

N E W M E X I C O

TEEN PREGNANCY COALITION

PREVENTION • PARENTING

Doña Ana Adolescent Pregnancy Project

A report itemizing data about teen pregnancy based on geographic regions of the county, ethnic break down of the county, cultural norms amongst the different cultural and ethnic groups in the county. This report should be a detailed analysis of data already compiled by the New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition or New Mexico Department of Health. The report will also develop a comparison of the same data in regards to state wide data about teen pregnancy.

PREFACE

Information compiled by Ramon Arroyos, New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition

The request of the HHS Department of Doña Ana County for information on **ethnic breakdown and cultural norms of ethnic groups in the County**, a detailed analysis of data already compiled by The New Mexico Teen Pregnancy coalition, poses a difficult problem due to the fact that research on cultural norms specific to teen pregnancy in Dona Ana County has not been done or is not available. We have included information on Mexican cultural and on Latina Teen Pregnancy trends.

This report will reflect that the higher teen pregnancy rates are in the predominately Hispanic communities however it is important to note that Dona Ana County is 64% Hispanic. Also important to note is that the percent of births are higher to women 18 and 19 years old than in the 15 to 17 year old range.

As we look at cultural norms concerning teen pregnancy there are several things that we need to consider or merit further study by researchers.

- Our unscientific research in Mexico produced several conversations concerning teen pregnancy and invariably the conversation led to a cultural norm that in Mexico, because of poverty and the economic strain on the family, a young girl is expected to marry or find her way in life at an early age while a young man is encouraged to stay and help support the family. Of course this may be a generalization because different factors may come into play including the economic situation of the family and the region of the country. It may be a norm for women to marry at an early age with an older man; for example a 16 or 17 year old may marry and or live with a man 21 years old or older and receive the blessings of the family because the man is considered to be mature enough to provide a home. On the other hand a 16 year old girl may “fall in love” with a young man her age who cannot support her and they end up having a baby. Does the norm become a risk factor?
- Cultural factors, Acculturation, Lack of Self Esteem, Developmental Assets and Protective Factors.

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On February 22, 2007 the New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition received from the Department of Health current teen pregnancy data, based on geographic regions of the county (per zip code) that has been verified by the department of vital statistics. The findings indicate that teen pregnancy is high across the county but there are several locations with higher teen pregnancy rates.

Those areas are:

15 to 19 yrs. old

- Mesilla Park followed by Salem, Mesquite, Vado, Rincon and Hatch respectively.

15 to 17 yrs old

- Salem, Mesquite, and Vado, in that order

18 to 19 yrs. old

- Hatch, Mesquite, Salem, Vado and Mesilla Park correspondingly.

In the Las Cruces area the high birth rates appear to be in the 8801 and the 88012 zip codes. However, Mesilla Park Zip Code Area 88047, next to Las Cruces appears to have the highest teen birth rate for that area and for the County.

Salem, Hatch and Rincon are rural farm areas on the North end of Dona Ana County with populations of 1106, 3,478, and 580 respectively, approximately 80% Hispanic with 32.9% foreign born according to the 2000 census. Per Capita Income in 1999 dollars is \$8686 for Salem, \$7559 for Rincon and \$11,644 for Hatch with 35.9 to 40.7% individuals below the poverty level. The higher percentage of teen births is found among the 18 to 19 year olds with the exception of Rincon with the higher percent of teen births among 15 to 17 years of age. It is important to note that there appears to have been a **100% increase in teen births within 2001 and 2004 in the Rincon zip code area.**

For Comparison: the County teen birth rate is 81.2 and the State teen birth rate is 59.8 and the US teen birth rate is 43 per 1000 as of 2004.

(A full-page chart provided by DOH is included as a Microsoft Excel File)

ZIP CODE	NAME	Female Population			Number of Births to...				Percent Births to...			Rate per 1000 Females 15-19	% Change in Number of Births to 15-19 yo 2001-2004
		15-17 yrs (2000, US Census)	18-19 yrs (2000, US Census)	15-19 yrs (2006 ESRI)	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs	All Ages	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs		
87937	Hatch	131	58	189	26	42	68	285	9.1%	14.7%	23.9%	89.85	2.57
87940	Rincon	11	18	38	7	4	11	71	9.9%	5.6%	15.5%	72.37	100.00
87941	Salem	22	19	60	19	22	41	156	12.2%	14.1%	26.3%	170.83	0.00

Las Cruces zip code areas 88012, 88001 and 88005-88007 are located within the city limits of Las Cruces with population density of 15,433, 60.3 % Hispanic, per capita income of \$13,608 in 1999 dollars and 20.3% individuals living below the poverty rate for zip code 88012. The 88001 zip code population was 35,505, 61% Hispanic, \$12,286 per capita income and 31.2% individuals living below the poverty rate. The 88005-88007 zip code areas had a population of 45,910, 53.5% Hispanic, \$17911 per capita income with 16.8% living below the poverty rate according to the 2000 census. Las Cruces zip code areas 88001 and 88012 are above the New Mexico teen birth rate of 59.8 and 88012 has a noticeable increase of 60.24 between 2001 and 2004 followed by 88011 with a 26.7% increase.

