

# Teen Pregnancy

## CURRENT TRENDS

In 2003, there were 6,179 pregnancies to Oregon females under age 20. Of these, 54.5 percent had neither completed high school nor obtained a general equivalency diploma (GED). Of those who took their pregnancies to term, 80.2 percent were unmarried at the time of birth. [Table 4-10.] Because of differences in risk and severity of outcomes, this report bases its analysis on two separate age groups to aid in understanding teen pregnancy trends: females under age 18 and females age 18 to 19. These two groups are compared to each other and to women age 20 and older. The number of pregnancies is determined by adding the numbers of births and abortions reported for Oregon residents. Because some neighboring states (e.g., California) do not exchange abortion reports with Oregon, those who obtain an out-of-state abortion are not always included in this count. [See Appendix B].

## OREGON FEMALES UNDER 18

Efforts at preventing teen pregnancies are focused primarily on females under age 18. During 2003, at least 2,069 pregnancies occurred among Oregon females under age 18, 58 fewer than in 2002. [Table 4-2]. In 2003, the statewide pregnancy rate among women age 10 to 17 decreased 3.7 percent, from 10.9 in 2002 to 10.5 in 2003 (see Table 4-2). This continues an eight-year decline and indicates that teens are showing improvement in protecting themselves against becoming pregnant. Pregnancy rates for teens age 10 to 17 varied by county and seven counties had rates statistically significantly different than the state rate. [Table 4-5]. The 2003 rate for teens 15-17 was 26.7 percent below the Oregon Benchmark goal for the year 2010: 36 pregnancies per 1,000 females. [Figure 4-1].

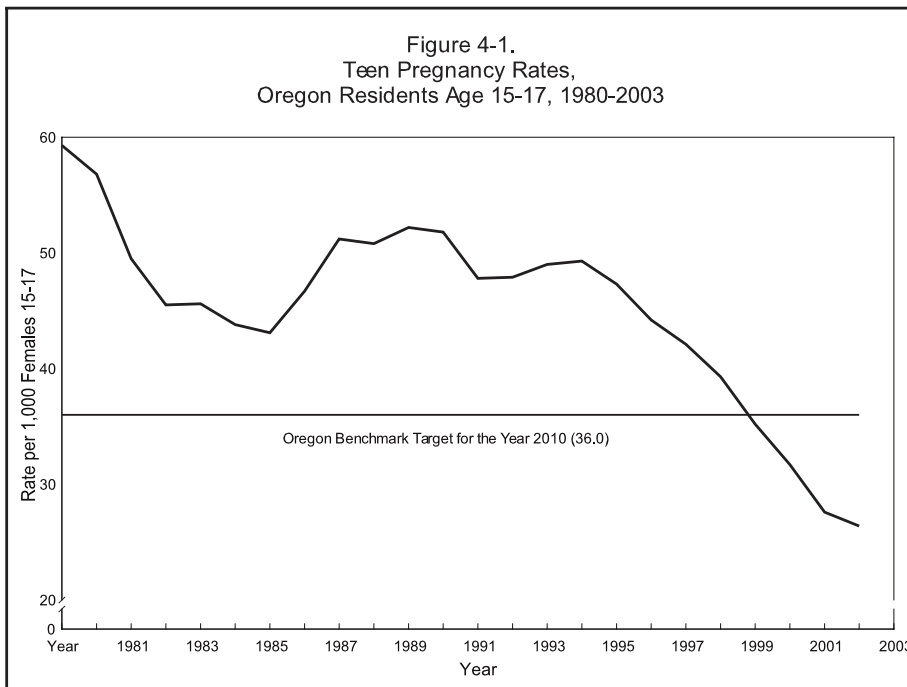
*Pregnancy rates for Oregonians age 10 to 17 declined 3.7 percent from 2002.*

