

Seventeen Is the Average Age at First Sexual Intercourse

Average age at sexual initiation is about the same for men and women.

Among women aged 15 to 44, average age at first sexual intercourse was 17.3 years. Their male counterparts lost their virginity at 17.0 years on average. Several demographic characteristics are associated with the loss of virginity at a younger or older age. Black men and women lost their virginity at a younger age than non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics, for example. People who lived with both parents at age 14 waited longer to engage in sex for the first time than did those in other family situations.

For most women, sexual initiation occurs with a slightly older man, while most men first have intercourse with a woman their own age or younger. Among teen girls, the younger the woman at first intercourse, the more likely it was that her partner was considerably older. Eleven percent of girls who were age 15 at first sexual intercourse, and 10 percent of those under age 15, lost their virginity to men who were aged 20 or older.

■ Most men and women have their first sexual experience with someone relatively close in age.

Religion has some impact on the age of sexual initiation

(average age at first sexual intercourse among women aged 15 to 44, by religion raised, 2002)

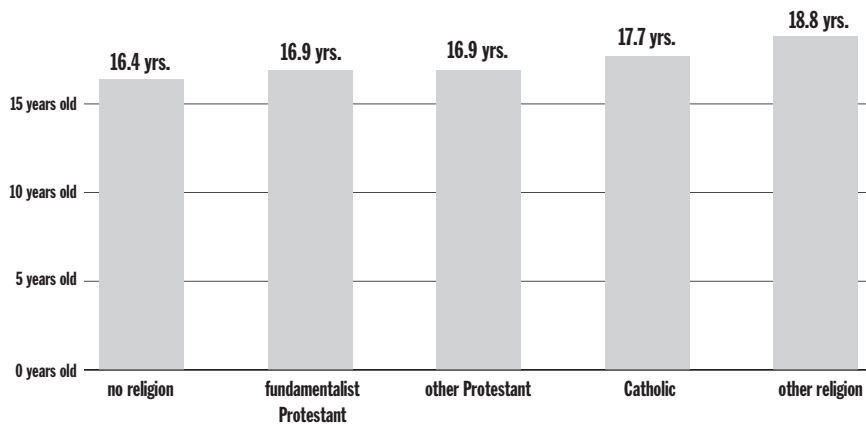


Table 1.1 Average Age at First Sexual Intercourse among Women, 2002*(average age of women aged 15 to 44 at first sexual intercourse, by selected characteristics, 2002)*

	average age at first sexual intercourse
Total women aged 15 to 44	17.3 years
Race and Hispanic origin	
Black, non-Hispanic	16.3
Hispanic	18.0
White, non-Hispanic	17.2
Family structure at age 14	
Living with both parents	17.8
Other	16.1
Religion raised	
None	16.4
Fundamentalist Protestant	16.9
Other Protestant	16.9
Catholic	17.7
Other religion	18.8

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Fertility, Family Planning, and Reproductive Health of U.S. Women: Data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth, Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, No. 25, 2005; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

Most Teenagers Have Sex before Age 18

Boys and girls are equally likely to have had sexual intercourse.

Teenage sexual activity has declined significantly over the past 12 years, according to the National Survey of Family Growth. In 2002, 46 percent of never-married boys aged 15 to 19 had had sexual intercourse, down from 60 percent in 1988. The percentage of girls in the age group who have had sexual intercourse fell from 51 to 46 percent. Despite the decline, 54 percent of boys and 58 percent of girls have had sex by age 18.

Teens aged 15 to 19 who live in two-parent families are much less likely to have sexual intercourse than those in other family situations. Only 30 to 34 percent of those in two-parent families have had sex compared with 52 to 54 percent of those in other types of families. Among 15-to-19-year-olds, Hispanic girls and non-Hispanic white boys are least likely to have had sexual intercourse (37 and 41 percent, respectively).

■ The decline in teen sexual activity may be due to concerns about sexually transmitted diseases.

