

# Oklahoma Alert: 2020 teen birth data, the pandemic year.



March 2022

Oklahoma's 2020 teen birth numbers and rates decreased for the 15-19 age range, but increased for the 10-14 age range during the pandemic lock-down year. The issue adds to the other concerns about the impact school and program closures had on young people's mental, emotional and sexual health in 2020, due to the loss of in-person instruction and lack of access to health services. Providing health education and services that enable young people to protect their sexual health and safety must be a top priority.

## Trends in Oklahoma teen birth numbers

<u>Ages</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
14 & younger	64	66	69	58	43	49	43	32	29	36
15 – 17	1,684	1,667	1,517	1,269	1,225	1,100	964	818	851	786
18 – 19	4,335	4,176	3,792	3,523	3,166	3,146	2,822	2,662	2,669	2,431
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,083</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>5,379</b>	<b>4,850</b>	<b>4,434</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>3,829</b>	<b>3,512</b>	<b>3,549</b>	<b>3,253</b>

## A closer look at the 2020 teen birth numbers

Oklahoma had 3,253 births to teens aged 19 and younger in 2020, a decrease of 8% (296 births) from 2019. One-fourth of the births were to teens aged 17 and younger, and 36 of those births were to 10 to 14 year-olds – a 20% increase from 2019. Three-fourths of births were to older teens, aged 18 to 19. Half (49%) of all teens had not finished high school, and about one birth in every six (15%) was to a girl who was already a parent.

**Reducing teen and unintended pregnancies is a smart, cost-effective strategy for improving health, education and economic outcomes.**

### Number of births by birth order

1 <sup>st</sup> birth	2,764
2 <sup>nd</sup> birth	423
3 <sup>rd</sup> birth	55
4 <sup>th</sup> birth	8
5 <sup>th</sup> birth	-

### Percentage of births by race/ethnicity

White	69%
Black	15%
American Indian	15%
Asian	1%
Hispanic*	23%

### 2020 birth rates\*\*

<u>Age</u>	<u>OK</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
15 – 19	<b>25.0</b>	15.4
15 – 17	<b>10.1</b>	6.3
18 – 19	<b>48.1</b>	28.9

\* Hispanic may be of any race  
\*\* Rates = number of births per 1,000 females the same age

Sources: Oklahoma State Dept. of Health, Vital Statistics final, 2020  
National Center for Health Statistics/CDC, *Births: Final Data for 2020* (March 2022)

For more information, check **Healthy Teens OK!** at [healthyteensok.org](http://healthyteensok.org)



# All youth need access to high quality, effective sexual health education and health services.



In 2020, Oklahoma remained among the states with the highest teen birth rates, ranked **47<sup>th</sup>** overall (15-19), **46<sup>th</sup>** for younger teens (15-17), and **47<sup>th</sup>** for older teens (18-19). This means, Oklahoma had the...

- **4<sup>th</sup> highest** birth rate to teens, ages 15 – 19.
- **5<sup>rd</sup> highest** birth rate to young teens, ages 15 – 17.
- **4<sup>th</sup> highest** birth rate to older teens, ages 18 – 19.

## States with the highest birth rates for ages 15-19 in 2020:

<b>OKLAHOMA</b>	<b>25.0</b>
Louisiana	25.7
Arkansas	27.8
Mississippi	27.9
<b>U.S. Average</b>	<b>15.4</b>

## Priorities for action:

- Where teen birth rates/ numbers are highest
- Youth at **greatest risk** for early sexual activity
- Children and youth growing up in **poverty**
- Children experiencing **early school failure** or **family dysfunction**

## Teens at higher risk for an unintended pregnancy:

**School dropouts** - 30% of girls cite pregnancy/parenting as the reason

**Older teens (18-19)** – *three-fourths* of all teen births each year

**System-involved youth (state foster care and juvenile justice, or county juvenile bureau systems)** – very vulnerable and underserved

**Victims of sexual abuse** - in national studies, two-thirds of teen mothers indicate their first sexual intercourse was *non-consensual* and occurred *between ages 9-12*; preventing child sexual abuse is critical!

**Teen parents** – one in every six teen births is a subsequent birth

**Siblings of teen parents** - at high risk of becoming a teen parent

**Disconnected youth** - young people who are not connected to school or work have the greatest potential for risk-taking behaviors

## Effective ways to reduce teen birth numbers and rates in your community:

- **Expand high quality, evidence-based, well-delivered programs** that provide medically-accurate, age appropriate information by trained health educators in safe, caring settings -- and show they work!
- **Support groups** like Amplify Tulsa ([amplifytulsa.org](http://amplifytulsa.org)), Teen emPower Inc. ([teenempower.org](http://teenempower.org)), Thrive OKC ([thriveokc.org](http://thriveokc.org)), Take Control Initiative ([takecontrolok.org](http://takecontrolok.org)), Youth Services of Tulsa ([yst.org](http://yst.org)) and J.A.M.E.S. Inc. ([jamesinc.org](http://jamesinc.org)). For program and contact info, check: [healthyteensok.org](http://healthyteensok.org)
- **Use the latest research and resources** from the Healthy Teen Network, [healthyteennetwork.org](http://healthyteennetwork.org); Power To Decide, [powertodecide.org](http://powertodecide.org); and Oklahoma KIDS COUNT, coordinated by the Oklahoma Policy Institute and funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, [datacenter.kidscount.org/data#OK/2/0](http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#OK/2/0)
- **Engage youth as leaders in prevention**, check Forum for Youth Investment: [www.readyby21.org](http://www.readyby21.org)