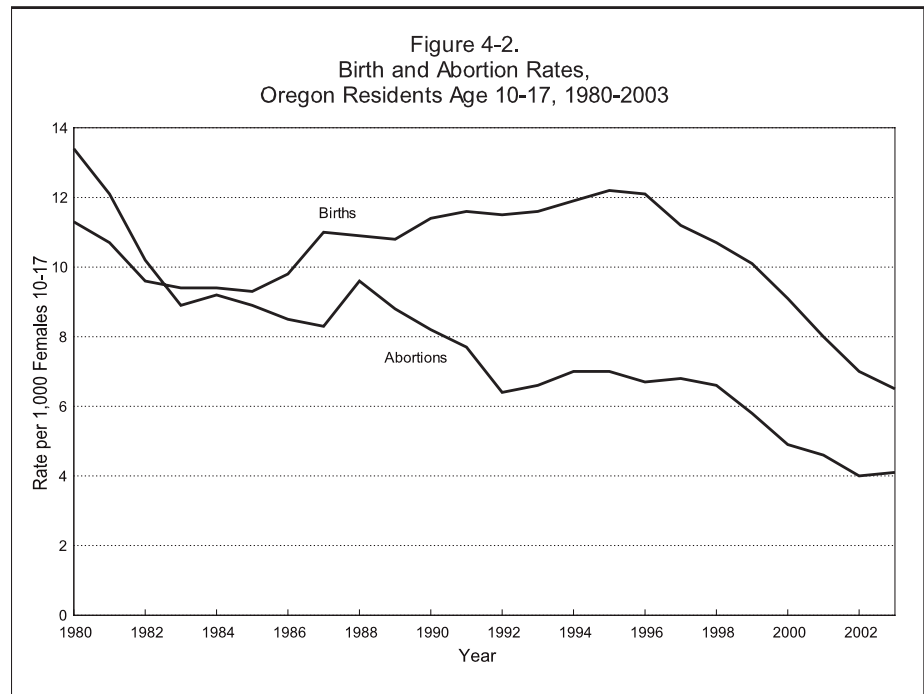
### OREGON BENCHMARKS Teen Pregnancy Rates 15-17

**YEAR 2010 GOAL: 36.0**

YEAR	RATE
1980	59.3
1981	56.8
1982	49.5
1983	45.5
1984	45.6
1985	43.8
1986	43.1
1987	46.7
1988	51.2
1989	50.8
1990	52.2
1991	51.8
1992	47.8
1993	47.9
1994	49.0
1995	49.3
1996	47.3
1997	44.2
1998	42.1
1999	39.3
2000	35.2
2001	31.7
2002	27.6
2003	26.4

Pregnancy rate per 1,000 Oregon resident females ages 15-17.





In 2003, the three youngest teens to become pregnant were age 12. There were 104 pregnancies to females under age 15.

### Births to Teens Under 18

There were 1,272 births to Oregon teens under age 18 in 2003. Sixty-two percent of the pregnancies among teens age 10 to 17 resulted in a live birth, compared to 46 percent in 1980. [Table 4-2]. It was the mother's first child in 91 percent of these births. [Table 4-9]. The birth rate for teens age 10 to 17 was 6.5, a 7.1 percent decrease from 2002. Forty-seven girls age 10 to 14 gave birth during 2003, four fewer than the previous year. [Table 4-2].

### Abortions to Teens Under 18

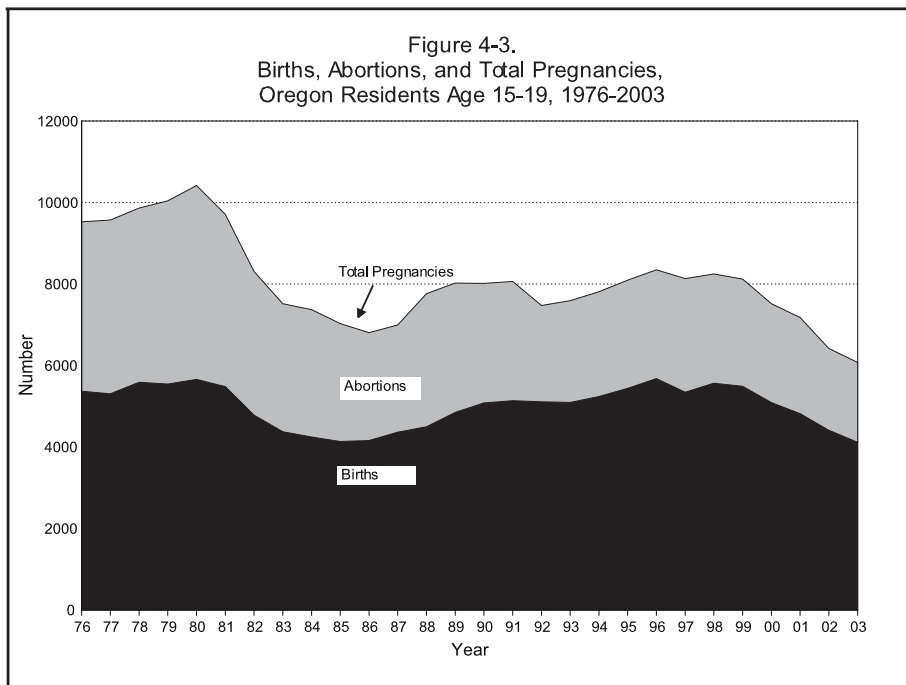
Abortion rates among teens increased slightly compared to 2002; for females age 10 to 17, the abortion rate increased by 2.5 percent. [Table 4-2; Figure 4-2]. There were 797 abortions to Oregonians age 10 to 17 reported during 2003, 28 more abortions than in 2002. Since the record high abortion rate recorded in 1980, the rate for females age 10 to 17 has decreased by more than 69 percent (from 13.4 to 4.1 per 1,000 females).

