

Child TRENDS[®] RESEARCH BRIEF

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Repeat Teen Childbearing: Differences Across States and by Race and Ethnicity

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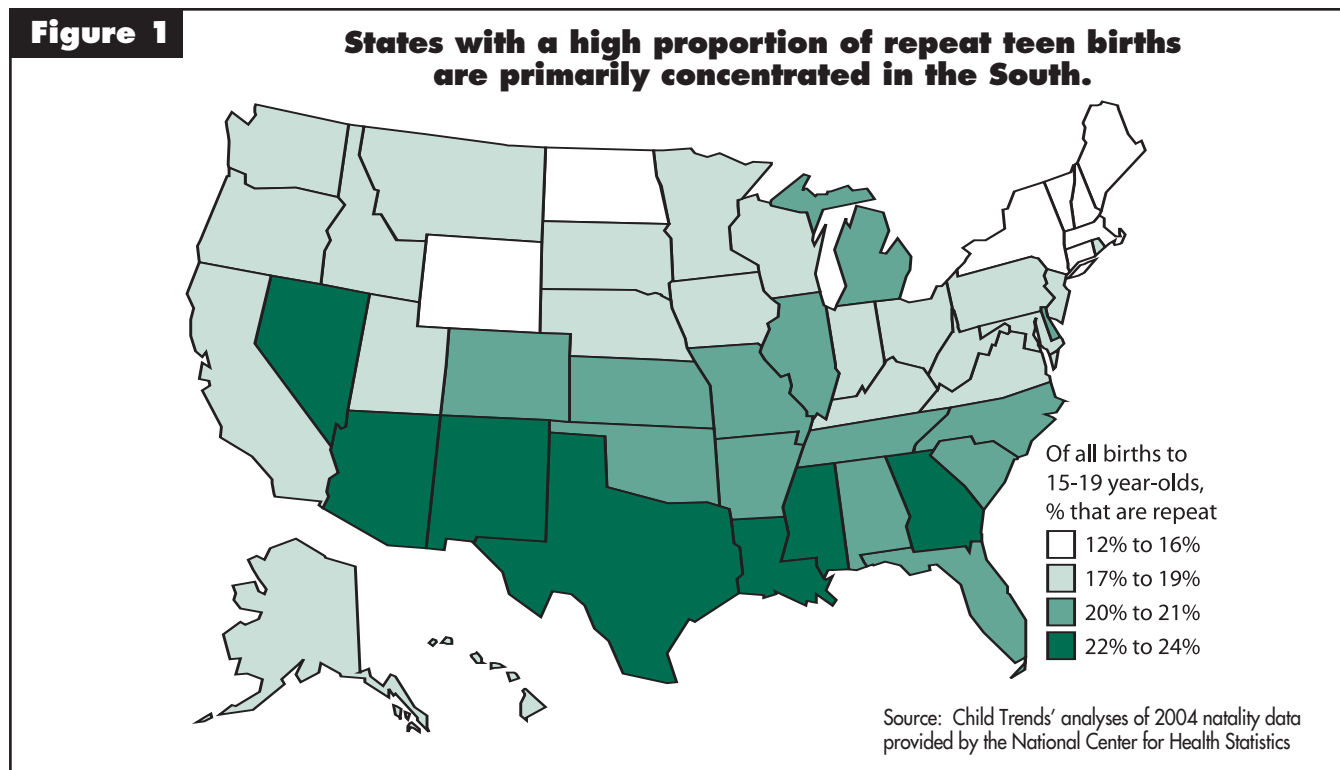
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Overview. Although the teenage birth rate has been decreasing since 1991 and reached a record low in 2004, nearly one-fifth of teen births that year were repeat births—births to teens who were already mothers. Teenage childbearing has negative implications for the mothers and their children. Teen mothers tend to be from disadvantaged backgrounds, even before having a child, and they and their children face poorer educational, economic, health, and developmental outcomes than do women who delay childbearing beyond their teen years.^{2,5,7,13} A second teen birth compounds problems resulting from a first teen birth.⁴

