

BuzzFeed NEWS

The Number Of U.S. Teenagers Giving Birth Has Reached A Historic Low

The number of U.S. teenage girls giving birth dropped in 2014 to a historic low, continuing a massive downward trend in teenage birth rates since 1991.

Data released Wednesday from the National Center for Health Statistics showed the birthrate for teenagers ages 15–19 across all race groups dropped 9% between 2013 and 2014 to 24.2 births per 1,000 women.

Since 1991, the birthrate for that age group has plunged 61%.

Bill Albert, spokesperson for the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, told BuzzFeed News that few Americans would be aware that teen pregnancy and birthrates have declined so dramatically.

“The majority of adults think it’s going up, rather than going down,” Albert said. “This is the greatest story never told.”

Albert said many adults make generalized, negative assumptions about teenagers’ behavior. But he said a combination of both contraception and abstinence teaching has shifted behavior.

He also credited the MTV shows *Teen Mom* and *16 and Pregnant* with exposing teens to the unglamorous reality of teenage pregnancy. “Young people tell us that these shows are far more sobering than salacious,” he said.

Only seven states saw the birth rate for teens ages 15–19 remain essentially unchanged between 2013 and 2014: Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Maine, Vermont, North Dakota, and Wyoming.

However, all states have seen a big decline in the rate since 1991.

The report also found the mean age for women giving birth for the first time in 2014 rose to 26.3 years old, up from 26.0 in 2014.

Additionally, health officials found the fertility rate for women ages 15–44 rose by less than 1% in 2014 — the first increase in the rate since the recession began six years ago.