The decline in sexual experience has been greater for teenage boys than teenage girls

(percent of people aged 15 to 19 who have ever had sexual intercourse, by sex, 1988 and 2002)

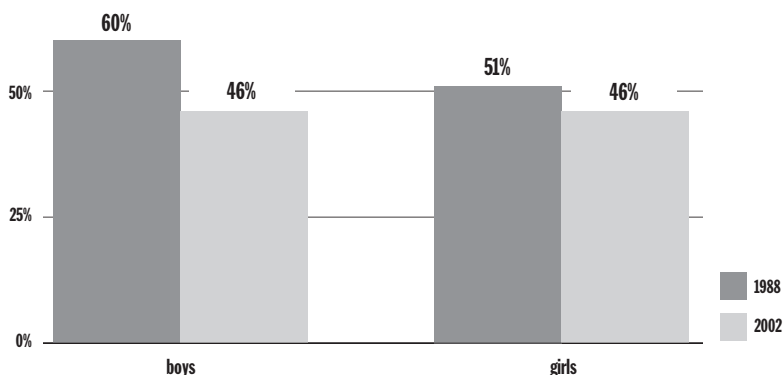


Table 2.1 Sexual Intercourse among Teenagers, 1988 and 2002

(percent of never-married people aged 15 to 19 who have ever had sexual intercourse, by selected characteristics and sex, 1988 and 2002; percentage point change, 1988–2002)

	percent who have ever had sexual intercourse		percentage point change, 1988–2002
	2002	1988	
BOYS			
Total aged 15 to 19	45.7%	60.4%	–14.7
Aged 15 to 17	31.3	50.0	–18.7
Aged 18 to 19	64.3	77.3	–13.0
Race and Hispanic origin			
Black, non-Hispanic	63.3	80.6	–17.3
Hispanic	54.8	59.7	–4.9
White, non-Hispanic	40.8	56.8	–16.0
Family structure at age 14			
Living with both parents	40.4	57.0	–16.6
Other	57.1	68.3	–11.2
GIRLS			
Total aged 15 to 19	45.5	51.1	–5.6
Aged 15 to 17	30.3	37.2	–6.9
Aged 18 to 19	68.8	72.6	–3.8
Race and Hispanic origin			
Black, non-Hispanic	56.9	60.4	–3.5
Hispanic	37.4	45.8	–8.4
White, non-Hispanic	45.1	50.4	–5.3
Family structure at age 14			
Living with both parents	38.7	44.9	–6.2
Other	57.2	62.2	–5.0

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Teenagers in the United States: Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use, and Childbearing, 2002*; *Vital and Health Statistics Series 23, No. 24, 2004*; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

Nearly Everyone Has Had Sex by Their Early Twenties

Most people aged 15 to 44 have had sex within the past three months.

If ever there was any doubt that sexual activity is a universal human drive, a look at the following tables would put those doubts to rest. By age 18, most men and women have had sexual intercourse. By age 23, more than 90 percent are sexually experienced.

The numbers barely change when the analysis is limited to the never-married. Among never-married men and women aged 15 to 44, fully 64 to 65 percent have had sexual intercourse in the past year. More than half have had sex in the past three months.

Interestingly, education dampens sexual activity. College graduates are less likely than those with less education to have had sex in the past three months—53 to 54 percent of college graduates have done so versus 67 to 70 percent of high school graduates.

■ With sexual activity universal, public health must focus on pregnancy and disease prevention.

Most single women have had sex in the past three months

(percent of never-married women aged 15 to 44 who have had sexual intercourse in the past three months, by age, 2002)

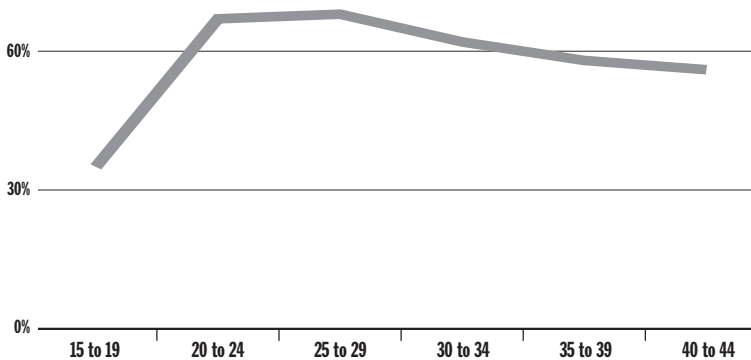


Table 3.1 Women Who Ever Had Sexual Intercourse by Age and Marital Status, 2002

(number of total and never-married women aged 15 to 44 and percent who have ever had sexual intercourse, by age at interview, 2002; numbers in thousands)

