

## PREGNANCY

### U.S. HEALTHY PEOPLE YEAR 2000 OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Reduce pregnancies among females aged 15-17 to no more than 50 per 1,000 adolescents
- 5.2 Reduce to no more than 30 percent the proportion of all pregnancies that are unintended
- 5.6 Increase to at least 90 percent the percentage of sexually active, unmarried, people aged 19 or younger who use contraception; especially combining methods effectively preventing pregnancy and providing barrier protection against disease

### OREGON BENCHMARKS YEAR 2000 GOALS

- 43 Reduce pregnancies among females aged 15-17 to no more than 15 per 1,000 female adolescents

The next three questions measure the use of contraception and occurrence of pregnancy among Oregon high school students.

Nationally, 66 percent of births among teenagers occur as a result of unintended pregnancies.<sup>6</sup> Teenage pregnancies place the mothers and their infants at lifetime risk for social and economic disadvantages.<sup>7</sup>

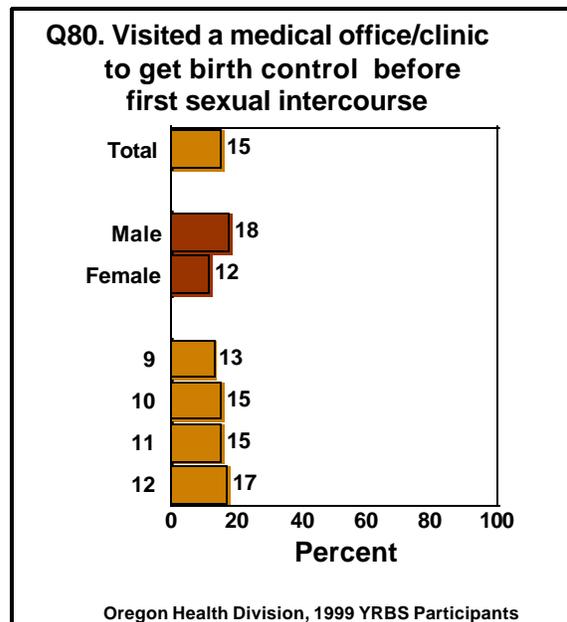
During 1998, 3,176 Oregon females age 10-17 were pregnant and 1,967 gave birth. The pregnancy rate among 10 to 17 year-old Oregonian girls was 17.2 per 1,000 (the birth rate was 10.7 and the abortion rate was 6.6 per 1,000).<sup>8</sup>

## WHAT OREGON STUDENTS REPORTED

**Q80. When did you first go to a medical office or clinic to get a method for preventing pregnancy? (Of YRBS participants who had ever had sexual intercourse)**

Fifteen percent of the 1999 YRBS participants who had ever had sexual intercourse had gone to a medical office or a clinic to get birth control prior to the experience.

Males were one and a half times more likely than females (18 vs. 12 percent) to have sought birth control at a clinic or medical office prior to first intercourse. Among students who had been sexually active, 23 percent more 12<sup>th</sup> graders than 9<sup>th</sup> graders had sought birth control prior to first intercourse.

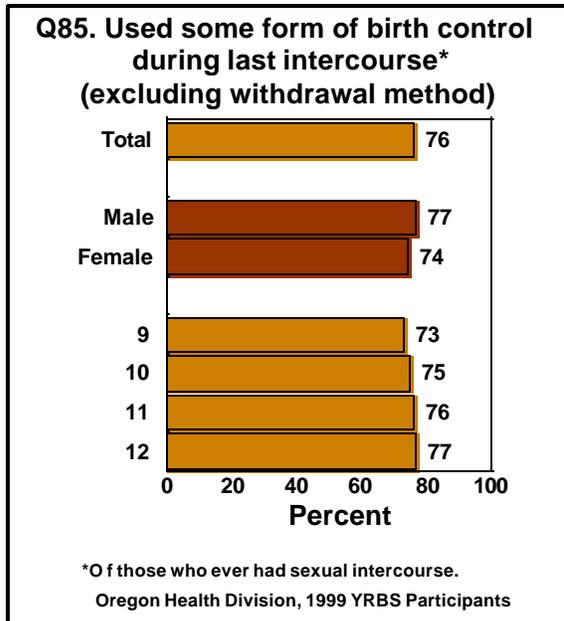


**Q85. The last time you had sexual intercourse, what one method did you or your partner use to prevent pregnancy? [Of YRBS participants who ever had sexual intercourse]**

Of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants who had ever had sex, 76 percent said they or their partner used some form of birth control (pills, condoms, or other methods, excluding withdrawal) during their last sexual intercourse.