ZIP CODE	NAME	Female Population			Number of Births to...				Percent Births to...			Rate per 1000 Females 15-19	% Change in Number of Births to 15-19 yo 2001-2004
		15-17 yrs (2000, US Census)	18-19 yrs (2000, US Census)	15-19 yrs (2006 ESRI)	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs	All Ages	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs		
88001	Las Cruces	602	796	1586	155	322	477	2492	6.2%	12.9%	19.1%	75.19	0.00
88002	White Sands	52	7	38	0	3	3	72	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%	19.74	0.00
88003	Las Cruces	25	540	758	0	2	2	16	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	0.66	0.00
88011	Las Cruces	341	270	793	19	55	74	749	2.5%	7.3%	9.9%	23.33	26.67
88012	Las Cruces	256	193	803	89	138	227	1150	7.7%	12.0%	19.7%	70.67	60.24
88005+007	Las Cruces+LC	1029	706	1918	173	231	404	2291	7.6%	10.1%	17.6%	52.66	11.24
88047	Mesilla Park	78	23	69	19	35	54	269	7.1%	13.0%	20.1%	195.65	8.00

Zip code area 88047 Mesilla Park is in the Las Cruces City area with a population of 1,545 of which 66.8% are Hispanic; per capita income in 1999 was \$14, 031 with only 18% individuals below the poverty level.

South of Las Cruces are Zip Code Areas 88048, Mesquite and 88072 Vado and 88044 La Mesa. Mesquite with the highest teen birth rate outside of the Las Cruces city limits has a population of 5,513 according to the 2000 census, 91.8% are Hispanic with a per capita income of \$7,562 with 33.75% individuals below poverty levels. Vado, population 1061, is 90.6% Hispanic with a per capita income of \$6,425 and 39.6% individuals below the poverty level. La Mesa zip code 88044, population 3,499 with 80.3% Hispanic is a farming community with a per capita income of \$12, 993 and 28.5% individuals under the poverty level.

ZIP CODE	NAME	Female Population			Number of Births to...				Percent Births to...			Rate per 1000 Females 15-19	% Change in Number of Births to 15-19 yo 2001-2004
		15-17 yrs (2000, US Census)	18-19 yrs (2000, US Census)	15-19 yrs (2006 ESRI)	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs	All Ages	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs		
88048	Mesquite	112	138	150	31	41	72	287	10.8%	14.3%	25.1%	120.00	8.00
88072	Vado	35	6	126	24	31	55	230	10.4%	13.5%	23.9%	109.13	5.83
88044	La Mesa	87	58	154	20	25	45	226	8.9%	11.1%	19.9%	73.05	5.00

Further South is zip code 88021 and 88081, Anthony and Chaparral; with a 2000 census population count at 26,147 and 83.1% Hispanic with a per capita income of \$8,684 and 36.5% individuals below the poverty level. Both Anthony and Chaparral are adjacent to the Texas State

line. Chaparral is one of the largest unincorporated towns in the state of New Mexico. Separated from the rest of Doña Ana County by the Franklin Mountains and the adjoining U.S. Army land of the White Sands Missile Range. Chaparral is located 22 miles south of Las Cruces via Interstate 10 and then 16 miles east via N.M. 404 through what is now known as the "Anthony Gap." The 88021 zip code, until recently, covered both Anthony and Chaparral and are reported as one. According to Tom Scharmen of DOH calculating the birth rate separately produces an even further lower birth rate of 52.63 for Anthony and 48.30 for Chaparral. These birth rates are lower than the state birth rate 59.8 but higher than the US teen birth rate of 43 per 1000 as of 2004. **There was a 6.67% decrease in the Anthony, Chaparral birth rate from 2001 to 2004.**

Santa Teresa zip code 88008 is a community at the junction of New Mexico Highways 278 and 9. It is about four miles north of the Mexico border, practically adjacent to Sunland Park, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. It consists primarily of residences in a gated community, population 5,551 and 73.6% Hispanic with a per capita income of \$15,670 and 22.6% individuals under the poverty level. **There was a 8.75% decrease in the Santa Teresa birth rate from 2001 to 2004.**

The City of Sunland Park zip code 88063 is located at the New Mexico, Texas, and Chihuahua, Mexico border and has a population of 10,377 according to the 2000 census. The population is 97.9% Hispanic with a per capita income of \$6,330 and 38.10 % individuals under the poverty level. The reported birth rate of 26.17 per 100 puts it below the national average.

ZIP CODE	NAME	Female Population			Number of Births to...				Percent Births to...			Rate per 1000 Females 15-19	% Change in Number of Births to 15-19 yo 2001-2004
		15-17 yrs (2000, US Census)	18-19 yrs (2000, US Census)	15-19 yrs (2006 ESRI)	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs	All Ages	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs		
88021+081	Chaparral+Anthony	758	486	1376	131	172	303	1329	9.9%	12.9%	22.8%	55.05	-6.67
88063	Sunland Park	328	187	535	25	31	56	255	9.8%	12.2%	22.0%	26.17	2.40
88008	Santa Teresa	150	75	220	3	3	6	44	6.8%	6.8%	13.6%	6.82	-8.75

Ethnic break down of the county

Geographic area	Total population	Total	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
Dona Ana County	174,682	168,437	118,478	2,723	2,580	1,330	117	43,209	6,245	110,665