	total		never-married	
	number	percent ever having had sexual intercourse	number	percent ever having had sexual intercourse
Total women aged 15 to 44	61,561	88.0%	25,712	71.3%
Aged 15	1,819	14.0	1,819	14.0
Aged 16	1,927	29.5	1,927	29.5
Aged 17	2,073	45.5	2,069	45.4
Aged 18	2,035	66.6	1,887	64.0
Aged 19	1,980	74.7	1,896	73.5
Aged 20	1,958	77.6	1,646	73.3
Aged 21	2,047	79.2	1,709	75.1
Aged 22	2,147	90.3	1,695	87.7
Aged 23	1,895	95.0	1,141	91.7
Aged 24	1,793	92.1	959	85.2
Aged 25 to 29	9,249	96.6	3,684	91.6
Aged 30 to 44	32,638	98.4	5,280	90.3

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Fertility, Family Planning, and Reproductive Health of U.S. Women: Data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth, Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, No. 25, 2005*; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

More than Nine out of Ten Men Are Attracted Only to the Opposite Sex

Among women, the proportion is slightly lower.

Few men and women say they are attracted to same-sex partners. Only 1.5 to 2.2 percent of men and women aged 18 to 44 say they are attracted mostly or only to the same sex. Another 1 to 2 percent say they are attracted to both sexes. Four percent of men and 10 percent of women say they are attracted mostly to the opposite sex. Ninety-two percent of men and 86 percent of women say they are attracted only to the opposite sex.

Those who have never married and are not cohabiting are most likely to say they are attracted to same-sex partners. Seven percent of never-married men and 5 percent of never-married women are attracted to both sexes, mostly the same sex, or only the same sex.

■ Sexual attraction appears not to be an either-or situation, with a substantial percentage of Americans having some attraction to the opposite sex.

Many men who have had a sexual experience with another man say they are attracted only to the opposite sex

(percent distribution of men aged 18 to 44 who have ever had a sexual experience with a male, by sexual attraction, 2002)

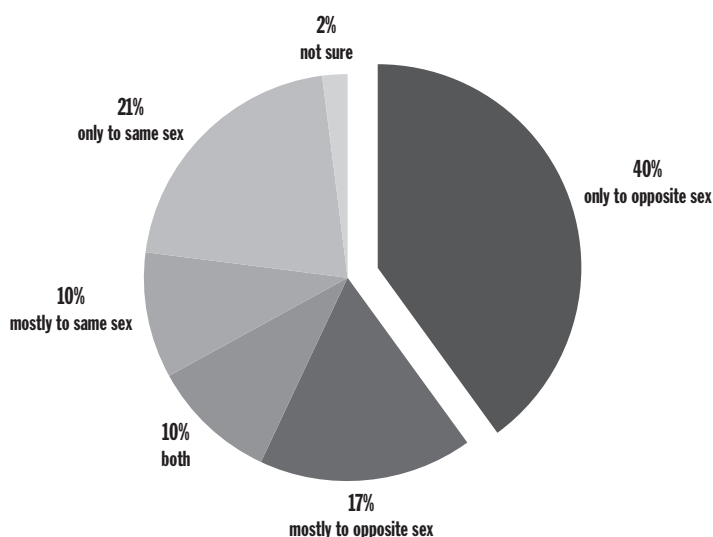


Table 4.7 Sexual Attraction by Sex and Age, 2002

(number of people aged 18 to 44 and percent distribution by sexual attraction, by sex and age, 2002; numbers in thousands)