Figures 4-3 and 4-4 present the historical pattern of the result of pregnancies (birth and abortion). As Figure 4-4 indicates, teens are more likely to carry a pregnancy to term now than they were in 1980. Since 1980, the younger the teen, the more likely the pregnancy would be terminated. However, even among teens under 15, nearly half of the pregnancies resulted in a live birth in 2003. [Table 4-2; Figure 4-4].

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***Abortion rates for teens  
age 10 to 17 increased  
2.5 percent from 2002***

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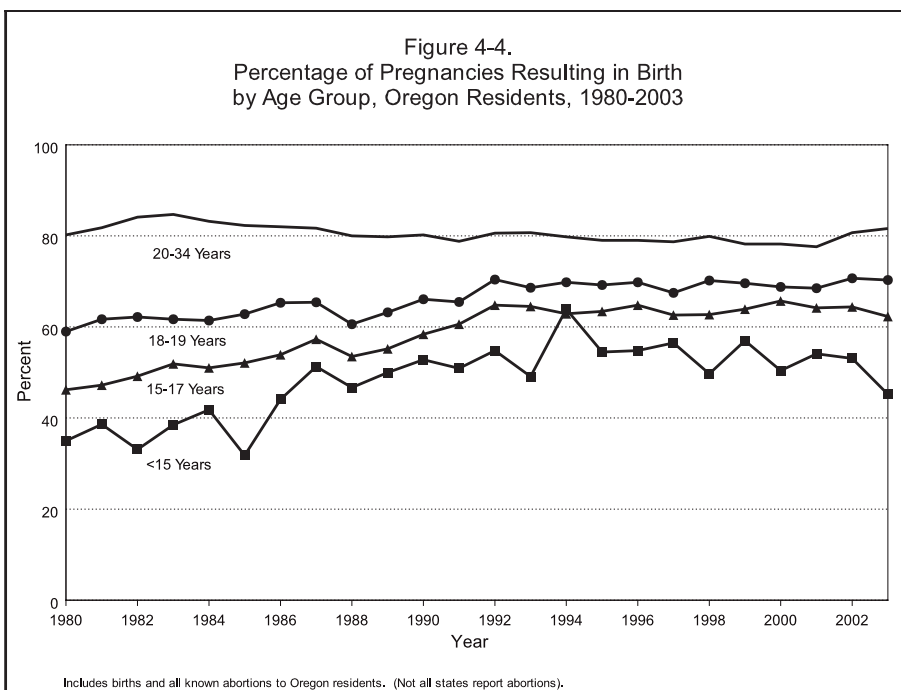


### OREGON FEMALES 18-19

In 2003, the pregnancy rate for Oregonians age 18 to 19 was 84.2 per 1,000 females, a 7.3 percent decrease from 2002. Comparisons with the 2002 figures show decreases in both the birth rate (7.8%) and the abortion rate (6.0%) among women age 18 to 19. [Table 4-1].

**Abortion rates for teens  
age 18 to 19 fell  
6.0 percent.**

Of the 4,110 pregnancies to women age 18 to 19, 70.3 percent (2,891) resulted in birth. [Figure 4-4]. It was the first child for 76.2 percent of the women giving birth.