Males were slightly more likely to report birth control use than females (77 vs. 74 percent). Use of birth control among those who had ever been sexually active rose slightly by grade.

Fifty-one percent of students who had ever had sex reported that they used condoms as their method to prevent pregnancy, the last time they had sex.



Currently sexually active teenagers reported use of a birth control method at last intercourse in higher proportion than those who have had sex but have been abstinent in the last three months (see table below). Among those who had sex in the last three months, the largest proportion of students named condoms as the main method used to prevent pregnancy at last intercourse. The pill was the second most commonly used primary birth control method.

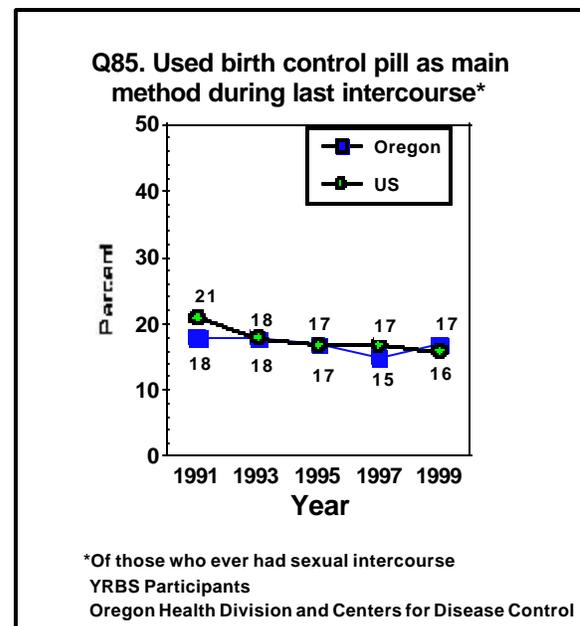
Sexual Activity Status	A Birth Control Method Used at Last Intercourse (excluding withdrawal method)				
	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999
Of all those who ever had sexual intercourse	70%	71%	73%	72%	76%
Only those who are currently abstinent	66%	65%	72%	69%	73%
Only those who are currently sexually active	72%	74%	74%	73%	77%

In 1997, the survey response options changed to include the birth control shot. The birth control shot is a synthetic version of the progesterone hormone, like the pill. However, the mode of delivery is different (injection versus oral), and the injection is every three months instead of a daily dose. Prior to 1997, the shot would have been included in the 'some other method' response. The table below shows birth control pill and injected shot use among high school students who had been sexually active in the three months prior to the survey. The results indicate that a majority of those who checked 'other' in prior years may have been using the shot. Some types of birth control shots have been available since the early 1990's.

Selected Birth Control Method	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999
pill	18%	18%	17%	15%	17%
shot	na	na	na	6%	6%
'some other method'	9%	5%	5%	3%	2%

#### Q85. DATA TRENDS

National reporting regarding birth control use focuses on the birth control pill. Therefore the comparison shown here includes only birth control pill use, even though condom use was more frequently reported than pill use, as the main method to prevent pregnancy. In 1999, Oregon had a slightly higher proportion of birth control pill use (among those teens who have ever had sexual intercourse) than the nation, although the percentage has stayed fairly close to national levels during the past five times the survey has been administered. The state trend does not appear to be following the slight national downward trend.

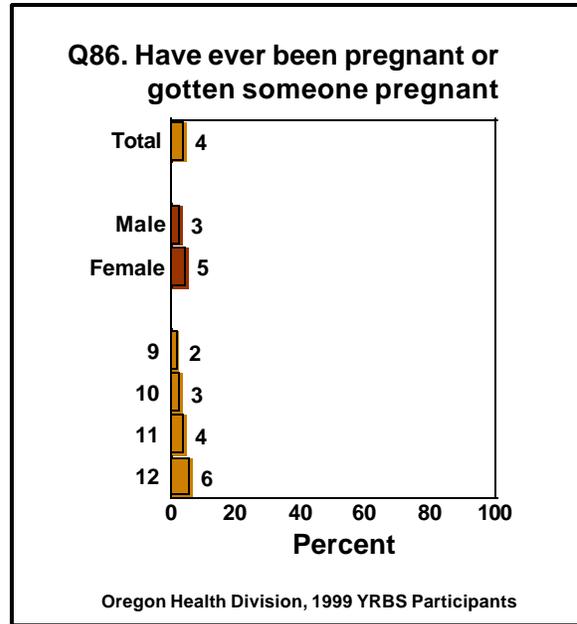


**Q86. How many times have you been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant?**

Four percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants reported having been pregnant or getting someone pregnant one or more times.