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, County Population Estimates updated annually for states and counties	Dona Ana County	New Mexico
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2005 (b)	64.8%	43.4%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2005	31.4%	43.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2005 (a)	1.6%	10.2%
Asian persons, percent, 2005 (a)	0.9%	1.3%
Black persons, percent, 2005 (a)	2.4%	2.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2005 (a)	0.2%	0.1%

Information provided by the Department of Health

PERCENT OF BIRTHS TO TEENS VS TEEN BIRTH RATE

The standard method for measuring and reporting birth rates in a population is the number of live births in a year divided by the total population at midpoint of the same year:

$$\text{Birth Rate} = \frac{\text{\# live births per year}}{\text{\textit{Total} population}}$$

A fertility rate is measured by calculating the number of live births in a year and dividing that figure by the number of women of child bearing age in the population:

$$\text{Fertility Rate} = \frac{\text{\# live births per year}}{\text{\# \textit{women} of child bearing age}}$$

When measuring teen births, it is common to use a formula that is actually a fertility rate – though it is usually referred to as a ‘teen birth rate’ (the definition of ‘teen’ may vary but 15 to 19 is the most common):

$$\text{Teen Birth Rate} = \frac{\text{\# of live births to teens per year}}{\text{\# \textit{teen women} in population}}$$

The ‘percent of births to teens’ is a short cut measure. It is often used when a denominator (number of teen women in a population) is unavailable. For small areas such as zipcodes, legislative districts, school boundaries, etc., demographic denominators are not estimated except at the decennial census. ‘Percent of births to teens’ is calculated as the number of live births to teens in a year divided by the # of live births to **all women** in the same year and population:

$$\text{Percent Births to Teens} = \frac{\text{\# of live births to teens per year}}{\text{\# of live births to all women per year}}$$

The ‘percent of births to teens’ is not a true rate and it is not comparable across populations (one population may have a greater proportion of teen women and thus would be expected to have a greater proportion of teen births).

Comparisons

The birth rates for zip codes throughout New Mexico are not yet available but are expected to be released by the first week of March 2007.

The percent of teen births for the rest of New Mexico are reported in the table below. It is necessary to note that the percent of teen births does not reflect the teen birth rate.

ZIP CODE	NAME	Female Population			Number of Births to...				Percent Births to...		
		15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs	All Ages	15-17 yrs	18-19 yrs	15-19 yrs
87002	Belen	441	172	613	67	135	202	1080	6.2%	12.5%	18.7%
87014	Cubero	44	51	95	32	67	99	543	5.9%	12.3%	18.2%
87023	Jarales	29	5	34	3	8	11	54	5.6%	14.8%	20.4%
87026	Laguna	77	53	130	10	35	45	278	3.6%	12.6%	16.2%
87036	Mountainair	58	11	69	2	14	16	88	2.3%	15.9%	18.2%
87062	Veguita	53	27	80	5	13	18	106	4.7%	12.3%	17.0%
87801	Socorro	231	214	445	47	73	120	606	7.8%	12.0%	19.8%
87825	Magdalena	100	33	133	13	22	35	175	7.4%	12.6%	20.0%
87829	Quemado	31	11	42	1	1	2	20	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%
87901	Truth or Consequences	176	70	246	9	36	45	288	3.1%	12.5%	15.6%
87936	Garfield	27	9	36	2	1	3	24	8.3%	4.2%	12.5%
87937	Hatch	131	58	189	26	42	68	285	9.1%	14.7%	23.9%
87940	Rincon	11	18	29	7	4	11	71	9.9%	5.6%	15.5%
87941	Salem	22	19	41	19	22	41	156	12.2%	14.1%	26.3%
87942	Williamsburg	28	2	30	0	1	1	31	0.0%	3.2%	3.2%
88001	Las Cruces	602	796	1398	155	322	477	2492	6.2%	12.9%	19.1%
88002	White Sands	52	7	59	0	3	3	72	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%
88003	Las Cruces	25	540	565	0	2	2	16	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%
88005	Las Cruces (+007)	1029	706	1735	173	231	404	2291	7.6%	10.1%	17.6%
88007	(Included in 88005)										
88008	Santa Teresa	150	75	225	3	3	6	44	6.8%	6.8%	13.6%
88011	Las Cruces	341	270	611	19	55	74	749	2.5%	7.3%	9.9%
88012	Las Cruces	256	193	449	89	138	227	1150	7.7%	12.0%	19.7%
88020	Animas	50	12	62	1	5	6	52	1.9%	9.6%	11.5%
88021	Anthony (081)	758	486	1244	131	172	303	1329	9.9%	12.9%	22.8%
88023	Bayard	67	33	100	20	24	44	161	12.4%	14.9%	27.3%
88025	Buckhom	26	0	26	0	0	0	26	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
88026	Santa Clara	50	21	71	14	16	30	115	12.2%	13.9%	26.1%
88030	Deming	699	318	1017	156	212	368	1588	9.8%	13.4%	23.2%
88043	Hurley	28	25	53	5	11	16	93	5.4%	11.8%	17.2%
88044	La Mesa	87	58	145	20	25	45	226	8.9%	11.1%	19.9%
88045	Lordsburg	95	68	163	20	22	42	198	10.1%	11.1%	21.2%
88047	Mesilla Park	78	23	101	19	35	54	269	7.1%	13.0%	20.1%
88048	Mesquite	112	138	250	31	41	72	287	10.8%	14.3%	25.1%
88061	Silver City	491	285	776	53	130	183	976	5.4%	13.3%	18.8%
88063	Sunland Park	328	187	515	25	31	56	255	9.8%	12.2%	22.0%
88072	Vado	35	6	41	24	31	55	230	10.4%	13.5%	23.9%
88081	(Included in 88021)										
88301	Carrizozo	20	13	33	2	6	8	55	3.6%	10.9%	14.5%
88310	Alamogordo	1049	579	1628	90	223	313	1969	4.6%	11.3%	15.9%
88316	Capitan	51	25	76	6	6	12	87	6.9%	6.9%	13.8%
88317	Cloudcroft	34	13	47	3	11	14	79	3.8%	13.9%	17.7%
88330	Holloman Air Force Bas	20	21	41	1	44	45	662	0.2%	6.6%	6.8%
88337	La Luz	82	19	101	8	13	21	88	9.1%	14.8%	23.9%
88340	Mescalero	117	71	188	36	57	93	341	10.6%	16.7%	27.3%
88345	Ruidoso	169	113	282	17	38	55	449	3.8%	8.5%	12.2%
88352	Tularosa	118	87	205	15	18	33	221	6.8%	8.1%	14.9%

