Although foreign-born Hispanics, on average, initiated sex about 6–9 months later than other groups, they also had the lowest levels of contraceptive use at first intercourse. Additionally, a higher proportion of U.S.-born Hispanics than of any other group had a partner of a different race or ethnicity; the majority of these partners were white (73%—not shown). Whites and blacks were also more consistent contraceptive users than both U.S.- and foreign-born Hispanics.

We also found racial and ethnic differences in individual, peer and dating characteristics. Whites reported higher grades in eighth grade than any other group, and foreign-born Hispanics reported the lowest level of delinquency. Whites and U.S.-born Hispanics had higher average substance use scores than blacks and foreign-born Hispanics. Whites had a slightly higher age at menarche than blacks and Hispanics, and a higher proportion of whites than of any other group reported dating in the year prior to baseline.

**TABLE 1. Selected characteristics of female members of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 cohort, by race and ethnicity and nativity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Total (N=3,294)</th>
<th>White (N=1,723)</th>
<th>Black (N=884)</th>
<th>U.S.-born Hispanic (N=557)</th>
<th>Foreign-born Hispanic (N=130)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a teenage birth</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>29.6*</td>
<td>28.3*</td>
<td>41.9*,†,‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age at baseline (range, 12–17)§</td>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>14.42</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>14.30</td>
<td>14.46</td>
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<td><strong>FAMILY BACKGROUND</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;high school</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>19.2*</td>
<td>29.1*</td>
<td>62.8*,†,‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥college</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<td>Family structure**</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Two parents</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>26.9*</td>
<td>48.1*,†</td>
<td>60.8†,‡</td>
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<td>One parent and one stepparent</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother had a teenage birth</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>40.9*</td>
<td>27.0*,†</td>
<td>45.6*,‡</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean eighth-grade grades (range, 1–10)</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>7.63</td>
<td>6.81*</td>
<td>7.01*</td>
<td>6.64*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean delinquency index score (range, 0–9)†††</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.32*</td>
<td>0.58†,‡</td>
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<td>Mean substance use index score (range, 0–3)‡‡</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.85*</td>
<td>1.25†</td>
<td>0.53*†,‡</td>
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<td>Mean no. of negative peer characteristics (range, 0–5)</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.28*</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.29</td>
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<td>Mean age at menarche (range, 13–19)</td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>12.24</td>
<td>11.91*</td>
<td>11.87*</td>
<td>11.96*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any dating in year before baseline</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>36.1*</td>
<td>52.8*,†</td>
<td>27.9*,‡</td>
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<td>Mean age at first sex</td>
<td>16.04</td>
<td>16.08</td>
<td>15.83*</td>
<td>16.03</td>
<td>16.56*,†,‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just met/just friends/other</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>16.1†</td>
<td>13.3*,†,‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional dating</td>
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<td>7.9</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steady dating</td>
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<td>69.7</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged/cohabiting/married</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean partner age difference (range, –5 to 15)</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partner of different race/ethnicity</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>14.0*</td>
<td>38.9*,†</td>
<td>13.6†</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contraceptive use at first sex</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>73.1*,†</td>
<td>57.4*,†</td>
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<td><strong>SEXUAL EXPERIENCE AND CONTRACEPTIVE USE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean no. of partners in last year (range, 0–10)</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean effectiveness of contraceptive method at last sex (range, 1–10)</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>6.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean contraceptive consistency (range, 0–1)</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.70*,†</td>
<td>0.67*†</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Different from the mean or distribution for whites at p<.05. †Different from the mean or distribution for blacks at p<.05. ‡Different from the mean or distribution for U.S.-born Hispanics at p<.05. §Although respondents were aged 12–16 as of screening, some were aged 17 as of their interview. **Parents may be either biological or adoptive. ††Although there were 10 points possible in this index, this range reflects the responses among our sample. Note: Data are percentages unless otherwise noted.
Bivariate Results

Young women who had had a teenage birth were older at baseline, had less-educated parents and were more likely to have a mother who had been a teenage mother than others (Table 2). For whites and blacks, a lower proportion of women who had had a teenage birth than of those who had not had grown up with two biological or adoptive parents. Among whites, those who had had a teenage birth were more likely than those who had not to report that their parents were authoritarian or uninvolved; they were less likely than whites with no teenage birth to report authoritative or permissive parenting. In each racial and ethnic group, teenage childbearing was negatively associated with grades and positively associated with level of substance abuse, number of negative peer characteristics and dating experience. Among whites and all Hispanics, levels of delinquency were also higher among those who had had a teenage birth than among those who had not.