Almost twice as many females as males (5 vs. 3 percent) reported being involved in a pregnancy. Involvement in pregnancies tripled as grade levels increased.

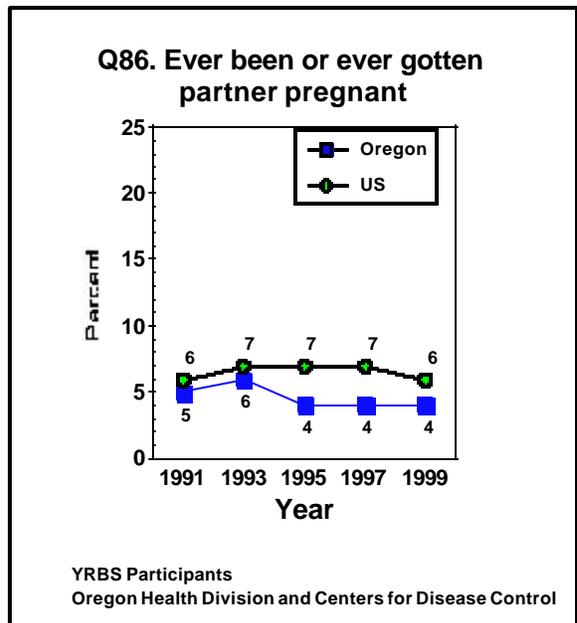
Of those who had ever been sexually active, 11 percent reported being pregnant or getting their partner pregnant.



**Q86. DATA TRENDS**

The proportion of Oregon YRBS participants who report being involved in a pregnancy has remained level and slightly below the national percentages reported in the national YRBS survey.

Among states reporting in the 1999 YRBS Surveillance Summary, the proportion of high school students involved in a pregnancy ranged from 2.8 percent in Nebraska to 8.4 percent in Mississippi.<sup>4</sup>



## WHAT OREGON STUDENTS WROTE

"I'm 16 with a child and life is hard, and I even have the baby's father with me and supporting us. Teenagers don't really understand or care about STDs/HIV/Pregnancy until it happens. Knowing that even if you tell them what can happen, they are still going to do it, scares me!"

"I have been lectured more than once on being sexually active, and I have a baby. But I'm still in school, and I'm doing Okay."

"I recently had a child, and now my life is hard with school and everything. You could try and encourage teens like me to stay in school to discuss preventing this in REALLY IN DEPTH DETAIL, so that you get their attention. Because I know I wish I would have used birth control, and I didn't even though I was aware of it."

"I have been pregnant and received an abortion. That was the hardest thing I've ever had to go through, and I think you need to educate more kids and remind them it can happen to you."

"I think teen sex should be stopped and that girls under the age 17 or 18 should have to have an abortion if she becomes pregnant so that they can finish school and save guys from child support."

"They should put condoms in the schools and have birth control available. The reason teens get pregnant is because it is hard to get birth control, and you have to get your parent's signature. Tell me, who wants their parent to know? Not me! I will take my chances."

"Schools should talk more openly about sex/pregnancy/STDs and talk about its consequences. Birth control and contraceptives should also be openly talked about."

"I think [my school's sex education program] is great. It really is good to go teach the kids so we won't have teen pregnancy."

"I do not believe [my school's sex education program] is a good program. It doesn't show kids what they can do to prevent STDs or a pregnancy. I feel we should give a class about sexual awareness, not abstinence."

"I think that there should be a place that you could go to get birth control and counseling that would be totally confidential; no questions asked."

"I think that if our school had a nurse or a Health Center that would help out a lot. We should have a place where kids may go to get condoms/birth control, etc if they are planning on sexual activity. That way there would be less teen pregnancies, abortions, and unwanted babies."