

UNINTENDED PREGNANCY AND CONTRACEPTION USE

An unintended pregnancy is one that is mistimed (occurred too soon) or unwanted (occurred when the woman wanted no future pregnancies) at the time of conception. Unintended pregnancies that result in births are associated with both short- and long-term negative outcomes for both mother and child, including delayed prenatal care, reduced likelihood of breastfeeding, maternal depression, increased risk for intimate partner violence, and poor developmental and educational outcomes for children.⁵⁷ However, in 2006–2010, women reported that 37.1 percent of live births occurring in the past 5 years were unintended at the

time of conception. This includes 13.8 percent of pregnancies that were unwanted and 23.3 percent that were mistimed. Fourteen percent of all births were reported by the mother to have occurred 2 or more years too soon (data not shown). Overall, the proportion of births reported to be unintended did not change significantly between 1982 and 2010.⁵⁸

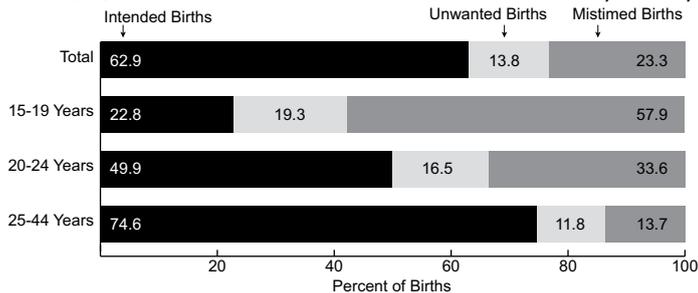
Unintended pregnancy varies by a variety of factors, including maternal age, race/ethnicity, poverty and education. In 2006–2010, over three-quarters of births in the past 5 years to mothers aged 15–19 years were reported to be unintended at the time of conception. The same was true for half of births to women aged 20–24 years and one-quarter to women aged

25–44 years. Births to non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic women were more likely than those to non-Hispanic White women to have been unintended (53.5 and 42.9 versus 30.7 percent, respectively; data not shown).⁵⁹

Unintended pregnancies can be averted with proper use of effective contraceptives. In 2006–2010, 4.7 million, or 11.0 percent, of women at risk of unintended pregnancy—who were having intercourse and not sterile, pregnant, postpartum, or trying to get pregnant—reported that they were not using contraception. Non-Hispanic Black women were more likely than women of other race or ethnic groups to not use contraception while at risk of pregnancy (17.2 percent).

Intendedness of Births at Conception* Among Women Aged 15–44 Years, by Age, 2006–2010

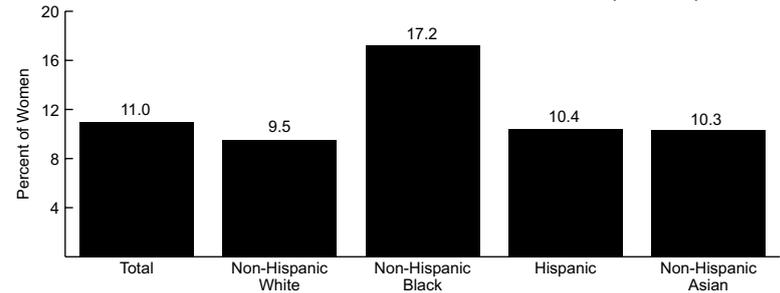
Source (II.2): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Survey of Family Growth



*Limited to births occurring in the 5 years before the interview. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

No Current Contraceptive Use Among Women Aged 15–44 Years, at Risk of Unintended Pregnancy,* by Race/Ethnicity,** 2006–2010

Source (II.3): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Survey of Family Growth



*At risk of unintended pregnancy is defined as having had intercourse in the last 3 months among those who were not currently pregnant, postpartum, trying to get pregnant, or sterile for health reasons.

**Estimates for other racial/ethnic groups were not available.