Overall and in each racial and ethnic group, young women who had had a teenage birth were younger than others at first sex, and a lower proportion of them had used contraceptives at first sex. White females who had had a teenage birth reported having a wider age gap relative to their first sexual partners than those who had not.

**TABLE 2. Selected characteristics of respondents, by race and ethnicity and teenage childbearing status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Full sample</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic†</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No teenage birth</td>
<td>Teenage birth</td>
<td>No teenage birth</td>
<td>Teenage birth</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean age at baseline (range, 12–17)</td>
<td>13.81</td>
<td>14.26***</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>14.31***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY BACKGROUND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; high school</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>29.6***</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>22.3***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ college</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family structure‡</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two parents</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>34.1***</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>35.4***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent and one stepparent</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother had a teenage birth</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>43.1***</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>38.7***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parenting style</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>65.2***</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>30.3***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>28.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uninvolved</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIVIDUAL, PEER AND DATING CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean eighth-grade grades (range, 1–10)</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>6.31***</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>6.25***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean delinquency index score (range, 0–9)§</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.51***</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1.63***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean substance use index score (range, 0–3)</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.40***</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.68***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean no. of negative peer characteristics (range, 0–5)</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>3.38***</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.39***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age at menarche (range, 13–19)</td>
<td>12.11</td>
<td>12.01</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>12.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any dating in year before baseline</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>56.2***</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>66.7***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just met/just friends/other</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>19.1*</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional dating</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady dating</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>62.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaged/cohabiting/married</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean partner age difference (range, –5 to 15)</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>2.30***</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>2.35**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partner of different race/ethnicity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraceptive use at first sex</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>71.6***</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>74.4**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean partner age difference (range, –5 to 15)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean partner age difference (range, 0–10)</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.88*</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>2.12***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean effectiveness of contraceptive method at last sex</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>6.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean contraceptive consistency (range, 0–1)</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.66***</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.67***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Different from the mean or distribution for no teenage birth at p<.05. **Different from the mean or distribution for no teenage birth at p<.01. ***Different from the mean or distribution for no teenage birth at p<.001. †U.S.- and foreign-born Hispanics. ‡Parents may be either biological or adoptive. §Although there were 10 points possible in this index, this range reflects the responses among our sample. Note: Data are percentages unless otherwise noted.
been teenage mothers. Among whites, those who had had a teenage birth were more likely than those who had not to have had a partner of a different race or ethnicity; among Hispanics, the opposite was true. Whites who had given birth as teenagers reported more sexual partners in the past year than other white women, and among all groups, contraceptive consistency was lower for those who had had a teenage birth than for those who had not.

**Multivariate Results**

The first multivariate model (Table 3) indicates that net of age, blacks' and native-born Hispanics' odds of having had a teenage birth were about twice those of whites (odds ratios, 2.1 and 1.9, respectively); foreign-born Hispanics' odds of this outcome were more than three times those of whites (3.5). The inclusion of family background characteristics (model 2) substantially reduced, but did not eliminate, these differences. In model 2, compared with adolescents whose parents had completed high school, those whose parents had less education had 59% greater odds of a teenage birth, and those whose parents had more schooling had lower odds (0.4–0.7). Living in a household that lacked two biological or adoptive parents was associated with increased odds of a teenage birth (1.6–2.6), as was having a mother who had given birth as a teenager (1.7). Finally, when compared with authoritative parenting, uninvolved parenting was associated with 73% higher odds of a teenage birth.

With the addition of individual, peer and dating characteristics (model 3), U.S.-born Hispanics no longer had greater odds of a teenage birth than did whites. Each one-point increase in grades (on a 10-point scale) was associated with a 13% reduction in the odds of a birth. Scores on the substance abuse index were positively associated with the odds of a teenage birth (odds ratio, 1.2), as was any dating experience in the year before baseline (1.4). In this model, permissive parenting became associated with reduced odds of a teenage birth (0.8), compared with authoritative parenting style, while uninvolved parenting was no longer associated with teenage childbearing.

