

US teen birth rates highest in rural areas, research shows

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Major cities had biggest decline in teen childbearing over the last 2 decades.

(HealthDay)—In 2010, teen births occurred at higher rates in rural counties than in suburban counties and major urban areas of the United States, new research finds.

The teen birth rate was almost one-third higher in rural counties compared to the rest of the country, researchers from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy reported.

Specifically, the data showed that:

- The teen birth rate among girls aged 15 to 19 in rural counties was 43 per 1,000 versus 33 per 1,000 in other parts of the United States.
- Among whites, the teen birth rate was more than twice as high in rural areas as in major urban areas (36 per 1,000 girls versus 16 per 1,000 girls, respectively).
- The birth rate among teens in rural counties fell by 32 percent from 1990 to 2010, but major urban areas and suburban counties had bigger declines (49 percent and 40 percent, respectively).
- Rural counties make up 16 percent of the overall teenage population in the United States and 20 percent of the teen births.

"This data provides an answer to a straightforward but previously unanswered question: Is rural teen childbearing higher or lower than in other places?" Sarah Brown, CEO of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and [Unplanned Pregnancy](#), said in a news release from the [nonprofit organization](#). "Clearly the need for efforts to help rural teens avoid too-[early pregnancy](#) and [parenthood](#) is great."

The research is based on statistics from the U.S. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's](#) National Center for Health Statistics.

More information: For more about [teen pregnancy](#), visit the U.S. National Library of Medicine.

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