Sources: NMDOH Vital Records and Health Statistics 2001-2004; US Census 2000

Table prepared by T. Scharmen

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GRANT COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

	2004
2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate*	59.8
2004 Grant County Teen Birth Rate	68.4 (Rank: 9th out of 33 counties)**
% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%	
% Change in Grant County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 4.3%	

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	65.6	65.2	62.0	53.6	60.4	68.4	61.9
Number of Teen Births	79	76	76	65	72	78	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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BERNALILLO COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Bernalillo County Teen Birth Rate 55.3 (Rank: 18th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Bernalillo County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -9.6%

County Trends

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>5-Year Average 2000-2004</u>
County Teen Birth Rate	61.2	58.0	57.4	58.7	58.2	55.3	57.5
Number of Teen Births	1,234	1,183	1,159	1,187	1,180	1,109	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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CATRON COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

	<u>2004</u>	
2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate*	59.8	
2004 Catron County Teen Birth Rate	29.1	(Rank: 31st out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Catron County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -46.5%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	54.3	10.6	28.6	31.6	20.0	29.1	24.0
Number of Teen Births	5	1	3	4	3	3	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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DE BACA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 DeBaca County Teen Birth Rate 40.1 (Rank: 28th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in DeBaca County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 225.9%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	12.3	50.3	11.9	73.1	49.8	40.1	45.0
Number of Teen Births	1	4	1	6	4	3	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

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DONA ANA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Dona Ana County Teen Birth Rate 81.2 (Rank: 3rd out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Dona Ana County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 22.6%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	66.2	69.4	75.0	76.1	79.9	81.2	76.3
Number of Teen Births	547	565	584	584	605	637	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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EDDY COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Eddy County Teen Birth Rate 73.5 (Rank: 8th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Eddy County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -13.9%

County Trends

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>5-Year Average 2000-2004</u>
County Teen Birth Rate	85.3	83.8	82.8	73.5	73.4	73.5	77.4
Number of Teen Births	177	172	176	151	145	142	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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GUADALUPE COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Guadalupe County Teen Birth Rate 58.0 (Rank: 15th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Guadalupe County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 30.0%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	44.6	101.0	76.0	87.6	67.5	58.0	78.0
Number of Teen Births	7	16	13	14	10	10	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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HARDING COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

	<u>2004</u>
2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate*	59.8
2004 Harding County Teen Birth Rate	0.0 (Rank: 33rd out of 33 counties)**
% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2% % Change in Harding County Teen Birth Rate 2002-2004 = -100%	

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.7	33.9	N/A	13.5
Number of Teen Births	0	0	0	1	1	0	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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HIDALGO COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Hidalgo County Teen Birth Rate 45.8 (Rank: 23rd out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Hidalgo County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -18.2%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	56.0	41.5	36.2	52.5	61.1	45.8	47.4
Number of Teen Births	15	10	9	13	15	11	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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LEA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Lea County Teen Birth Rate 78.8 (Rank: 4th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Lea County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -17.1%

County Trends

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>5-Year Average 2000-2004</u>
County Teen Birth Rate	95.0	76.8	89.4	74.8	88.3	78.8	81.6
Number of Teen Births	233	185	222	187	223	186	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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LINCOLN COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Lincoln County Teen Birth Rate 45.9 (Rank: 22nd out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Lincoln County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 7.5%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	42.7	81.6	52.2	44.2	40.1	45.9	52.8
Number of Teen Births	25	49	35	30	28	32	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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LOS ALAMOS COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Los Alamos County Teen Birth Rate 5.4 (Rank: 32nd out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Los Alamos County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 2.6%