	total		sexual attraction					
	number	percent	only opposite sex	mostly opposite sex	both	mostly same sex	only same sex	not sure
Total men aged 18 to 44	55,399	100.0%	92.2%	3.9%	1.0%	0.7%	1.5%	0.7%
Aged 18 to 19	4,460	100.0	93.8	3.4	1.7	—	—	—
Aged 20 to 24	9,883	100.0	91.2	5.0	0.7	0.8	1.3	1.0
Aged 25 to 29	9,226	100.0	92.6	3.7	0.8	0.9	1.3	0.9
Aged 30 to 34	10,138	100.0	92.5	3.8	0.6	0.5	2.0	0.6
Aged 35 to 44	21,692	100.0	92.1	3.5	1.3	0.7	1.8	0.6
Total women aged 18 to 44	55,742	100.0	85.7	10.2	1.9	0.8	0.7	0.8
Aged 18 to 19	4,015	100.0	80.1	12.8	4.9	—	—	0.8
Aged 20 to 24	9,840	100.0	82.5	13.3	2.3	0.3	0.5	1.0
Aged 25 to 29	9,249	100.0	82.1	13.5	2.4	0.7	0.6	0.8
Aged 30 to 34	10,272	100.0	86.6	9.8	1.9	0.5	0.4	0.7
Aged 35 to 44	22,365	100.0	89.2	7.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.6

Note: "—" means sample is too small to make a reliable estimate.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Sexual Behavior and Selected Health Measures: Men and Women 15–44 Years of Age, United States, 2002, Advance Data, No. 362, 2005*; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

Many People Live with AIDS

Sixty-four percent of those living with AIDS are black or Hispanic.

More than 400,000 Americans were living with AIDS in 2004, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than three out of four were males aged 13 or older, 23 percent were females aged 13 or older, and less than 1 percent were children under age 13. Seventy-three percent of those living with AIDS were aged 35 to 54.

Blacks and Hispanics account for the majority of people living with AIDS, while non-Hispanic whites are just 35 percent of the total. Most men living with AIDS were infected by male-to-male sexual contact. In contrast, most women living with AIDS were infected through heterosexual contact.

■ Twenty-one percent of men and 34 percent of women living with AIDS were infected through injection drug use.

Non-Hispanic whites are a minority of those living with AIDS

(percent distribution of people living with AIDS by race and Hispanic origin, 2004)

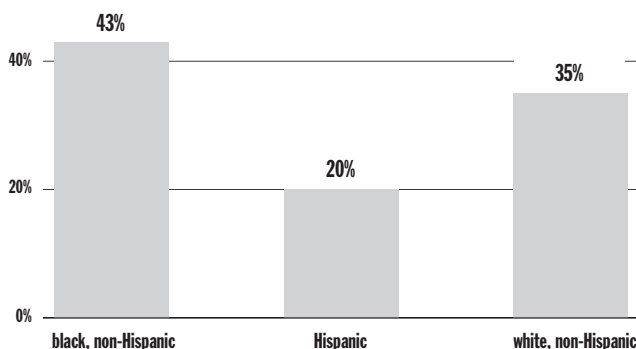


Table 5.14 People Living with AIDS by Sex and Age, 2004*(number and percent distribution of people living with AIDS by sex and age, 2004)*

	number	percent distribution
Total people living with AIDS	415,193	100.0%
Sex		
Males aged 13 or older	317,698	76.5
Females aged 13 or older	93,566	22.5
Children under age 13*	3,927	0.9
Age		
Under age 13	1,695	0.4
Aged 13 to 14	776	0.2
Aged 15 to 19	2,043	0.5
Aged 20 to 24	4,942	1.2
Aged 25 to 29	13,721	3.3
Aged 30 to 34	33,669	8.1
Aged 35 to 39	68,389	16.5
Aged 40 to 44	95,874	23.1
Aged 45 to 49	81,636	19.7
Aged 50 to 54	56,336	13.6
Aged 55 to 59	30,033	7.2
Aged 60 to 64	14,228	3.4
Aged 65 or older	11,850	2.9

* *At diagnosis**Note: Numbers may not sum to total because total includes people of unknown sex.**Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, 2004, Vol. 16, 2005; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2004report/default.htm>*

Half of Women Aged 15 to 44 Have Cohabited

Only 9 percent of women in the age group are currently cohabiting.

Cohabitation has become commonplace among younger generations of Americans. Fully 50 percent of women aged 15 to 44 have ever lived with an opposite-sex partner outside of marriage. The proportion peaks at more than 60 percent among women aged 25 to 39. Only 9 percent of women in the 15 to 44 age group are currently cohabiting, however, with the figure peaking at 16 percent in the 20-to-24 age group.