This Research Brief provides new information on trends in repeat teen childbearing by state and by racial/ethnic group to help state-level agencies and local program providers address the needs of these especially disadvantaged teens and their children. We find that states vary greatly in the percentage of teen births that are repeat births and that this pattern generally mirrors variations in states' overall teen birth rates. Thus, states with the highest proportions of repeat teen childbearing also have some of the highest teen birth rates. However, across the country, repeat births have been decreasing—from 25 percent of all teen births in 1990 to 20 percent in 2004. These changes have been particularly notable among African American teens and teens in northern states.

REPEAT TEEN BIRTHS IN 2004

One-fifth of U.S. teen births were repeat births in 2004. Of the more than 400,000 births to females aged 15-19 in 2004, 83,000 (20 percent) were to teen females who already had given birth at least once.



ABOUT THE DATA SOURCES FOR THIS BRIEF

All birth data in this brief originated from the Natality Data Set CD Series 21, gathered and disseminated by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).^{9,10} Child Trends produced all national and state-level birth statistics for women between the ages of 15 and 19. All statistics on repeat childbearing pertain to female teens who have given birth more than once, and do not include male teens who may have fathered multiple children. This brief focuses on the percentage of teen births that are repeat births occurring to women who have already had a child, rather than the percentage of teen mothers who will go on to have an additional birth. Supplemental information on 2004 teen birth rates was drawn from a recent report from NCHS.⁸

Differences across states in the percentage of repeat births to teens range from one-tenth to one-quarter of births. In 2004, between 22 percent and 24 percent of teen births were repeat births in seven states, concentrated primarily in the South. Those states, listed in order from highest- to lowest-percentage of repeat teen births, included Texas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arizona, Nevada, and New Mexico (see Figure 1, state rankings in Table 1, and Table 2). In only four states did repeat teen births account for less than 15 percent of teen births, and all were in New England—Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

The states with the highest percentage of repeat teen births are also the states with the highest rates of teen childbearing. Texas, the state with the highest teen birth rate (63 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19) in 2004, was also the state with the highest proportion of repeat teen births (24 percent). Likewise, New Hampshire had the lowest teen birth rate (at 18 per 1,000 females in this age group) and—along with Maine and Vermont—had the lowest proportion of repeat teen births (12 percent). These two cases represent a general pattern of state overlap in the proportion of teen repeat births with teen birth rates (see Figures 1 and 2). The highest rates of teen childbearing and the greatest proportion of repeat teen births typically occur in the Sun Belt region, whereas the lowest rates of teen childbearing and the lowest proportion of repeat teen births tend to be centered geographically in the North. The 2004