County Trends

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>5-Year Average 2000-2004</u>
County Teen Birth Rate	5.3	19.7	7.7	16.1	6.9	5.4	11.2
Number of Teen Births	3	11	5	11	5	4	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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MCKINLEY COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 McKinley County Teen Birth Rate 59.1 (Rank: 14th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in McKinley County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -14.8%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	69.4	52.6	56.4	63.7	55.7	59.1	57.5
Number of Teen Births	237	184	206	240	216	236	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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MORA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Mora County Teen Birth Rate 35.8 (Rank: 30th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Mora County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -8.3%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	39.0	37.9	32.3	43.6	47.7	35.8	39.5
Number of Teen Births	9	9	8	10	10	8	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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OTERO COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate*

59.8

2004 Otero County Teen Birth Rate

45.7 (Rank: 24th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Otero County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -16.7%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	54.9	60.2	50.7	55.5	52.1	45.7	52.8
Number of Teen Births	132	148	128	144	139	119	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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QUAY COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

	<u>2004</u>
2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate*	59.8
2004 Quay County Teen Birth Rate	60.7 (Rank: 11th out of 33 counties)**
% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%	
% Change in Quay County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -34.4%	

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	92.5	84.4	90.3	64.0	33.0	60.7	66.5
Number of Teen Births	36	32	35	25	13	22	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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RIO ARRIBA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Rio Arriba County Teen Birth Rate 76.3 (Rank: 7th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Rio Arriba County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -12.4%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	87.2	89.8	79.3	73.5	86.5	76.3	81.1
Number of Teen Births	135	138	125	121	148	129	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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ROOSEVELT COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Roosevelt County Teen Birth Rate 60.0 (Rank: 13th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Roosevelt County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 9.5%

County Trends

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>5-Year Average 2000-2004</u>
County Teen Birth Rate	54.8	80.5	66.4	60.3	67.6	60.0	67.0
Number of Teen Births	54	77	59	51	57	53	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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SAN JUAN COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 San Juan County Teen Birth Rate 60.1 (Rank: 12th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in San Juan County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -5.3%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	63.5	66.3	63.4	61.5	56.9	60.1	61.6
Number of Teen Births	327	350	343	338	311	328	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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SAN MIGUEL COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 San Miguel County Teen Birth Rate 57.6 (Rank: 16th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in San Miguel County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 9.9%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	52.4	69.9	48.8	54.2	39.8	57.6	54.1
Number of Teen Births	74	99	69	74	52	80	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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SANDOVAL COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Sandoval County Teen Birth Rate 37.8 (Rank: 29th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Sandoval County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -24.2%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	49.9	52.0	47.7	43.1	40.3	37.8	44.2
Number of Teen Births	160	173	174	166	163	153	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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SANTA FE COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Santa Fe County Teen Birth Rate 42.0 (Rank: 27th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Santa Fe County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -29.8%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	59.8	50.3	44.4	48.5	48.9	42.0	46.8
Number of Teen Births	247	209	197	225	238	199	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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SIERRA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Sierra County Teen Birth Rate 45.2 (Rank: 25th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Sierra County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -16.4%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	54.1	53.9	47.8	29.8	61.7	45.2	47.0
Number of Teen Births	19	19	18	11	22	17	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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SOCORRO COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Socorro County Teen Birth Rate 57.0 (Rank: 17th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Socorro County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -21.7%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	72.8	64.8	50.1	60.4	53.6	57.0	57.2
Number of Teen Births	55	49	39	49	45	47	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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TAOS COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate*

59.8

2004 Taos County Teen Birth Rate

44.2 (Rank: 26th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Taos County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -30.5%

County Trends

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>5-Year Average 2000-2004</u>
County Teen Birth Rate	63.6	65.0	53.5	45.7	58.5	44.2	53.4
Number of Teen Births	64	65	59	51	66	49	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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TORRANCE COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Torrance County Teen Birth Rate 46.7 (Rank: 20th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Torrance County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -38.9%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	76.5	56.9	51.0	41.7	40.8	46.7	47.4
Number of Teen Births	47	36	36	30	30	35	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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UNION COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Union County Teen Birth Rate 77.2 (Rank: 6th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Union County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = 8.1%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	71.4	55.1	42.8	42.9	37.8	77.2	51.2
Number of Teen Births	12	10	9	9	8	14	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

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VALENCIA COUNTY TEEN BIRTH DATA

2004

2004 New Mexico Teen Birth Rate* 59.8

2004 Valencia County Teen Birth Rate 55.3 (Rank: 19th out of 33 counties)**

% Change in New Mexico Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -10.2%

% Change in Valencia County Teen Birth Rate 1999-2004 = -34.0%

County Trends

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	5-Year Average 2000-2004
County Teen Birth Rate	83.7	72.9	67.2	62.7	69.9	55.3	65.6
Number of Teen Births	207	184	181	174	199	155	

* Birth rate means the number of births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. All 2004 data is provisional.

**A ranking of 33 indicates the lowest rate in New Mexico; 1 is the highest.

Data Source: New Mexico Vital Records and Health Statistics

Defining Cultural Norms

Cultural norms are behavior patterns that are typical of specific groups. Such behaviors are learned from parents, teachers, peers, and many others whose values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors take place in the context of their own organizational culture. Some norms are healthy and some are not. Some contribute to the betterment of individuals, families, and communities; others are precisely the kinds of high-risk behaviors that mainstream American society would like to reduce or eliminate. Conflict or uncertainty over which cultural norms should be acceptable in which circumstances has contributed to change and instability in the fields of education and prevention during recent years. Cultural norms often are so strongly ingrained in an individual's daily life that the individual may be unaware of certain behaviors. Until these behaviors are seen in the context of a different culture with different values and beliefs, the individual may have difficulty recognizing and changing them. The goal of prevention and effective youth development is to understand and improve cultural norms, and thereby reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use.

