Teen Sex and Pregnancy

**SEXUAL ACTIVITY**
- Most very young teens have not had intercourse: 8 in 10 girls and 7 in 10 boys are sexually inexperienced at age 15.
- The likelihood of teenagers’ having intercourse increases steadily with age; however, about 1 in 5 young people do not have intercourse while teenagers.
- Most young people begin having sex in their mid-to-late teens, about 8 years before they marry; more than half of 17-year-olds have had intercourse.
- While 93% of teenage women report that their first intercourse was voluntary, one-quarter of these young women report that it was unwanted.
- The younger women are when they first have intercourse, the more likely they are to have had unwanted or nonvoluntary first sex—7 in 10 of those who had sex before age 13, for example.
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of sexually active 15–17-year-old women have partners who are within two years of their age; 29% have sexual partners who are 3–5 years older, and 7% have partners who are six or more years older.
- Most sexually active young men have female partners close to their age: 76% of the partners of 19-year-old men are either 17 (33%) or 18 (43%); 13% are 16, and 11% are aged 13–15.

**CONTRACEPTIVE USE**
- A sexually active teenager who does not use contraceptives has a 90% chance of becoming pregnant within one year.
- Teenage women’s contraceptive use at first intercourse rose from 48% to 65% during the 1980s, almost entirely because of a doubling in condom use. By 1995, use at first intercourse reached 78%, with 2/3 of it condom use.
- 9 in 10 sexually active women and their partners use a contraceptive method, although not always consistently or correctly.
- About 1 in 6 teenage women practicing contraception combine two methods, primarily the condom and another method.
- The method teenage women most frequently use is the pill (44%), followed by the condom (38%). About 10% rely on the injectable, 4% on withdrawal and 3% on the implant.
- Teenagers are less likely than older women to practice contraception without interruption over the course of a year, and more likely to practice contraception sporadically or not at all.

**SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs)**
- Every year 3 million teens—about 1 in 4 sexually experienced teens—acquire an STD.
- In a single act of unprotected sex with an infected partner, a teenage woman has a 1% risk of acquiring HIV, a 30% risk of getting genital herpes and a 50% chance of contracting gonorrhea.
- Chlamydia is more common among teens than among older...
Teen Pregnancy Outcomes

More than half (56%) of the 905,000 teenage pregnancies in 1996 ended in births (2/3 of which were unplanned).

- 78% of teenage mothers have a second child within 2 years of their first.
- 1/4 of teenage mothers have a second child within 2 years of their first.
- 61% of minors who have abortions do so with at least one parent’s knowledge; 45% of parents are told by their daughter. The great majority of parents support their daughter’s decision to have an abortion.

SOURCES

The data in this fact sheet are the most current available. Most of the data are from research conducted by The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI) or published in the peer-reviewed journal Family Planning Perspectives and the 1994 AGI report Sex and America’s Teenagers. Additional sources include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Center for Health Statistics.

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