### OREGON RATES VS. U.S. RATES

In Oregon, the birth rate among 15- to 19-year-olds (commonly used in historical and national comparisons) decreased 7.7 percent in 2003 (33.4 vs. 36.2 per 1,000 females in 2002). [Table 4-1]. The 2003 rate was 39.5 percent lower than the 1991 rate of 55.2 per 1,000, which is the highest rate recorded during the past quarter century. [Figure 4-5].

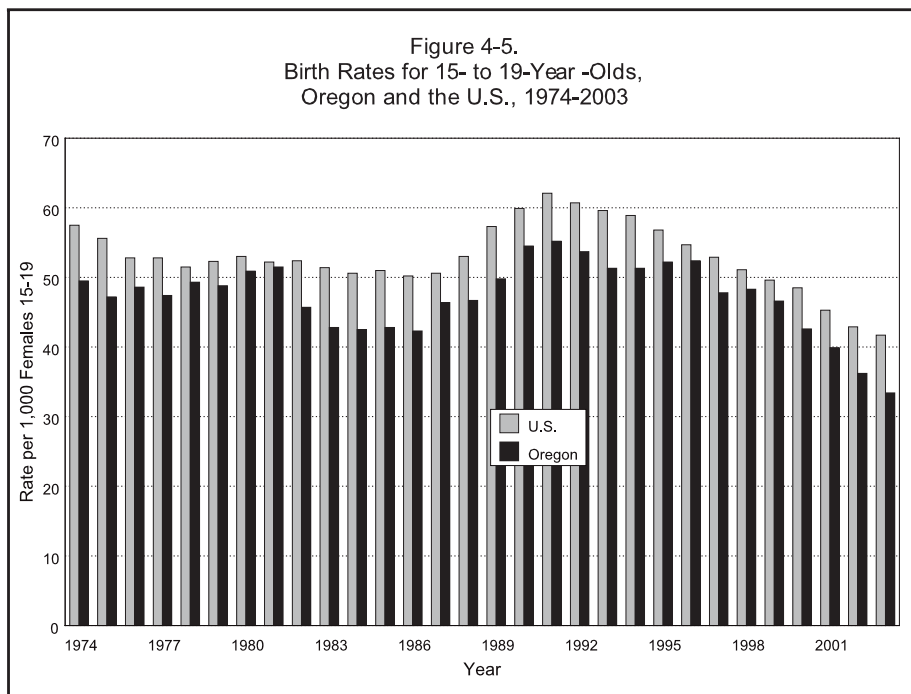
Oregon's 2003 birth rate for 15- to 19-year-old teens was 19.9 percent below the national rate (33.4 vs. 41.7 per 1,000 females, see sidebar). Oregon's lower teen birth rate may be attributed in large part to its demographic characteristics. Historically, African American and Hispanic populations have had higher teen birth rates and have been under-represented in the state. Oregon's diversity, however, is increasing. Between the 1990 and the 2000 census, the proportion of Hispanic residents doubled from 4 percent to 8 percent while the proportion of racial minorities was relatively unchanged.<sup>1</sup> During this time period, Oregon's teen pregnancy rate for 15- to 19-year-olds fell from 86.0 per 1,000 females in 1990 to 49.3 in 2003, a 42.7 percent decrease. [Table 4-1]. (For further discussion of Oregon's demographic characteristics and teen pregnancy rates, see the Methodology section of Appendix B).

Teen Birth Rates <sup>1</sup>			
Age	Oregon		U.S.
	2003	2002	2003
10-17	6.5	7.0	NA
10-14	0.4	0.4	0.6
15-17	16.5	17.7	22.4
18-19	59.2	64.2	70.8
15-19	33.4	36.2	41.7

1 All rates per 1,000 females.

### LEVEL OF INFANT HEALTH Low Birthweight

Whether reflecting premature delivery or small size for gestational age, the low birthweight (LBW) rate (less than 2,500 grams or 5.5 pounds) is the best single measure of health for newborn infants. Changes in the low birthweight rate of a group



might indicate aggregate changes in the mothers' personal behavior during pregnancy or other conditions that affect fetal health such as nutrition or access to prenatal care.

In 2003, the low birthweight rate for teen mothers age 15-19 was 62.7 per 1,000 births (Table 4-4), a 6.3% decrease from 2002. For 15- to 17-year-olds, the rate (72.7 per 1,000) increased by 2.1 percent. The teen rate for low birthweight remained higher than those for mothers age 20 and older (61.3 per 1,000). [Table 2-29]. The difference in the low birthweight rates between the two groups has narrowed recently. [Figure 4-6].