Table 1

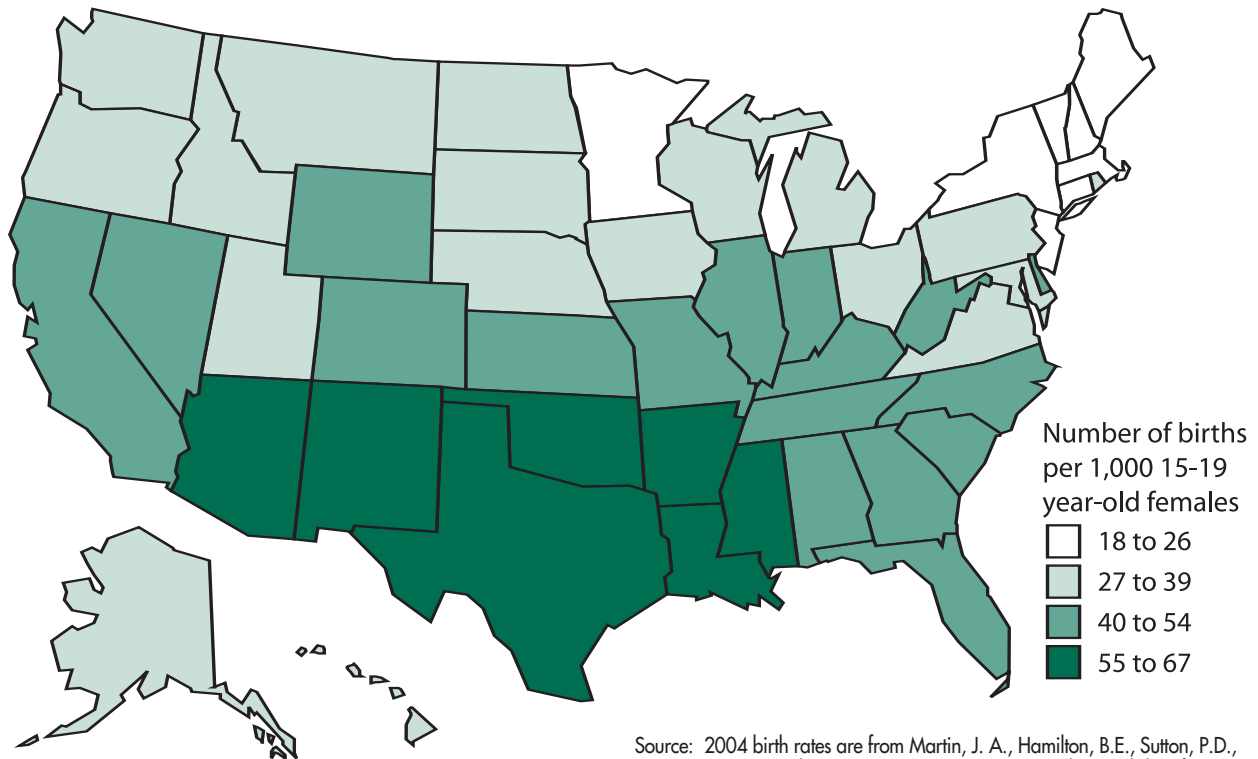
2004 State-Level Rankings of the Percentage of Teen Births that are Repeat Births

Ranking	State of residence	% of teen births that are repeat births, 2004
1	Texas	24%
2	Georgia	23%
3	Louisiana	23%
4	Mississippi	23%
5	Arizona	22%
6	District of Columbia	22%
7	Nevada	22%
8	New Mexico	22%
9	Arkansas	21%
10	Illinois	21%
11	North Carolina	21%
12	Oklahoma	21%
13	Tennessee	21%
14	Alabama	20%
15	Colorado	20%
16	Delaware	20%
17	Florida	20%
18	Kansas	20%
19	Michigan	20%
20	Missouri	20%
21	South Carolina	20%
22	California	19%
23	Indiana	19%
24	Kentucky	19%
25	Maryland	19%
26	Montana	19%
27	Nebraska	19%
28	Ohio	19%
29	Oregon	19%
30	Pennsylvania	19%
31	Rhode Island	19%
32	South Dakota	19%
33	Wisconsin	19%
34	Alaska	18%
35	Idaho	18%
36	Iowa	18%
37	New Jersey	18%
38	Utah	18%
39	Virginia	18%
40	West Virginia	18%
41	Hawaii	17%
42	Minnesota	17%
43	Washington	17%
44	Connecticut	16%
45	New York	16%
46	North Dakota	15%
47	Wyoming	15%
48	Massachusetts	14%
49	Maine	12%
50	New Hampshire	12%
51	Vermont	12%

U.S. Total

20%

Source: Birth data are from the National Center for Health Statistics: 1990 Natality Data Set CD Series 21, No. 8; 2004 Natality Detail File CD Series 21, No. 17H(a).

Figure 2**Teen birth rates closely reflect the state-level variation in repeat teen childbearing.**

Source: 2004 birth rates are from Martin, J. A., Hamilton, B.E., Sutton, P.D., Ventura, S.J., Menacker, F., & Kirmeyer, S. (2006). Births: Final data for 2004. National Vital Statistics Reports. Vol. 55, No. 1.

nationwide teen birth rate was 41 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19.

