

ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY IN TENNESSEE: PREGNANCY RATES, BIRTH RATES, AND ADVERSE CONDITIONS, 1990-1996

- The Year 2000 target pregnancy rate²⁶ among females 14 and younger for Tennessee was to be no more than 2.5 per 1,000, and that for females 15-17 to be no more than 55 per 1,000. The first time Tennessee was able to meet both objectives was in 1996. The pregnancy rate among 10-14 year-olds was 2.5 per 1,000 in 1996 compared to 2.6 in 1995. Among 15-17 year-olds, the rate was 51.9 per 1,000 down from 55.8 in 1995.
- Fewer Tennessee teenagers (ages 10-17) became pregnant in 1996 compared to 1995, (6,138 and 6,267 pregnant teenagers, respectively). Tennessee's adolescent pregnancy rate declined to a new all-time low in 1996. The pregnancy rate was 21.1 per 1,000 females aged 10-17, down from 22.0 in 1994 and 21.8 in 1995.
- The adolescent pregnancy rate was nearly 3 times higher among blacks than whites. Rates were 15.6 per 1,000 among white adolescent females and 42.2 per 1,000 among their black counterparts.
- Less overall decline was observed for adolescent birth rates from 1990 to 1996. Overall, adolescent birth rates decreased from 17.7 per 1,000 adolescent females in 1990 to 16.3 per 1,000 in 1996. This decline amounted to less than half the decline in pregnancy rates among adolescents in the period (an 8% decline in birth rates compared to a 17% decline in pregnancy rates).
- Adolescent birth rates declined slightly more among blacks (9%) than whites (8%) from 1990 to 1996. This runs counter to trends observed by race in adolescent pregnancy rates. The rates for whites declined by more (19%) than did the rate for blacks (15%).
- Growth in the population of females ages 10-17 has been estimated at 7% for both whites and blacks from 1990-1996, making such declines more compelling.
- Percentages of births to adolescent females ages 10-17 in which no prenatal care was received declined among blacks, but not among whites or the total population. In 1996, 2.5% of adolescent mothers received no prenatal care, including 1.8% of whites and 3.5% of blacks. Overall, percentages declined from 1990 to 1996 by 19%. Percentages of births among blacks receiving no prenatal care declined by 29%, while increasing by 6% among whites.

²⁶Pregnancies include live births, fetal deaths and abortions reported the TDH.