

# Hispanic Teen Pregnancy in Texas vs New Hampshire

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## Introduction/Purpose

**What:** Currently, New Hampshire has the lowest teen birth rate (17.9 per 1,000 females aged 15-19) in the United States and Texas has the highest (61.6). We sought to understand this disparity in data by analyzing how sexual education differences in NH and TX compare to their current teen pregnancy rates, particularly within the Hispanic teen population. Through a qualitative research design, we conducted a literature review to discover the details of whether an 'abstinence-only' or 'comprehensive' sexual education approach is used by NH and TX. Our project is a focused analysis of teen Latina pregnancy rates because birth rates among Hispanic teens were over twice as high as birth rates among non-Hispanic White teens (CDC 2019).

**Why:** Teen pregnancy rates in the United States have been declining since the last three decades, but they are still high.

**Question:** Do sexual education curriculum differences explain NH having the lowest teen birth rates and TX having the highest teen birth rates in the U.S.?

## Hypothesis

- Schools in states with an abstinence-only curriculum will have higher Hispanic teen birth rates because their students would be provided less information regarding contraceptives, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and unintended pregnancies
- Schools in states with a comprehensive sexual education curriculum will have lower Hispanic teen birth rates because this curriculum provides students with necessary knowledge to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health



## Methods

Teen pregnancy rate is typically calculated per thousand as the number of births to teen mothers divided by the total teenage female population. All of the data in this project was collected from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) WONDER database<sup>1</sup>. All data points are from the year 2020. In querying the database we considered only the population of female mothers under the age of 20. One potential limitation of the database is that races such as White or Black may include a population of mothers that identify as both Hispanic and as a member of that respective race.

## Texas Sex Education Policy

TX sexual education policy states that schools must teach abstinence as a preferred behavior and devote greater time to it. The policy lacks clear guidance regarding contraceptive use. Prior to 2020, TX sexual education was restricted to abstinence-only and medically accurate teaching is still not required. 25% of TX schools do not teach any form of sexual education and 58% teach abstinence only education.

## New Hampshire Sex Education Policy

NH grants schools greater discretion in sexual education, only requiring education on HIV/AIDS and STDs. Although sexual education is not required, 86.9% of secondary schools tried to increase knowledge and 96.5% taught the benefits of abstinence and importance of proper condom use.

## Results

- Teen pregnancy rate was higher for all racial groups across the board in TX compared to those in NH
- The Hispanic population had a teen pregnancy rate of 30.66 per thousand in TX and 12.12 per thousand in NH
- In both states, the Hispanic population had the highest teen birth rate
- Teen birth rate in TX is higher than the national average of 15.57
- Teen birth rate in NH is lower than the national average.

## Teen births per 1,000 in selected Texas and New Hampshire populations

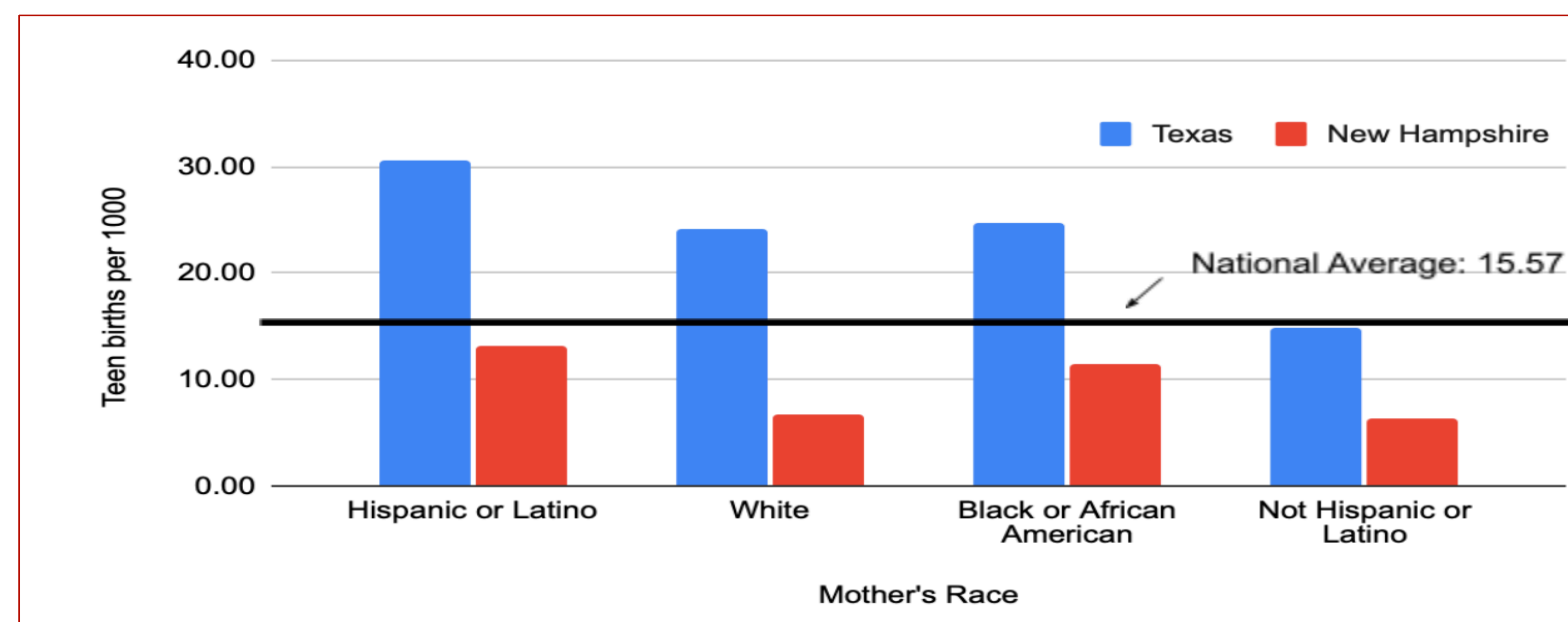


Figure 1. Data collected from females 15-19 years old

## Teen pregnancy rates in 2020 Texas selected populations

	Hispanic or Latino	White	Black or African American	Non-Hispanic or Latino
# of births from mothers <20 y/o	15,271	18,894	3,361	7,614
# of females <20 y/o	498,100	785,345	135,970	513,806
Teen births per 1,000 females	30.66	24.06	24.72	14.82

## Teen pregnancy rates in 2020 New Hampshire selected populations

	Hispanic or Latino	White	Black or African American	Non-Hispanic or Latino
# of births from mothers <20 y/o	31	249	12	243
# of females <20 y/o	2,362	37,083	1,045	38,686
Teen births per 1,000 females	13.12	6.71	11.48	6.28

## Conclusion

- Our literature review comparing teen birth rates in TX and NH found no significant differences in terms of legislation between the states
- The findings show a clear difference in teen pregnancy rates across the board
- One similarity is the prominent teen pregnancy rates for Hispanics in each state when compared to other races
- Findings imply that sexual education may not be the only factor shaping the disparity of teen birth rates in the Hispanic population.

## Future Directions

- Explore geographic distances to Mexico and pregnancy rates through a comparison of more border states
- Explore how Hispanic culture influences perceptions of teen pregnancy
- Analyze how other social and economic determinants of health play a role in regional Hispanic teen birth rate disparities



## References

<sup>1</sup>United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Division of Vital Statistics, Natality public-use data 2016-2020, on CDC WONDER Online Database, October 2021

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