on their age, whether they were married, cohabiting or single, along with the number of children they already had.

For instance, about 19 percent of [married women](#) and 16 percent of cohabiting women expected to have a child within two years of the interview, compared to 5 percent of women without a spouse or partner, the researchers found.

But looking ahead, more than one-quarter of cohabiting women and never married, not cohabiting women assumed they'd have a child in two to five years, versus just 12 percent of married women.

Some of the other survey findings regarding childbirth include:

- As women aged, the percentage who expected to have a child decreased no matter how many kids they already had.
- Among childless women, close to nine in 10 of those aged 15 to 24 said they expect to have a child in the future. This fell to 77 percent for women aged 25 to 34 and dropped to one-third among those older than that.
- Also, as the size of their family increased, women were less likely to anticipate another child—and that was true in all age groups. Eighty-two percent of women who had two or more children said they didn't expect to have any more babies, the survey found.
- But among [women](#) with no children, only 22 percent said they did not expect to have a child. Most intended to wait, however. Roughly three out of 10 anticipated a child in two to five years, and 36 percent eyed motherhood more than five years later.

The report was published Oct. 13 as a *NCHS Data Brief*.

More information: Womenshealth.gov talks about why [preconception health matters](#).

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Citation: More US women hope for motherhood, with two kids ideal (2016, October 13)
retrieved 24 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-10-women-motherhood-kids-ideal.html>

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