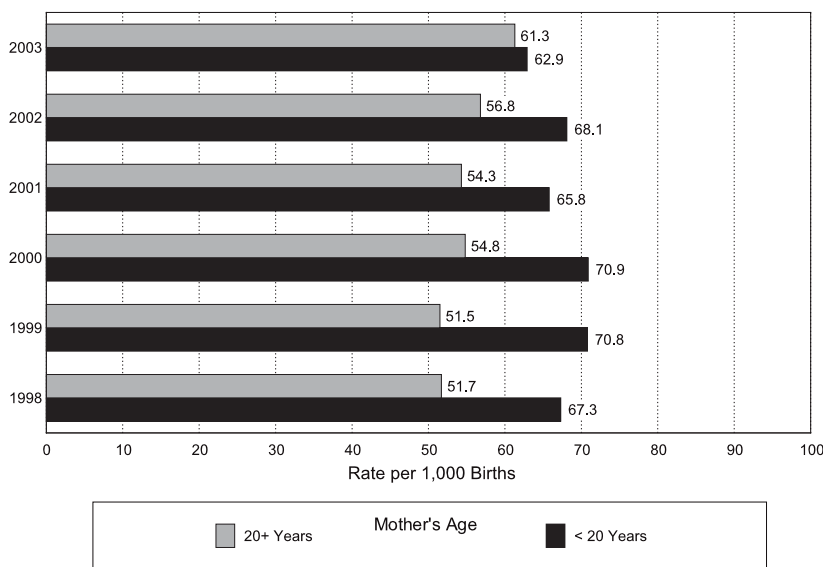
### Race and Ethnicity

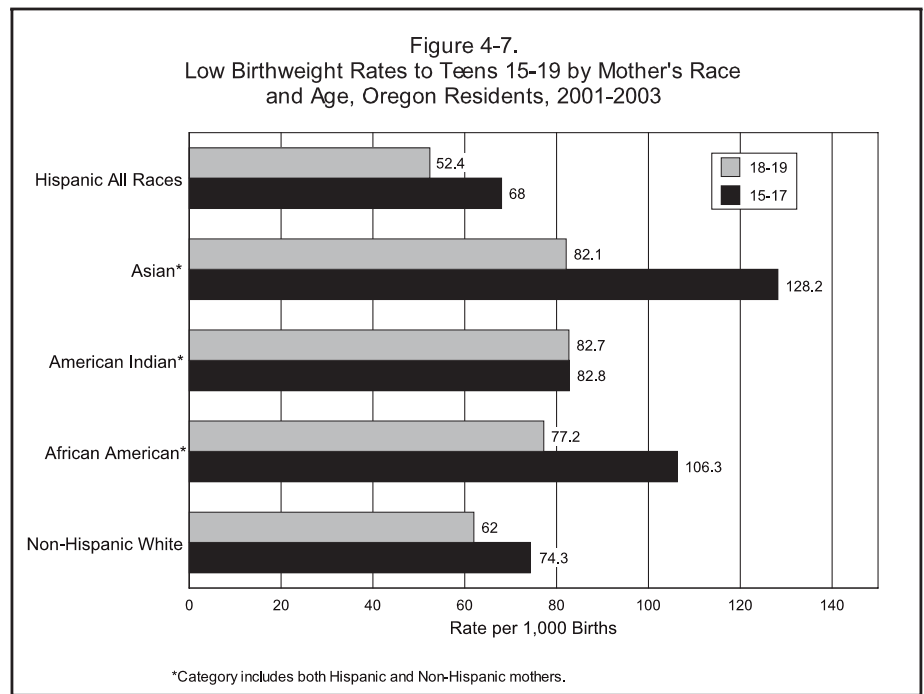
Demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, and marital status combine with age to influence the likelihood that a teenager will receive early prenatal care. In 2003, for example, 55.3 percent of unmarried Hispanics age 15-17 started prenatal care during their first trimester, compared to 75.0 percent of married non-Hispanic whites age 18-19. [Table 4-4].

Low birthweight rates to teen mothers by racial/ethnic grouping are displayed in the sidebar and in Table 4-4. Between 2002 and 2003, the rate of low birthweight for Hispanic teens age 15-17 decreased by 3.6 percent, while the rate for teens age 18-19 decreased 31.0 percent. Among non-Hispanic, non-white groups, the low birthweight rate for teens age 15-17 and 18-19 both decreased, by 15.9 and 54.2 percent respectively. (see sidebar).