When characteristics of the respondent's first sexual relationship were added (model 4), U.S.-born Hispanics again had significantly elevated odds of having had a teenage birth (odds ratio, 1.4). Age at first sex and contraceptive use at first sex were negatively associated with teenage childbearing: Each additional year of age at first sex was associated with increased odds of a teenage birth (1.6–2.6), as was the use of contraceptives in the past year (0.61–0.96), compared with those from model 1. Number of sexual partners and consistent contraceptive use in the past year were negatively associated with the likelihood of a teenage birth (odds ratios, 0.9 and 0.3, respectively).

In this model, relationship status and contraceptive use at first sex were no longer associated with teenage childbearing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
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<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>2.12***</td>
<td>1.31*</td>
<td>1.50***</td>
<td>1.49**</td>
<td>1.46**</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.-born Hispanic</td>
<td>1.88***</td>
<td>1.36*</td>
<td>1.33***</td>
<td>1.37*</td>
<td>1.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign-born Hispanic</td>
<td>3.48***</td>
<td>1.83***</td>
<td>2.17***</td>
<td>1.94**</td>
<td>1.70*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.30***</td>
<td>1.34***</td>
<td>1.30***</td>
<td>1.36***</td>
<td>1.34***</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY BACKGROUND</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;high school</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.59**</td>
<td>1.68***</td>
<td>1.65***</td>
<td>1.60**</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<td>0.78</td>
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<td>0.39***</td>
<td>0.44***</td>
<td>0.47***</td>
<td>0.51***</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent and one stepparent</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.63***</td>
<td>1.42*</td>
<td>1.39*</td>
<td>1.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.57***</td>
<td>1.31*</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>2.60***</td>
<td>2.21***</td>
<td>2.15***</td>
<td>2.12***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother had a teenage birth</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.72**</td>
<td>1.67***</td>
<td>1.57***</td>
<td>1.64***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative (ref)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.76*</td>
<td>0.73**</td>
<td>0.73*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninvolved</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.73***</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIVIDUAL, PEER AND DATING CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth-grade grades</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.87***</td>
<td>0.90***</td>
<td>0.91***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency index</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance use index</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative peer characteristics</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at menarche</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any dating in year before baseline</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.40**</td>
<td>1.27**</td>
<td>1.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIRST SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at first sex</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.74***</td>
<td>0.74***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship status at first sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just met/just friends/other</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional dating</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady dating</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged/cohabiting/married</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.57*</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner age difference</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner of different race/ethnicity</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraceptive use at first sex</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.61***</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEXUAL EXPERIENCE AND CONTRACEPTIVE USE†</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of partners in last year</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.91**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of contraceptive method at last sex</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraceptive consistency</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F statistic</td>
<td>39.93***</td>
<td>29.06***</td>
<td>26.13***</td>
<td>25.16***</td>
<td>23.02***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. †Parents may be either biological or adoptive. ‡Measures are time-varying. Notes: Calculations are based on 11,356 person-years of information. na=not applicable. ref=reference group.

**TABLE 3. Odds ratios from discrete-time logistic regression analyses assessing associations between respondents’ characteristics and their likelihood of having had a teenage birth**
TABLE 4. Predicted probabilities (percentages) from discrete-time logistic regression analyses assessing the likelihood of a teenage birth, by groups of characteristics, according to race and ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>U.S.-born Hispanic</th>
<th>Foreign-born Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average subgroup characteristics*</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White family background‡</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>5.9*</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White grades and dating</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White age at first sex</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White no. of partners and contraceptive consistency</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White characteristics significant in the final model§</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>5.1***</td>
<td>4.9*</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All except dating</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>4.9***</td>
<td>4.8*</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All except dating, family structure</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>5.2**</td>
<td>4.9*</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Different from the figure in the first row at p<.05. ** Different from the figure in the first row at p<.01. *** Different from the figure in the first row at p<.001. † Average subgroup-specific characteristics based on person-year files. ‡ Parent education, family structure, maternal fertility history and parenting style. § All family background characteristics, eighth-grade grades, dating experience, age at first sex, number of partners and contraceptive consistency. Note: na = not applicable.

Predicted Probabilities

The average white teenager in our sample had a 4% probability of having a birth in an average year (Table 4).* In comparison, the average black teenager had a 9% probability, the average U.S.-born Hispanic teenager an 8% probability and the average foreign-born Hispanic teenager a 12% probability.

