exclusion of one case, for which marital status at baseline was unreported, this subset leaves us with 2,366 births to unmarried couples and 737 births to married couples.

New mothers were initially interviewed in person at the hospital, and the fathers of their children were interviewed either at the hospital or somewhere else as soon as possible after the birth. Baseline response rates were high—82% for unmarried and 87% for married mothers; 76% and 88% for their partners, respectively.

**Measures**

The infant health outcomes we analyze are mothers’ reports of the child’s birth weight and whether the child was low-birth-weight (2,500 g or less). Our measure of maternal behavior is indicated by whether the mother reported she initiated prenatal care during the first trimester. Paternal behaviors are measured by both parents’ reports of whether the father contributed money or in-kind help to the mother during the pregnancy. About one-quarter of fathers did not participate in the baseline survey. Thus, the paternal reports for these measures are missing, and these observations are omitted from the analysis of fathers’ reports. Questions about paternal support were asked of unmarried parents only.

Our key independent variables are measures of whether only the mother reported having considered abortion when she learned of the pregnancy, whether only the father reported having considered abortion when he learned of the pregnancy or whether both parents reported having considered abortion when each learned of the pregnancy. In some specifications, we use an indicator for whether at least one parent considered abortion. We also include indicators for whether each parent refused or did not know the answer to these questions and for whether the father did not complete the interview.

Although assessing whether parents considered abortion is an unusual approach to measuring pregnancy intention, we adopted it for a practical reason: The Fragile Families survey did not ask the more standard questions about pregnancy intentions (i.e., whether a parent considered the pregnancy unwanted or mistimed). However, the benefits of having a measure reported independently by the father and the mother outweigh the possible disadvantages of using this indicator. As in most surveys measuring pregnancy intentions, parents were asked this question retrospectively. Yet a question about whether parents had considered abortion may be subject to less social desirability bias than one asking whether an existing child was unwanted. Another advantage is that complicated pregnancies or pregnancies with poor outcomes may lead a parent to retrospectively say that the pregnancy was unwanted, and this could cause researchers to erroneously conclude that unwanted pregnancies had worse outcomes than intended ones. This measure may also be of intrinsic interest, given how little is known about family outcomes in situations where men and women disagreed about terminating a pregnancy.14

**TABLE 1. Percentage of births in the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, by selected characteristics, according to parents’ marital status at the time of the birth, 1998–2000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Unmarried (N=2,366)</th>
<th>Married (N=737)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single birth</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;high school degree</td>
<td>40**</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree, no college</td>
<td>32**</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no four-year degree</td>
<td>24**</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>3**</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td>22**</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>43**</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–29</td>
<td>20**</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥30</td>
<td>15**</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18**</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviewed</td>
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<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic black</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic white</td>
<td>11**</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td><strong>PARENTS’ FERTILITY HISTORY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Has children with another partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother has</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father has</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither has</td>
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<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05. **p<.01. Notes: Only one birth per couple is included in the data. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. Comparisons across columns were made with t tests of equality of means.