TRENDS IN REPEAT TEEN BIRTHS, 1990-2004

Repeat teen births have declined since 1990. Paralleling the drop in teen birth rates, the percentage of repeat teen births decreased from 25 percent in 1990 to 20 percent in 2004 (see Table 2). This trend represents a national decline of 20 percent. In numbers, there were 128,000 repeat births in 1990, compared with 83,000 in 2004.

At the state level, these changes have varied widely. While the proportion of repeat teen births declined in all states, the amount of decline ranged from 4 percent to 40 percent. States with the greatest declines in the proportion of repeat teen childbearing—Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont—had some of the lower percentages of repeat teen births initially in 1990, and have since fallen to the bottom of the state-level rankings with the lowest percentages of repeat teen births by 2004. Iowa, Montana, and New Mexico experienced the lowest percent declines, and all moved up in the relative state rankings for repeat teen births.

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN REPEAT TEEN BIRTHS

Although repeat teen childbearing has declined among all racial/ethnic groups, these declines have not been uniform. In 2004, the proportions of repeat births to non-Hispanic whites and non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islanders (17 percent and 19 percent, respectively) were below the national average (20 percent), and the proportions of repeat teen births to Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks (22 percent and 23 percent, respectively) were above the national average (see Figure 3). The declines between 1990 and 2004 ranged from 30 percent among non-Hispanic blacks and 21 percent among non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islanders to 15 percent among Hispanics and 11 percent among non-Hispanic whites. Recent data suggest long-acting injectable contraception methods may be behind the large decline in repeat teen births among non-Hispanic blacks.¹

Repeat teen childbearing by race/ethnicity varies by state. At the state level, the percentage of repeat births by race/ethnicity varies greatly, depending both on the composition of the population and the number of teen births to each group in

the state. Table 3 presents the number of teen births to non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islanders in 2004 and the proportion of these teen births that were second or higher parity for each state. For example, the percentage of teen births to non-Hispanic whites that were repeat births varied from 21 percent in Georgia to 10 percent in Massachusetts.

DISCUSSION

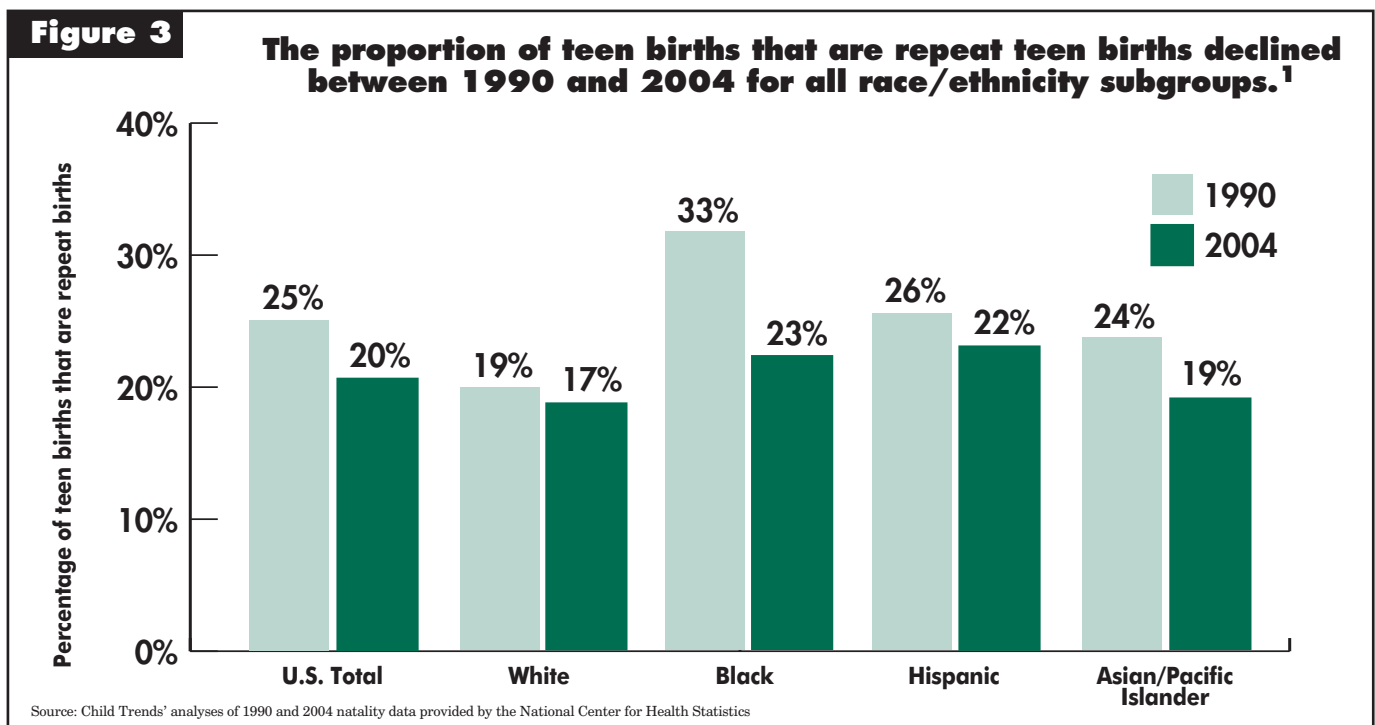
It is good news that the proportion of repeat teen births has declined in all 50 states—from a national average of nearly one-quarter of all teen births to one-fifth of all teen births. However, 83,000 repeat births occurred to teens in 2004. These teens and their children face economic, educational, and socioemotional challenges, making teens who already are parents an important target group for the state-level agencies and local program providers that work to prevent teen childbearing and support parenting teens.