A slightly smaller 49 percent of men aged 15 to 44 have ever cohabited. As with their female counterparts, only 9 percent of men are currently cohabiting. The percentage of men currently cohabiting peaks at 18 percent in the 25-to-29 age group.

Most cohabitations end in marriage, but many of those marriages dissolve. Fifty-two percent of women who have ever cohabited say their first cohabitation ended in marriage, but only 34 percent of those marriages are still intact. Another 35 percent of first cohabitations ended without marriage. Thirteen percent of first cohabitations are continuing.

■ Cohabitation is most common among the least-educated men and women.

Mamy cohabitations end in separation

(percent distribution of women aged 15 to 44 who have ever cohabited, by status of first cohabitation, 2002)

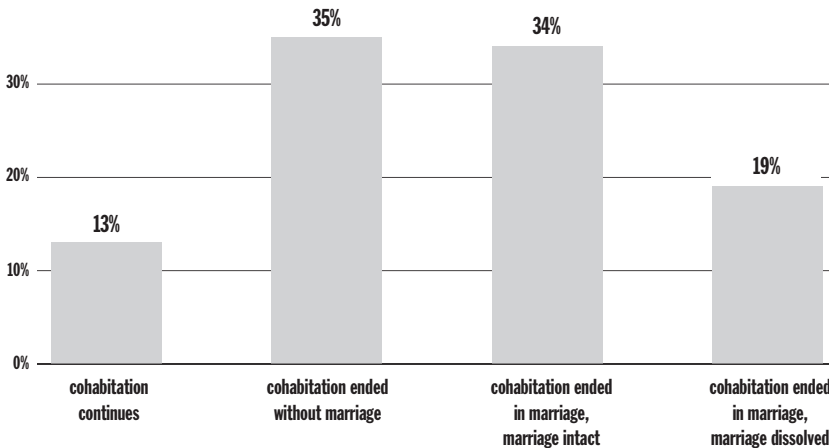


Table 6.1 Cohabitation Experience of Women, 2002

(total number of women aged 15 to 44, and percent who have ever cohabited or are currently cohabiting, by selected characteristics, 2002; numbers in thousands)

	total		ever cohabited	currently cohabiting
	number	percent		
Total women aged 15 to 44	61,561	100.0%	50.0%	9.1%
Aged 15 to 19	9,834	100.0	11.7	5.6
Aged 20 to 24	9,840	100.0	43.1	15.7
Aged 25 to 29	9,249	100.0	60.9	12.9
Aged 30 to 34	10,272	100.0	63.2	7.9
Aged 35 to 39	10,853	100.0	61.3	6.7
Aged 40 to 44	11,512	100.0	57.4	6.6
Number of children ever borne				
None	25,622	100.0	31.8	8.9
One	11,193	100.0	63.1	10.7
Two	13,402	100.0	61.4	6.1
Three or more	11,343	100.0	64.9	11.2
Race and Hispanic origin				
Black, non-Hispanic	8,250	100.0	51.1	9.6
Hispanic	9,107	100.0	48.8	13.4
White, non-Hispanic	39,498	100.0	50.5	7.9
Education				
Not a high school graduate	5,627	100.0	69.4	17.2
High school graduate or GED	14,264	100.0	68.5	11.3
Some college, no degree	14,279	100.0	58.3	7.6
Bachelor's degree or more	13,551	100.0	46.3	5.4
Family structure at age 14				
Living with both parents	43,921	100.0	45.5	7.4
Other	17,640	100.0	61.3	13.2

Note: Education categories include only people aged 22 to 44.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Fertility, Family Planning, and Reproductive Health of U.S. Women: Data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth, Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, No. 25, 2005*; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

More Women Are Using Contraception

Only 7 percent of women are taking their chances.

Sixty-two percent of women aged 15 to 44 were using contraception in 2002, according to the National Center for Health Statistics—up from 56 percent in 1982. Only 7 percent of women are sexually active but not using contraception, pregnant, or trying to get pregnant—in other words, risking an unwanted pregnancy.

