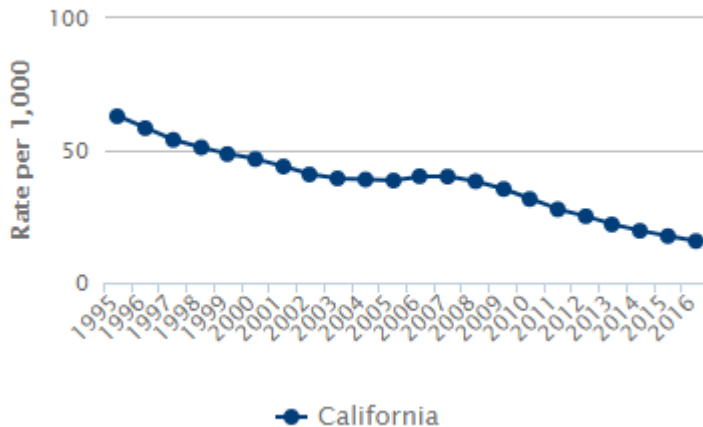


Teen Births in California

Birth Rate Among Teens Ages 15-29



Definition: Number of births per 1,000 women ages 15-19 (e.g., in 2016, there were 15.7 births per 1,000 California women ages 15-19).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Birth Statistical Master Files; California Dept. of Finance, [Population Estimates and Projections, 2000-2009, 2010-2060](#); CDC WONDER, [Natality Public-Use Data](#) (Feb. 2019).

Birth Rate Among Teens Ages 15-29: 2016; Showing Counties

What It Is

On kidsdata.org, teen births data are available as numbers and rates per 1,000 young women overall, by age group (14 and under, 15-17, 18-19), and by mother's race/ethnicity.

Why This Topic Is Important

Adolescent births are associated with serious challenges and negative outcomes for the parents, their children, and society overall. Teen mothers are more likely than mothers in their 20s and early 30s to have premature births, infants with low birthweight, and babies who die in infancy. Children of teens also are at increased risk for physical, behavioral, cognitive, and academic challenges later in life. Children born to teens are more likely to drop out of high school, enter the criminal justice system in adolescence, become teen parents themselves, and experience unemployment in adulthood compared with children born to older mothers.

Giving birth as a teenager can create disadvantages for the mother and father as well. Teen mothers are more likely to become welfare dependent, and teen parenthood in general is associated with lower educational attainment and lower income levels. Fiscal hardship can be compounded by the fact that teen mothers are less likely to be married, which may mean covering family expenses on their own. However, some teen parents are able to manage these challenges successfully, become competent parents, and reach their educational and career goals.

It is estimated that adolescent births cost society billions of dollars annually, due to lost productivity and costs related to health care, foster care, and incarceration.

How Children Are Faring

The birth rate among California teens decreased by 75% between 1995 and 2016, from 62.9 births per 1,000 young women ages 15-19 to 15.7 per 1,000. This decline was evident at the county level as well, as teen birth rates dropped in all counties with data during this period. Despite these improvements, many counties continue to have high rates, with some exceeding 30 births per 1,000 teens in 2016. The majority of teen births statewide are to women ages 18-19, though rates have declined for all age groups (under 15, 15-17, and 18-19) since 1995.

Trends among California racial/ethnic groups can be compared beginning in 2000. Since then, teen birth rates have decreased for all

Number of Births to Young Women Under Age 20, by Age Group: 2016