Factors that can reduce closely spaced subsequent teen pregnancy or childbearing include delaying first sexual intercourse,¹⁵ initiating long-acting contraceptive methods,¹⁴ and continuing to attend school after having a first teen birth.^{6,14} Other protective factors for teen mothers include having one or both parents with at least 12 years of education,³ and living independently or with a parent,

rather than with a partner.⁶ Factors that increase the risk of having a repeat teen birth include having lower cognitive ability,¹⁵ being non-Hispanic black or Hispanic,³ and wanting the first teen birth.³

Research has also shown that nurse home-visiting programs, in which trained nurses visit expectant adolescents before and after the baby's birth, help to reduce subsequent childbearing.¹² The Adolescent Family Life Program, overseen by the Office of Population Affairs, funds programs for pregnant and parenting teens, and many of these programs aim to prevent repeat teen childbearing through mentoring programs, enhanced case management, home visits, parenting classes, and other efforts.¹¹

This *Research Brief* has focused on the decline in the proportion of repeat births to teens in all states and how repeat childbearing varies by race/ethnicity. While the percentage of repeat births to teens does not predict the proportion of at-risk mothers that eventually will have a second or higher-order teen birth, this statistic nonetheless broadens our understanding of births to teenagers who are already mothers. Expanding our state-level and subgroup knowledge of this topic is important in order to help state-level agencies and local program providers identify populations that are at risk for repeat teen childbearing, target prevention efforts to reduce this risk, and address the negative outcomes resulting from repeat teen births.



¹ All racial/ethnic groups are mutually exclusive.

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⁶ Manlove, J., Mariner, C., & Papillo, A. R. (2000). Subsequent fertility among teen mothers: Longitudinal analyses of recent national data. *Journal of Marriage & the Family, 62*(2), 430-448.