The pill is the most popular method of contraception, used by 19 percent of all women aged 15 to 44 and by 31 percent of contraceptive users in the age group. Female sterilization ranks second in popularity, used by 17 percent of all women aged 15 to 44 and by 27 percent of contraceptive users. Condoms, ranked third, are the contraceptive method of choice for 11 percent of women aged 15 to 44 (and 18 percent of contraceptive users).

Nearly 90 percent of sexually active women aged 15 to 44 have used a condom at some point in their lives, making it the most widely used method of contraception. The pill has been used by 82 percent of sexually active women.

■ The HIV threat has boosted condom use during the past 20 years.

Condom use has increased since 1982

(percent of women aged 15 to 44 currently using condoms as their contraceptive method, 1982 and 2002)

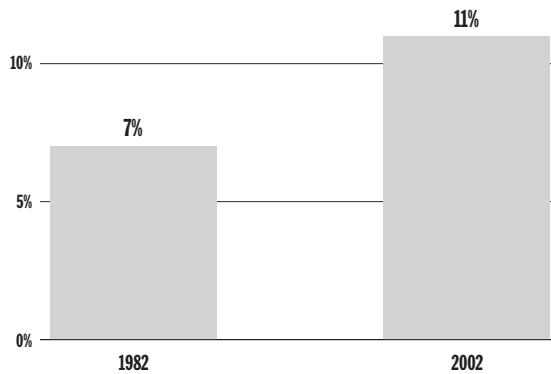


Table 8.1 Current Contraceptive Status of Women, 1982 and 2002

(total number of women aged 15 to 44 and percent distribution by current contraceptive status and method, 1982 and 2002; numbers in thousands)

	2002	1982
Total women aged 15 to 44, number	61,561	54,099
Total women aged 15 to 44, percent	100.0%	100.0%
Using contraception	61.9	55.7
Pill	18.9	15.6
Female sterilization	16.7	12.9
Condom	11.1	6.7
Male sterilization	5.7	6.1
Three-month injectable	3.3	—
Withdrawal	2.5	1.1
Intrauterine device (IUD)	1.3	4.0
Implant, Lunelle, or Patch	0.8	—
Periodic abstinence—calendar rhythm method	0.7	1.8
Diaphragm	0.2	4.5
Periodic abstinence—natural family planning	0.2	0.3
Other methods	0.6	2.7
Not using contraception	38.1	44.3
Never had intercourse or no intercourse in past three months	18.1	19.5
Pregnant or postpartum	5.3	5.0
Seeking pregnancy	4.2	4.2
Nonsurgically sterile, male or female	1.6	1.2
Surgically sterile, female (noncontraceptive)	1.5	6.3
All other	7.4	8.1

Note: Other methods includes Today® Sponge, cervical cap, female condom, and other methods. “—” means method not available in that year.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Use of Contraception and Use of Family Planning Services in the United States: 1982–2002*, Advance Data, No. 350, 2004; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

Most Teen Girls Would Be Very Upset If They Became Pregnant

A smaller majority of teen boys would be “very upset.”

Not surprisingly, most teenagers would be “very upset” if they or their girlfriend became pregnant. Sixty percent of girls aged 15 to 19 say they would be very upset. Only 5 percent would be “very pleased.” Interestingly, a smaller 51 percent of teen boys say they would be very upset if their girlfriend became pregnant.

The older the teen girl, the more likely she would be very upset by a pregnancy. Only 37 percent of girls under age 15 say they would be very upset compared with 57 percent of girls aged 17 to 19. The pattern is the same among teens boys. Eleven percent of boys under age 15 say they would be very pleased if their girlfriend became pregnant.

Non-Hispanic whites would be more upset by a pregnancy than blacks or Hispanics. Among girls, 66 percent of non-Hispanic white teens say they would be very upset if they became pregnant now. This compares with a smaller 51 percent of blacks and 46 percent of Hispanics. Ten percent of Hispanic girls say they would be very pleased by a pregnancy. The pattern is the same for boys, with non-Hispanic whites more upset by a potential pregnancy than blacks or Hispanics.

■ Family structure plays a role in teen attitudes toward pregnancy, and teens from two-parent families would be more upset by a pregnancy than those from other types of families.