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“Passed from one generation to the next, cultural norms are the shared, sanctioned, and integrated systems of beliefs and practices that characterize a cultural group. These norms foster reliable guides for daily living and contribute to the health and well being of the group. As prescriptions for correct and moral behavior, cultural norms lend meaning and coherence to life, as well as the means to achieve a sense of integrity, safety and belonging. Thus, normative beliefs, together with related values and rituals, confer a sense of order and control upon aspects of life that might otherwise appear chaotic or unpredictable.

Cultural norms are woven into interpretations and expressions of health and illness through dynamic, interactive relationships at all levels of influence—from the gene to the society. Cultural norms often mediate the relationship between ethnicity and health, even effecting gene expression through such practices as marriage rules, lifestyle choices, and environmental exposures. At the individual and group levels, cultural norms have a substantial role in health-related behaviors such as dietary practices, tobacco use, and exercise.”

From the encyclopedia of public health; <http://www.answers.com/topic/cultural-norms-1>

Mexican Culture

Mexico is by far the leading country of origin of immigrants to the U.S. In 1997, there were more than seven million persons in the U.S. who were born in Mexico, which represented 28 percent of the foreign born population. The population from Mexico was about six times as large as the foreign-born population from the next highest country. The foreign-born population from Mexico increased from 0.8 million in 1970 to 2.2 million in 1980 to 4.3 million in 1990 to 7.0 million in 1997 (Schmidley and Campbell, 1999). In light of the large number of persons born in Mexico who live in the U.S., it is surprising that Mexican culture is not well understood by many Americans. Persons from Mexico differ from other foreign-born groups in the U.S. Only 15 percent of U.S. residents born in Mexico are U.S. citizens. This contrasts sharply with the U.S. citizenship rates for persons born in Europe (53 percent) and Asia (44 percent) and even with persons from other parts of Latin America. Mexican-born persons in the U.S. tend to differ from

other Latino groups in many ways. The proportion of persons with a high school education or higher was 47 percent among all Latin American-born persons, but was only 31 percent for persons born in Mexico. Only six percent of the Mexicans were employed in managerial and professional specialty occupations, as compared to 23 percent for those from South America. Among workers born in Mexico, the median earnings were below the median for workers born in the Caribbean or South America. The poverty rate for those born in Mexico was 34 percent, while for those born in South America it was 15 percent. Only 46 percent of the US population that is Mexican-born had health insurance, as compared to 43 percent from South America. The size of the households was also larger for the Mexican-born (4.38 per household) in comparison with people born in South America (3.17). (Schmidley and Campbell, 1999). This profile indicates that many persons in the U.S. who were born in Mexico are poor, not highly educated and lack access to many important services, even in contrast to other groups from Latin America. **Persons in such circumstances may experience difficulty accessing and using health, rehabilitation, and human services. It is particularly important that professionals gain at least some familiarity with Mexican culture.**

John H. Stone, Ph.D., Director,

Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information & Exchange (CIRRIE)

The State of Latina Adolescents' Health

Latinos comprise the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the United States. Over the next 20 years, experts estimate that the number of Latino teens will grow by 60 percent while the total teen population will grow by eight percent. By the year 2020, one in five teens will be Latino.[1] In addition to the challenges all youth encounter during the transition to adulthood, social, cultural, economic, and biological factors influence the state of Latina adolescents' health. Some of these factors may place Latinas at risk, while others may assist in protecting their health. The complex interaction of these factors can also affect Latina teens' life choices, resiliency, and development.

- While teen pregnancy rates have dropped across all ethnic groups over the past decade, the decline has been smallest among Latinas.[2,3] Between 1990 and 1997, the pregnancy rate among Latina teens dropped by 11 percent, compared to 23 percent among African American teens and 26 percent among non-Hispanic white teens.[2]
- African American teens had a higher pregnancy rate than Latinas in 1997 (154 per 1,000 women versus 133). However, African American teens also had a higher abortion rate (63 per 1,000 women versus 35), thereby bringing their birth rate below that of Latinas.[3]
- Among teens, Latinas had the highest birth rate in 2000 (94 per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19). By comparison, the teen birth rate among African Americans was 79 per 1,000; among Native Americans, 68; among non-Hispanic whites, 33; and among Asian Americans, 22.[4]
- Latinas had the smallest decrease in teen birth rates compared to other ethnic groups. Between 1991 and 2000, the birth rate decreased by nearly 12 percent among Latina teens, compared to over 31 percent among African American teens, over 24 percent

among non-Hispanic white teens, and over 20 percent among both Asian Americans and Native Americans.[4]

- Latino youth are at a disproportionate risk for HIV infection. Through December 2001, Latino young men and women represented 20 percent of the cumulative reported AIDS cases among teens, although they accounted for only about 12 percent of the total U.S. teen population. Latina and African American young women together accounted for 84 percent of AIDS cases among women ages 13 to 19, although, together, they represent about 26 percent of women this age.[5,6]
- Between 1988 and 2000, Latina teens had higher rates of Chlamydia and gonorrhea than did non-Hispanic white teenage women. [7]

Sexual health indicators underscore Latina teens' sexual activity and limited use of contraception, including condoms.