Low Birthweight Rates <sup>1</sup> By Race/ Ethnicity and Age, 2003		
Race/ Ethnicity	Age	
	15-17	18-19
Rates		
Non-Hispanic White	74.8	66.6
Hispanic (All Races)	64.4	40.8
Non-Hispanic, Non-white	98.2	44.8
Percent Change, 2003 vs. 2002		
Non-Hispanic White	14.4	5.0
Hispanic (All Races)	-3.6	-31.0
Non-Hispanic, Non-white	-15.9	-54.2
1 All rates per 1,000 births.		

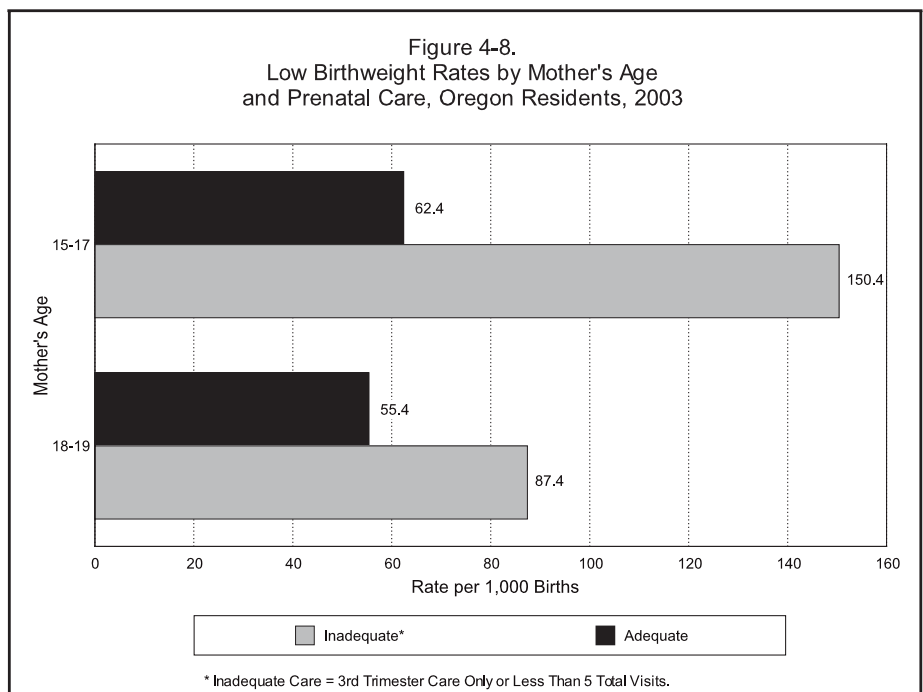
Figure 4-6.  
Rates of Low Birthweight Birth,  
Oregon Residents <20 and 20+, 1998-2003





### Prenatal Care

Table 4-3 shows the association between inadequate prenatal care and frequency of low birthweight infants among teens who gave birth in 2003. Among mothers age 15-19, those who received inadequate prenatal care were more likely to have low birthweight babies than those who had received adequate care (107.4 vs. 57.5 per 1,000 live births). Figure 4-8 shows low birthweight rates per 1,000 live births by adequate and inadequate prenatal care. For mothers 15-17, the rates were 62.4 vs. 150.4; for mothers 18-19, they were 55.4 vs. 87.4.



### Early Prenatal Care

Prenatal care should begin within the first three months of pregnancy to allow early detection of complications and to ensure the health of both the mother and the infant. An Oregon Benchmark goal is that by the year 2010, ninety percent of pregnant women, regardless of age, will begin medical care during the first trimester of pregnancy. Teens are farther from this goal than any other age group: in 2003, only 65.1 percent of teens giving birth started prenatal care during the first trimester compared to 82.7 percent for women age 20 and older (see sidebar). Only 61.4 percent of those under age 18 received early prenatal care, a slight increase from 61.0 percent in 2002. [Table 4-10].

