

Table C. Number, rate, and percent of births to unmarried women, and birth rate for married women: United States, 1980 and 1985–2002

Year	Births to unmarried women			Birth rate for married women ³
	Number	Rate ¹	Percent ²	
2002	1,365,966	43.7	34.0	86.3
2001	1,349,249	43.8	33.5	86.7
2000	1,347,043	44.0	33.2	87.4
1999	1,308,560	43.3	33.0	84.8
1998	1,293,567	43.3	32.8	84.2
1997	1,257,444	42.9	32.4	82.7
1996	1,260,306	43.8	32.4	82.3
1995	1,253,976	44.3	32.2	82.6
1994	1,289,592	46.2	32.6	82.9
1993	1,240,172	44.8	31.0	86.1
1992	1,224,876	44.9	30.1	88.5
1991	1,213,769	45.0	29.5	89.6
1990	1,165,384	43.8	28.0	93.2
1989	1,094,169	41.6	27.1	91.9
1988	1,005,299	38.5	25.7	90.8
1987	933,013	36.0	24.5	90.0
1986	878,477	34.2	23.4	90.7
1985	828,174	32.8	22.0	93.3
1980	665,747	29.4	18.4	97.0

¹Births to unmarried women per 1,000 unmarried women aged 15–44 years.

²Percent of all births to unmarried women.

³Births to married women per 1,000 married women aged 15–44 years.

NOTE: Rates for 1991–2001 have been revised and may differ from those previously published; see “Technical Notes.”

women (43.5 percent) in 2002. The proportion of births to non-Hispanic black women declined slightly to 68.4 percent. The percent for American Indian women was 59.7, and for API women, it was 14.9. There are substantial variations in these proportions for Hispanic and API subgroups (tables 13, 14, 17, and 19).

Changes in both marital and nonmarital fertility affect the proportion of births that are to unmarried women. In recent years, the proportion has inched up, primarily because births to married women have declined by 2 percent since 2000, whereas births to unmarried women increased slightly, by 1 percent.

The numbers and proportions of births to unmarried women by race and Hispanic origin by State are shown in table 19. In general, the number of States reporting increases in these measures far outpaced the number with declines. The number of births to unmarried women rose in 37 States and American Samoa, and declined in 13 States, the District of Columbia, and in all territories except for American Samoa. The percent of births to unmarried women increased in 41 States and all territories except for Guam, declined in 5 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam, and was unchanged in 4 States.

Age of father

The birth rate per 1,000 men aged 15–54 years was 48.4 in 2002 (table 20), a decrease of 1 percent from 2001 (49.0 per 1,000) and the lowest level ever reported. Between 1990 and 1997, the overall birth rate for men declined 15 percent; the rate fluctuated slightly between 1998 and 2000 and has declined since. For 2001–2002, age-specific birth rates for males under age 35 years were down, birth rates for men between ages 35 and 49 years were up; rates for men aged 50 years and over were unchanged.

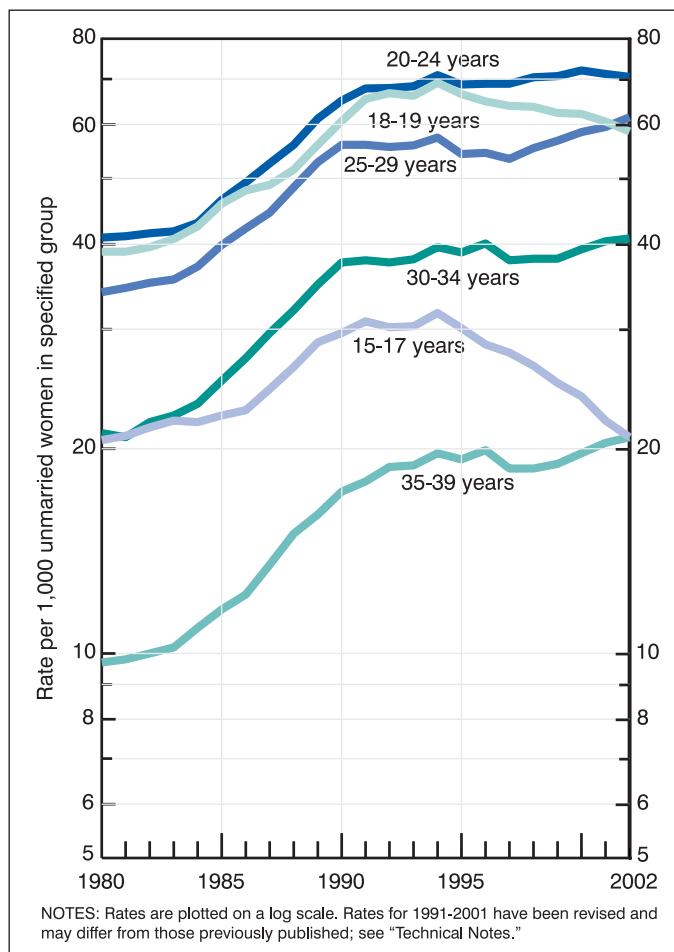


Figure 6. Birth rates for unmarried women, by age of mother: United States, 1980–2002

The birth rates for teenage males (15–19 years) fell 6 percent between 2001 and 2002 (from 18.5 to 17.4) and has declined 29 percent, from 24.6 per 1,000 since 1994. The downturn in birth rates for male teenagers echoes declines in the birth rate for female teenagers that began in the early 1990s (see section on “Age of mother”). Declining birth rates among younger fathers as well as rising birth rates among older fathers have resulted in a 1-year increase in the median age of fathers, from 28.7 to 29.7 years, between 1992 and 2002 (tabular data not shown).

Information on age of father is often missing on birth certificates of children born to women under 25 years of age and unmarried women (24). In 2002 age of father was not reported for 13 percent of all births, 24 percent of births to all women under 25 years of age, and 38 percent of all nonmarital births. In computing birth rates by age of father, births where age of father is not stated were distributed in the same proportion as births where age of father is stated within each 5-year age interval of mother. This procedure avoids the distortion in rates that would result if the relationship between age of mother and age of father were disregarded. The procedures for computing birth rates by age of father are described in more detail in the “Technical Notes.”