- In 2001, 44 percent of Latinas in grades nine through 12 reported ever having had sexual intercourse, compared to 41 percent of non-Hispanic white and 53 percent of African American young women. [8]
- The percentage of female teens using any method of contraception at first sexual intercourse was lowest for Latinas (57 percent), compared to non-Hispanic whites (81 percent), Asian Americans and Native Americans (77 percent each), or African Americans (68 percent). [3]
- Nearly 54 percent of sexually active Latino high school students reported using a condom at most recent intercourse, compared to 67 percent of sexually active African Americans and 57 percent of sexually active non-Hispanic whites. [9]

Factors Affecting Latina Adolescents' Health

Many young Latina women face changing cultural norms, discrimination, poverty, and limited access to health care [10]—issues which can place them at high risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS. Key factors in Latina adolescents' health include the following:

Poverty

Latinos living in the United States are disproportionately affected by poverty. In 2000, Latinos comprised 12 percent of the total U.S. population, but over 20 percent of those living in poverty. [6,11] Twenty-three percent of Latinos were living in poverty, compared to 10 percent of non-Hispanic whites. [6] Latinos were less likely than non-Hispanic whites to have graduated from high school (57 versus 88 percent) and were more likely to be unemployed (seven versus three percent). [11] Living in poverty exacerbates stress, health risks, and unhealthy behaviors. [12] Because of limited economic resources, Latino families may also live in low-income areas characterized by high rates of crime and violence and by limited opportunities. In addition, Latinos living in these areas may experience limited access to health care because fewer health care providers work in these communities. [13]

Access to Health Care

Latinos are among those least well served by the U.S. health care system. According to the U.S. Census in 2000, 33 percent of Latinos lacked health insurance, as compared to 10 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 19 percent of African Americans. [14] According to one study, one in three Latina adolescents is uninsured. [15] In a study of Latino students in 7th, 9th, and 11th grades, 20 percent said they had nowhere to go for medical attention. [15] Compared to older Latino teens, younger adolescents reported more unmet health care needs, which may reflect their lack of access to routine care, their lack of knowledge as to how to access care, or their lack of experience in knowing what kinds of help to seek for specific problems. [15]

Despite their risk for unprotected sexual activity, Latina teens receive little information about contraception and family planning. [13] Fewer prevention and health care delivery programs serve Latina teens than serve any other ethnic group. School-based interventions and health care services reach only a fraction of Latina teens, due in part to the substantial school dropout rate in this population. [12] Additional factors limiting Latina teens' access to health care—including reproductive health care—include language barriers and a lack of cultural sensitivity among many health care providers. [15]

Racism and Discrimination

Latinos in the dominant U.S. culture may encounter racism and discrimination, particularly related to their traditions, native language, and coloring. The predominant, non-Hispanic white culture may sometimes perceive Latinos as different and, therefore, "minority," may hold lower expectations of them, and may offer few opportunities for Latina young women to reach their full potential. [12] In this way, institutionalized racial/ethnic discrimination may also limit Latinas' economic, academic, and professional achievements. [12,16] The combination of low expectations from society and their own expectations for the future may result in Latina teens' engaging in unprotected sexual activity. [12,16]

Acculturation and Biculturalism

Acculturation can be defined as the process in which one acquires the skills necessary for life in a new environment. As Latina teens adopt the norms and practices of the dominant U.S. culture, they often distance themselves from traditional "protective" behaviors, including culturally held rules regarding sexuality. [10,12] One study found that Latinas born in the United States engaged in higher risk sexual behavior than did foreign-born Latinas: 58 percent of U.S.-born Latinas were 15 years old or younger at first intercourse, compared to 23 percent of foreign-born Latinas. In addition, 46 percent of U.S.-born Latinas reported multiple sex partners over the past six months compared to 17 percent of foreign-born Latinas. [17] Nevertheless, some Latina teens with little acculturation may also be at risk. For example, less acculturated Latinas often lack adequate information about their own body, contraceptive options, negotiation skills, and health care resources. [17,18]

Latina teens, growing up between two different cultures, may embrace elements of each, thereby developing a bicultural identity. [19] At times, the norms and expectations of these two cultures can clash, creating tension between traditional parents and their bicultural children. For example, bicultural Latina teens may seek to assert their independence—arousing conflict with many parents' traditional cultural values of interdependence and cooperation. If traditional parents try

to impose their values on their children, bicultural Latina youth may feel increasingly alienated. [20] Culturally-based tension between Latino youth and their parents may strain the parent-child relationship and lessen the potential for open communication. [12,19]

Familismo (The Family)

Family bonds run deep in Latino culture, and Latino family members often feel a strong, mutual responsibility to support and care for one another. Families may be a significant source of guidance and social support. Family traditions emphasize cooperation and collective needs over individual needs.[19] The cultural importance of social connections and family ties also means that family members often play an important role in influencing the health of Latina teens. For example, in one study Mexican and Puerto Rican mothers said they often monitor their daughters' behavior, with the help of extended family members, in order to protect them from unintended pregnancy. The daughters usually interpreted this supervision as a gesture of caring and concern. [10]