If black teenagers in our sample had the same average family background characteristics (parent education, family structure, parenting style and proportion of mothers who gave birth as teenagers) as whites, blacks' estimated probability of having a teenage birth would decrease by 31%, to 6%. For U.S.-born and foreign-born Hispanics, however, the probability of a teenage birth did not change significantly when estimated using the family characteristics for whites. The probability of having a teenage birth did not change significantly for blacks or Hispanics when estimated on the basis of white respondents' grades and baseline dating experience, age at first sex, or number of sexual partners and contraceptive consistency. When the average characteristics for all variables significant in model 5 of the multivariate analysis were replaced with the average white characteristics for these measures, the probability of experiencing a teenage birth decreased 40% for black respondents (from 9% to 5%) and 33% for U.S.-born Hispanics (from 8% to 5%). The estimated change in probabilities for foreign-born Hispanics was not significant in any model, including ones that did not change reports of dating or family structure. (Dating was less common, and family structure more stable, for foreign-born Hispanics than for whites.) This was partly because of the small sample size for this group.

Subgroup Results

For whites, having a parent with less than a high school degree (rather than a parent who had completed high school) was associated with more than twice the odds of a teenage birth (Table 5). This association was significantly higher than the (nonsignificant) associations for blacks and Hispanics. Among black females, having an authoritarian parent (rather than an authoritative one) was associated with a 47% reduction in the odds of a teenage birth, while among whites, having an uninvolved parent was linked with a 68% increase in these odds. The associations between these parenting styles and teenage childbearing were significantly different for whites and blacks.

Among whites and blacks, the higher a teenager's grades in eighth grade, the lower her odds of a teenage birth, but this was not true among Hispanics. Any dating at baseline was associated with increased odds of a teenage birth for whites, but not for blacks and Hispanics, although the odds ratios were not significantly different by race and ethnicity.

Increasing age at first sex was associated with decreasing odds of a teenage birth for all racial and ethnic groups. However, among Hispanics only, having a partner who was of a different race or ethnicity was associated with 56% reduced odds of a teenage birth (and this odds ratio was significantly different than that for whites or blacks). Finally, number of sexual partners in the last year was negatively associated with the odds of a teenage birth for both blacks and Hispanics, although only the difference between Hispanics and whites was statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

In this study, we have attempted to add to the understanding of racial, ethnic and nativity differences in teenage childbearing. As in national estimates,† we found that whites in our sample had the lowest incidence of teenage births, and foreign-born Hispanics had the highest incidence. Our findings highlight dramatic differences across groups in family, individual and relationship contexts, including disparities in sexual risk-taking behaviors—and most of these types of characteristics were associated with the transition to a teenage birth. Our multivariate results suggest that differences in the context of adolescence help to account for racial, ethnic and nativity differences in teenage childbearing; translating these results into predicted probabilities helps us see by how much. If everyone in our sample had the average characteristics of whites, the probability of a teenage birth in an average year would drop to 5% for both blacks and U.S.-born Hispanics, much closer to the 4% probability among whites.

Although controlling for a host of contextual factors weakened the association between race and ethnicity and teenage childbearing, blacks and foreign-born Hispanics continued to have significantly higher odds than whites. These remaining associations likely reflect our inability to fully capture socioeconomic differences between groups in family, school and neighborhood characteristics, which may be strongly associated with the risk of a teenage
birth. Additionally, some evidence suggests that teenage childbirth may be more normative among black and Hispanic teenagers than among whites, but this characteristic could not be captured in this study.15,33

**Family Background**
Most of the explained racial and ethnic differences in teenage childbirth in these analyses were due to group differences in family background characteristics. As hypothesized, lower parental education, living in a family that did not include two biological or adoptive parents, and having a mother who had experienced a teenage birth were all associated with increased odds of teenage childbirth. The disproportionate disadvantage of blacks and U.S.-born Hispanics across these measures helps account for their higher teenage birthrates relative to whites. In fact, if black teenagers had the family context of white adolescents, they would have a significantly reduced probability of a teenage birth. For foreign-born Hispanic teenagers, the greater risk of teenage childbirth associated with lower levels of parental education and the large proportion of adolescents who were children of teenage mothers were counterbalanced, in part, by the reduced risk of a teenage birth for the large proportion who lived with two biological or adoptive parents. Notably, while higher parental education was associated with reduced odds of a teenage birth for all racial and ethnic groups, having a parent with less than a high school education was not associated with increased odds for blacks or Hispanics, perhaps because lower education levels were more prevalent (and thus potentially more normative) for these populations.

