

Teen pregnancy and birth rates at an all time low in Minn., report shows

June 7 2018, by Maddie Eaton



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Pregnancy and birth rates continue to decline for 15-19-year-olds in

Minnesota, with rates decreasing the most among youth from communities of color. The 2018 Minnesota Adolescent Sexual Health Report from the University of Minnesota Medical School's Healthy Youth Development—Prevention Research Center (HYD—PRC) attributes the decline to a combination of delayed sexual activity and an increase in use of highly effective contraceptive methods among teens.

"Minnesota [youth](#) should be commended for their positive decision making related to their [sexual health](#)," said Jill Farris, Director of Adolescent Sexual Health Training and Education for the HYD—PRC. "Continued declining rates of teen pregnancy, especially among youth of color, is a positive step for Minnesota youth."

The HYD—PRC's [report](#) highlights these decreases while also recognizing that Minnesota youth continue to experience increasing rates of sexually transmitted infections. "Young people are using highly effective contraceptive methods, but clinicians and providers must continue to stress the importance of barrier methods for STI prevention," noted Farris.

Disparities in sexual [health](#) outcomes—by geography, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and gender identity—continue to persist, as well. Youth from communities of color have disproportionately higher rates of STIs and births. The ten counties with the highest teen birth rates are all in greater Minnesota. Transgender and gender diverse (TGD) youth report higher rates of risk behaviors than their heterosexual and cisgender peers. "In Minnesota, 2.7 percent of youth identify as TGD. These youth are in our schools and communities all across the state of Minnesota. Health professionals, school staff, community organizations, and policy makers all have a role to play in supporting these vulnerable youth," said Farris.

A special section of the report this year is focused on Minnesota youth's

experience with relationship violence and sexual abuse. The report showed nearly 14 percent of youth reported violence in their relationships and nearly 20 percent reported being sexually harassed at school in the past 30 days.

This report helps Minnesotans understand the current landscape of our young people's sexual health and healthy youth development.

"Improving adolescent sexual health outcomes starts where we live, learn, work, and play. Everyone has a role in creating a healthy world for our youth to thrive. If we can provide additional support to [young people](#) by addressing things like physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, and social determinants such as discrimination and access to health care services, we can empower them to make healthy decisions and improve sexual health outcomes," said Farris.

Read the [full report online](#), including individualized reports for each of Minnesota's 87 counties.

Provided by University of Minnesota

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