One study found that, when Latina mothers discussed their personal beliefs and values regarding sexuality with their 13-year-old teens, these talks were related, a year later, to adolescents' abstaining from or delaying initiation of sex. [20] However, other studies found that when Latina mothers emphasized shame and secrecy in discussing sexual behavior, their daughters sometimes resorted to deceit to circumvent what they saw as attempts to control their behavior. [10,21] Given that family and culture frequently loom large in the lives of Latina teens, the role of parents and other family members can be significant in providing positive guidance and emotional support. [10,12,21]

Gender Roles

The cultural importance of family and motherhood sometimes encourages young Latinas to become mothers during their teenage years. Since motherhood is highly valued in Latino culture, Latina young women may not view pregnancy as a negative consequence of unprotected sex. [20] Indeed, some Latinas expect that having a baby will result in increased devotion from the baby's father because, in Latino culture, he may be expected to take responsibility for providing for his family. [22] Less acculturated Latinas are more likely to espouse such traditional gender role beliefs, while more acculturated Latinas often perceive greater life choices and options for women. [12]

Machismo heavily influences ideas of culturally acceptable, gender-based sexual behavior for young Latino men and women. Within *machismo*, Latino men often expect to make the sexual and contraceptive decisions in the relationship, while expecting women to take a secondary role. [10,22,23] This unbalanced power dynamic may prevent young Latinas from making their own sexual decisions and can contribute to compromising Latinas' sexual and reproductive health. [23]

Condom negotiation may be difficult for Latinas. Unequal partnerships lessen women's ability to suggest using condoms, especially if men see their personal power and self-esteem as being tied to sexual freedom, spontaneity, and control over sexual activities. Condoms may also carry unspoken intimations of suspicion, mistrust, infidelity, and an accusation that a partner is diseased. Suggesting the use of condoms is also inconsistent with the public position of the Roman Catholic Church and with some males' expectations that women will conform to

prescribed sex roles. Finally, women may fear repercussions from their partners if they suggest using condoms. [23] Young Latinas need support in building their communication and negotiation skills and in establishing shared responsibility for sexual decisions and behavior.

Religion

Roman Catholicism, the religion predominant among Latinos, strongly influences *familismo* [19] and through *familismo*, also strongly influences the sexual health behaviors of young Latinas. [19,22] For example, the Roman Catholic Church disapproves of contraception, including condoms. This disapproval may deter young Latinas from protecting themselves during sexual activity. At the same time, Latina teens in one study did not associate virginity with religious beliefs, but saw delaying initiation of sex as an expression of self-respect. [10]

Early Puberty and Having an Older Boyfriend

Latina teens face an additional challenge in that many experience early puberty. When asked why some girls are likely to engage in sexual activity earlier than others, participants in one study frequently attributed early physical development to early sexual involvement, either in the sense that the girls understood their physical development to be a sign that they were mature enough to engage in sexual activity or else that males mistook these girls for being older, and hence more sexually mature, than they really were. [21] When encountering sexual pressure, younger girls often lack the relative power and the negotiation skills and assertiveness to arrive at safe and healthy decisions, particularly if they are dealing with male partners at least three years older than they. [23,24]

In one study, Latinas, particularly those who were less acculturated, were more likely than other teens to have an older boyfriend. [24] This phenomenon may be, in part, culturally related, since in Latin America, husbands are generally at least 10 years old than their wives. While a relationship with an older male is culturally acceptable, having an older boyfriend has also been shown to be associated with increased risk for teen pregnancy and for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. [24,25]

Recommendations for Developing Programs for Latina Adolescents

The following recommendations will assist providers and communities in developing effective programs to promote the reproductive and sexual health of Latina adolescents:

- **Make programs culturally and linguistically appropriate.** To best communicate health messages to Latina teens, programs must present culturally appropriate and relevant information in the language(s) and idiom that the young women will understand. Given issues of acculturation and biculturalism among Latina youth, programs need to pay special attention to traditions and to changing cultural norms as well as to the specific Latino cultures of their clients, such as Honduran, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Brazilian, or Mexican.
- **Involve teens and their social support networks.** Involving teens as well as their families and friends in the development of the programs, messages, and services can make programs more relevant and effective for their intended audience. Families and friends can have a great impact on the health decisions and behavior of Latina youth. These people, so important in the lives of Latina teens, can also play vital roles in encouraging and reinforcing healthy choices among Latina teens.

- **Address culturally defined gender roles.** Latino cultural traditions may hinder young women's ability to openly communicate with their partners. Therefore, programs tailored for Latinas should emphasize assertiveness as well as communication and negotiation skills. Effective programs should also involve young Latino men in discussing gender roles and communication within relationships.
- **Involve communities in programs' development, implementation, and evaluation.** The best way to reach a community is by working with the community. Invite Latino youth, parents, schools, churches, and community-based organizations to participate in designing and implementing the program—from the very beginning. These partners can contribute significantly to developing a culturally appropriate and powerful program. Moreover, they will share a sense of ownership as the program develops.

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