As hypothesized, uninvolved parenting was positively associated with teenage childbirth for whites, supporting previous research.31,32 The negative association between authoritarian parenting and teenage childbirth for blacks, while counter to our hypothesis, is in the same direction as was found in a previous study, which suggests that authoritarian parenting may be associated with fewer risky behaviors for racial and ethnic minorities, particularly among blacks.16

**Individual Characteristics**
Only two characteristics were associated with teenage childbirth in this domain in the final model: Higher self-reported grades in school were associated with lower odds of a teenage birth (for whites, blacks and the full sample), and dating was associated with increased odds (for whites and the full sample). The inclusion of these variables removed the significance of the association between U.S.-born Hispanic ethnicity and teenage parenthood. The comparatively low grades reported by blacks and Hispanics (both U.S.-born and foreign-born) potentially help explain their higher teenage birthrates. In contrast, whites were more likely than any other group to report having dated. Thus, if blacks and Hispanics had the dating behaviors of whites, their risk of a teenage birth might increase. Interestingly, black teenagers were among the least likely to be dating, but they also reported the earliest timing of first sex, which may reflect differences by race and ethnicity in how dating and romantic relationships are defined.31,33 Although there were dramatic differences in other individual characteristics—such as higher substance use among whites and U.S.-born Hispanics, lower delinquency among foreign-born Hispanics, and an earlier age at menarche among blacks and Hispanics—these were not associated with having a teenage birth.

**Relationship Context and Sexual Behavior**
We also found racial, ethnic and nativity differences in the characteristics of teenagers’ sexual relationships, which were, in turn, associated with teenage childbirth. As hypothesized, older age at first sex and more consistent contraceptive use were associated with decreased odds of a teenage birth for the full sample and each racial and ethnic

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**TABLE 5. Odds ratios from discrete-time logistic regression analyses predicting a first teenage birth, by teenagers’ characteristics, according to race and ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>White (N=6,068)</th>
<th>Black (N=2,935)</th>
<th>Hispanic† (N=2,353)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.36***&lt;br&gt;na</td>
<td>1.37***&lt;br&gt;na</td>
<td>1.35***&lt;br&gt;1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY BACKGROUND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;high school</td>
<td>2.42***&lt;br&gt;1.08†&lt;br&gt;0.92†</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school (ref)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤college</td>
<td>0.57*&lt;br&gt;0.38*&lt;br&gt;0.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two biological/adoptive parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.71*&lt;br&gt;0.75</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother had a teenage birth</td>
<td>1.57*&lt;br&gt;1.56*&lt;br&gt;1.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative (ref)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.53†&lt;br&gt;0.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninvolved</td>
<td>1.68*&lt;br&gt;0.80†&lt;br&gt;0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIVIDUAL, PEER AND DATING CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth-grade grades</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.88***&lt;br&gt;0.91*&lt;br&gt;1.01†</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency index</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance use index</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative peer characteristics</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at menarche</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any dating in year before baseline</td>
<td>1.59*&lt;br&gt;1.03&lt;br&gt;1.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIRST SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at first sex</td>
<td>0.74***&lt;br&gt;0.77***&lt;br&gt;0.68***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady dating, engaged, cohabiting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or married at first sex</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.71*&lt;br&gt;1.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner age difference</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner of different race/ethnicity</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.44†&lt;br&gt;‡&lt;br&gt;§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraceptive use at first sex</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEXUAL EXPERIENCE AND CONTRACEPTIVE USE††</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of partners in last year</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.88*&lt;br&gt;0.81***&lt;br&gt;‡‡</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of contraceptive method at last sex</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraceptive consistency</td>
<td>0.24***&lt;br&gt;0.38***&lt;br&gt;0.35***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F statistic</td>
<td>15.82***&lt;br&gt;6.55***&lt;br&gt;5.91***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001. †U.S.- and foreign-born Hispanics. ††Different from the odds ratio for whites at p<.05. ‡Different from the odds ratio for blacks at p<.05. †††Measures are time-varying. Notes: na=not applicable.