Older teens would be more upset by pregnancy

(percent of girls aged 15 to 19 who would be “very upset” if they got pregnant now, by age, 2002)

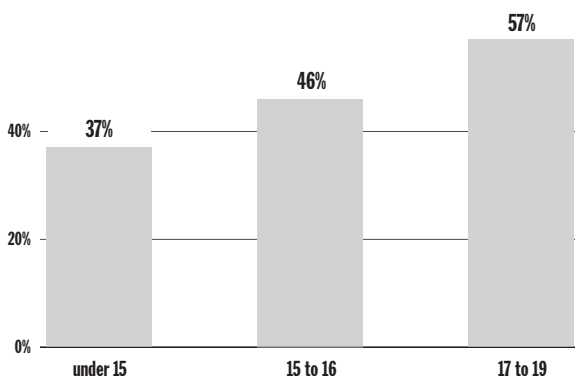


Table 9.11 Attitude of Teenage Girls toward Pregnancy, 2002

“If you got pregnant now, how would you feel?”

(number of never-married females aged 15 to 19 and percent distribution by response to statement, by selected characteristics, 2002; numbers in thousands)

	total		very upset	a little upset	a little pleased	very pleased
	number	percent				
Total never-married women aged 15 to 19	9,598	100.0%	60.2%	26.7%	8.0%	4.7%
Age						
Aged 15 to 17	5,815	100.0	67.5	21.2	8.2	2.8
Aged 18 to 19	3,783	100.0	49.0	35.1	7.8	7.6
Age at first intercourse						
Never had sex	5,236	100.0	72.1	20.3	5.1	2.5
Under age 15	1,248	100.0	36.7	39.9	13.8	7.2
Aged 15 to 16	2,095	100.0	45.8	35.0	10.3	8.9
Aged 17 to 19	1,019	100.0	57.2	26.5	11.1	3.9
Race and Hispanic Origin						
Black, non-Hispanic	1,496	100.0	50.5	32.5	11.7	5.0
Hispanic	1,447	100.0	46.4	29.0	14.9	9.8
White, non-Hispanic	6,099	100.0	65.8	24.2	5.5	3.8
Family structure at age 14						
Living with both parents	6,078	100.0	63.4	27.5	6.1	2.8
Other	3,520	100.0	54.7	25.3	11.3	7.9

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Teenagers in the United States: Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use, and Childbearing, 2002*, Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, No. 24, 2004; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm>

Hispanics Have the Highest Birth Rate

More than 8 percent of Hispanic women have given birth in the past year.

Hispanic women have a much higher birth rate than Asians, blacks, or non-Hispanic whites. In 2004, the Hispanic rate was a lofty 97.8 births per 1,000 women, much higher than the 58.4 of non-Hispanic white women. Asian and black women have a birth rate somewhat higher than non-Hispanic whites, at 67.1 and 67.0, respectively. The birth rate varies considerably by age within race and Hispanic origin groups. It peaks among Hispanic women in the 20-to-24 age group at 165.3 births per 1,000 women. The Asian birth rate peaks at 116.9 in the 30-to-34 age group.

Six percent of women aged 15 to 44 have given birth in the past year, the figure peaking at 10 percent among women aged 25 to 29. Among Hispanic women aged 15 to 44, 8.5 percent gave birth in the past year. This compares with only 5.4 percent of non-Hispanic white women.

■ A growing proportion of the nation's children are Hispanic because of their higher birth rate.

Non-Hispanic whites have the lowest birth rate

(number of births per 1,000 women, by race and Hispanic origin, 2004)

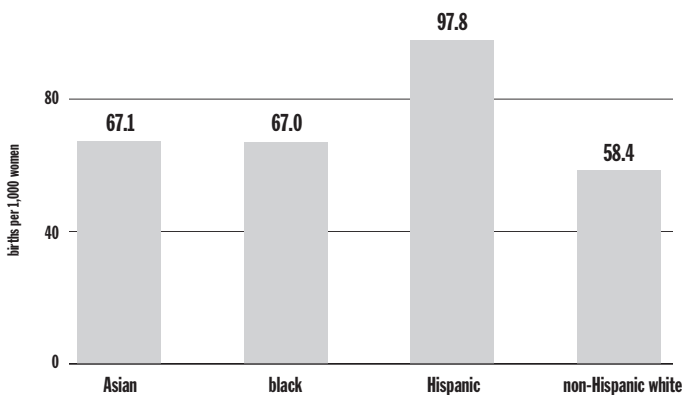


Table 10.7 Birth Rate by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin, 2004*(number of live births per 1,000 women in age group, by race and Hispanic origin, 2004)*