Table 2 1990 and 2004 State-Level Trends in the Percentage of Teen Births that are Repeat Births

State of residence	Number of births to mothers aged 15-19, 1990	Number of births to mothers aged 15-19, 2004	% of teen births that are repeat births, 1990	% of teen births that are repeat births, 2004	% decline in repeat births, 1990-2004	State of residence	Number of births to mothers aged 15-19, 1990	Number of births to mothers aged 15-19, 2004	% of teen births that are repeat births, 1990	% of teen births that are repeat births, 2004	% decline in repeat births, 1990-2004
Alabama	11,252	8,124	27%	20%	26%	Montana	1,331	1,199	20%	19%	5%
Alaska	1,142	953	21%	18%	14%	Nebraska	2,352	2,205	22%	19%	14%
Arizona	9,612	11,498	26%	22%	15%	Nevada	2,663	3,730	24%	22%	8%
Arkansas	7,011	5,701	26%	21%	19%	New Hampshire	1,258	800	18%	12%	33%
California	69,712	49,248	23%	19%	17%	New Jersey	10,068	6,920	23%	18%	22%
Colorado	5,975	6,774	22%	20%	9%	New Mexico	4,367	4,401	23%	22%	4%
Connecticut	4,038	2,860	22%	16%	27%	New York	26,608	17,025	23%	16%	30%
Delaware	1,277	1,171	27%	20%	26%	North Carolina	16,506	13,550	25%	21%	16%
District of Columbia	2,030	852	32%	22%	31%	North Dakota	793	600	17%	15%	12%
Florida	27,017	23,334	27%	20%	26%	Ohio	22,690	15,188	24%	19%	21%
Georgia	18,369	16,067	29%	23%	21%	Oklahoma	7,590	6,825	23%	21%	9%
Hawaii	2,122	1,442	21%	17%	19%	Oregon	5,084	3,988	21%	19%	10%
Idaho	2,009	2,029	20%	18%	10%	Pennsylvania	18,216	12,553	24%	19%	21%
Illinois	24,967	17,513	27%	21%	22%	Rhode Island	1,564	1,035	22%	19%	14%
Indiana	12,335	9,418	23%	19%	17%	South Carolina	9,721	7,463	27%	20%	26%
Iowa	3,989	3,219	19%	18%	5%	South Dakota	1,172	1,117	24%	19%	21%
Kansas	4,722	3,973	25%	20%	20%	Tennessee	12,928	10,067	25%	21%	16%
Kentucky	9,349	6,695	23%	19%	17%	Texas	48,302	51,231	27%	24%	11%
Louisiana	12,270	9,440	27%	23%	15%	Utah	3,707	3,180	21%	18%	14%
Maine	1,857	1,105	20%	12%	40%	Vermont	702	459	18%	12%	33%
Maryland	8,143	6,239	26%	19%	27%	Virginia	11,353	8,769	24%	18%	25%
Massachusetts	7,266	4,544	22%	14%	36%	Washington	8,397	6,583	21%	17%	19%
Michigan	20,312	11,943	25%	20%	20%	West Virginia	3,976	2,469	21%	18%	14%
Minnesota	5,342	4,846	20%	17%	15%	Wisconsin	7,281	5,992	26%	19%	27%
Mississippi	8,909	6,542	29%	23%	21%	Wyoming	943	807	19%	15%	21%
Missouri	11,227	8,751	24%	20%	17%	U.S. Total	521,826	412,437	25%	20%	20%

Source: Birth data are from the National Center for Health Statistics: 1990 Natality Data Set CD Series 21, No. 8; 2004 Natality Detail File CD Series 21, No. 17H(a).

Table 3**State-Level Comparison of Percentage of Births to 15-19 Year-Olds that are Repeat Births, by Race/Ethnicity, 2004**