	total	Asian	non-Hispanic black	Hispanic	non-Hispanic white
Total	66.3	67.1	67.0	97.8	58.4
Under age 15	0.7	0.2	1.6	1.3	0.2
Aged 15 to 17	22.1	8.9	37.1	49.7	12.0
Aged 18 to 19	70.0	29.6	103.9	133.5	48.7
Aged 20 to 24	101.8	59.8	126.9	165.3	81.9
Aged 25 to 29	115.5	108.6	103.0	145.6	110.0
Aged 30 to 34	95.5	116.9	67.4	104.1	97.1
Aged 35 to 39	45.4	62.1	33.7	52.9	44.8
Aged 40 to 44	8.9	13.6	7.8	12.4	8.2
Aged 45 to 54	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.7	0.5

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Births: Final Data for 2004, Health E-Stats, 2006*; Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/finalbirths04/finalbirths04.htm>; calculations by New Strategist

Only 67 Percent of Children Live with Both Parents

Among blacks, the figure is just 36 percent.

The percentage of American children who live with both parents fell from 85 to 67 percent during the past 25 years. At the same time, the percentage of children who live with only their mother only climbed from 11 to 23 percent.

Asian children are most likely to live with both parents, and 82 percent do so. Among non-Hispanic whites, 76 percent live with both parents. For Hispanics, the proportion is a slightly smaller 65 percent. A minority of black children lives with both parents, while nearly half (49 percent) live with only their mother.

Slightly fewer than 6 percent of children live with their grandparents. Among those who live with a grandparent, the 56 percent majority also lives with their mother or with both parents. Just 39 percent of those living with a grandparent do not also have a parent in the home.

■ The living arrangements of children have become more diverse, and black children have the most diverse living arrangements of all.

Asian children are most likely to live with both parents

(percent of children under age 18 living with both parents, by race and Hispanic origin, 2005)

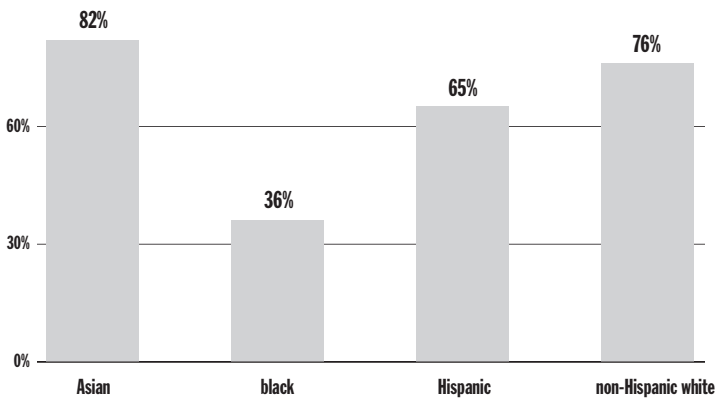


Table 11.1 Living Arrangements of Children, 1970 to 2005

(number and percent distribution of children under age 18 by living arrangement, 1970 to 2005; numbers in thousands)

	total		children living with			
	number	percent	both parents	mother only	father only	neither parent
Total children						
2005	73,523	100.0%	67.4%	23.4%	4.7%	4.5%
2000	72,012	100.0	69.1	22.4	4.2	4.2
1995	70,254	100.0	68.7	23.5	3.5	4.3
1990	64,137	100.0	72.5	21.6	3.1	2.8
1985	62,475	100.0	73.9	20.9	2.5	2.7
1980	63,427	100.0	76.7	18.0	1.7	3.7
1975	66,087	100.0	80.3	15.5	1.5	2.7
1970	69,162	100.0	85.2	10.8	1.1	2.9

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Families and Living Arrangements, Historical Time Series*, Internet site <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html>; calculations by New Strategist