State of residence	Non-Hispanic Whites		Non-Hispanic Blacks		Hispanic		Non-Hispanic Asian/ Pacific Islanders	
	Number of births, 2004	Of all births to teens, % that are repeat births	Number of births, 2004	Of all births to teens, % that are repeat births	Number of births, 2004	Of all births to teens, % that are repeat births	Number of births, 2004	Of all births to teens, % that are repeat births
Alabama	4,078	18%	3,461	22%	537	23%	23	--
Alaska	382	14%	29	--	110	27%	41	21%
Arizona	2,836	18%	435	24%	7,125	24%	71	14%
Arkansas	3,493	18%	1,616	27%	519	24%	34	21%
California	7,667	14%	4,149	17%	35,314	20%	1,819	18%
Colorado	2,443	15%	440	17%	3,742	24%	79	15%
Connecticut	929	13%	645	14%	1,247	20%	35	14%
Delaware	451	17%	499	22%	205	23%	12	--
District of Columbia	7	--	738	22%	105	24%	2	--
Florida	8,941	16%	7,744	24%	6,430	20%	131	14%
Georgia	6,483	21%	6,890	24%	2,579	24%	99	16%
Hawaii	223	15%	33	9%	333	14%	851	19%
Idaho	1,450	15%	6	--	514	25%	13	--
Illinois	5,695	16%	6,194	24%	5,491	22%	109	12%
Indiana	6,551	18%	1,837	23%	978	24%	35	17%
Iowa	2,455	15%	282	29%	409	23%	45	22%
Kansas	2,512	17%	497	23%	854	28%	48	25%
Kentucky	5,524	18%	837	22%	303	20%	22	--
Louisiana	3,604	18%	5,474	26%	242	23%	35	23%
Maine	1,047	12%	12	--	19	--	7	--
Maryland	2,118	16%	3,262	20%	793	20%	52	10%
Massachusetts	2,201	10%	665	15%	1,503	20%	160	18%
Michigan	6,626	16%	4,019	23%	1,103	24%	99	19%
Minnesota	2,668	12%	704	19%	765	21%	406	31%
Mississippi	2,634	19%	3,658	25%	169	25%	16	--
Missouri	5,918	18%	2,199	24%	519	23%	58	14%
Montana	769	16%	4	--	66	20%	5	--
Nebraska	1,290	15%	308	24%	469	25%	27	--
Nevada	1,242	16%	435	25%	1,860	25%	138	18%
New Hampshire	728	10%	17	--	51	16%	3	--
New Jersey	1,478	12%	2,201	19%	3,147	20%	81	15%
New Mexico	778	19%	55	13%	2,953	22%	14	--
New York	5,267	15%	4,825	16%	6,550	18%	294	8%
North Carolina	6,009	18%	4,787	22%	2,316	25%	161	22%
North Dakota	360	12%	9	--	23	--	2	--
Ohio	9,898	17%	4,347	24%	836	23%	64	25%
Oklahoma	3,930	19%	866	23%	1,021	25%	41	15%
Oregon	2,438	17%	151	19%	1,204	24%	77	14%
Pennsylvania	6,618	15%	3,646	23%	2,131	25%	128	15%
Rhode Island	392	16%	142	17%	415	24%	63	28%
South Carolina	3,257	17%	3,490	22%	646	21%	33	15%
South Dakota	620	12%	25	--	71	21%	6	--
Tennessee	6,124	18%	3,028	26%	854	24%	44	23%
Texas	12,282	19%	7,259	26%	31,325	26%	280	15%
Utah	2,025	15%	46	30%	962	24%	60	25%
Vermont	445	12%	4	--	9	--	0	--
Virginia	4,172	15%	3,346	22%	1,151	19%	90	14%
Washington	3,648	14%	383	15%	2,036	22%	233	19%
West Virginia	2,323	18%	126	19%	14	--	2	--
Wisconsin	3,166	13%	1,460	28%	888	21%	289	26%
Wyoming	600	13%	5	--	138	14%	4	--
U.S. Total in 2004	168,795	17%	97,290	23%	133,044	22%	6,441	19%
U.S. Total in 1990	250,207	19%	147,533	33%	97,694	26%	7,962	24%

Source: Birth data are from the National Center for Health Statistics: 1990 Natality Data Set CD Series 21, No. 8; 2004 Natality Detail File CD Series 21, No. 17H(a).
 --Percentages of repeat births in states with fewer than 30 births to a particular subgroup were not estimated.

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