<b>Oregon Benchmark: First Trimester Prenatal Care, 2003</b>	
<b>Year 2010 Goal: 90%</b>	
<b>All Women</b>	81.1
<b>All Teens</b>	65.1
10-17 Years	61.4
18-19 Years	66.8
20+ Years	82.7

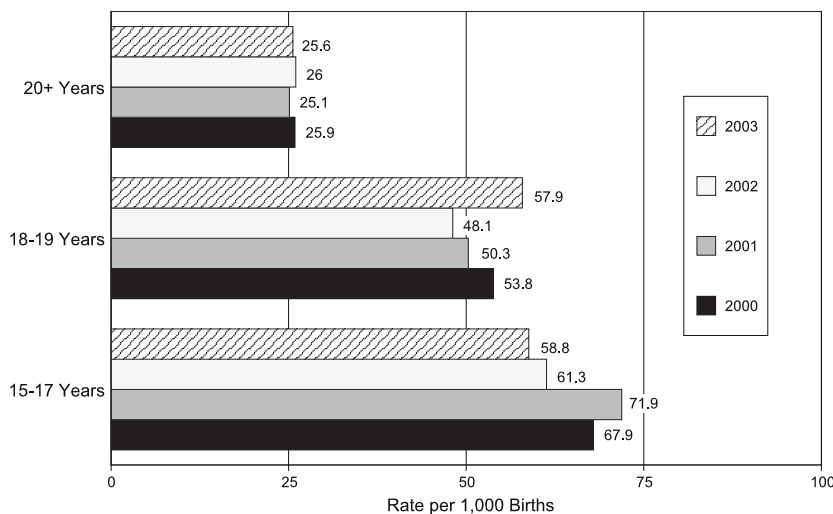
### Inadequate Prenatal Care

Inadequate prenatal care has been defined as care that begins after the second trimester of pregnancy, or that involves fewer than five prenatal visits. By this measure, 10.9 percent of 15- to 17- year-old teens and 9.9 percent of 18- to 19- year-old teens received inadequate prenatal care in 2003. This compares with 5.1 percent of women age 20 or older that received inadequate care. [Table 4-10]. The proportion of women under age 20 who received inadequate prenatal care increased by 9.6 percent in 2003, from 9.4 percent in 2002 to 10.3 percent.

### Late Care and No Prenatal Care

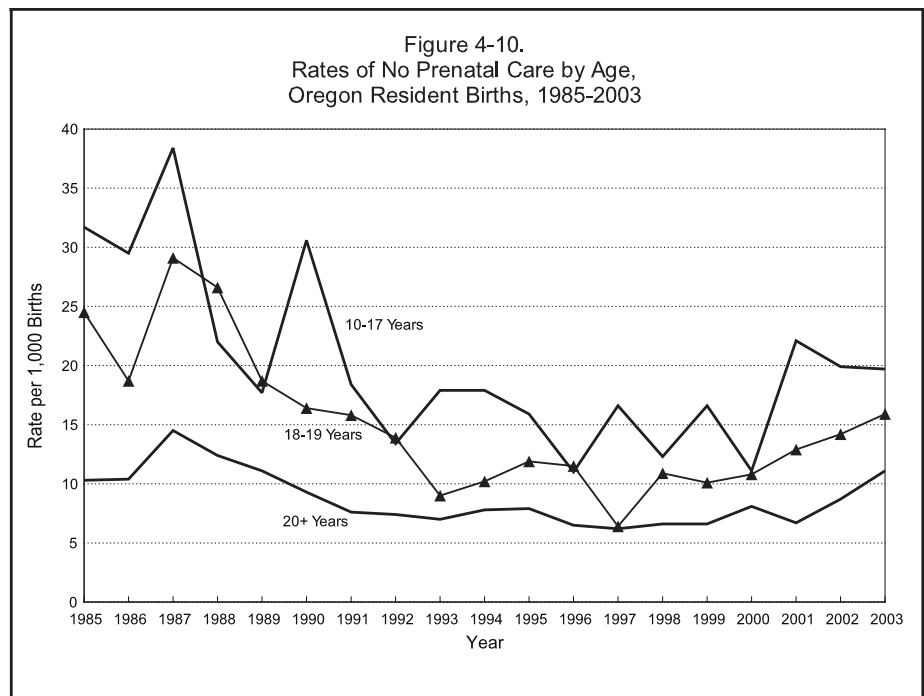
The proportion of teens age 15-17 who began prenatal care during the third trimester decreased 4.1 percent to 58.8 per 1,000 live births in 2003. [Figure 4-9]. Teens under age 18 are

Figure 4-9.  
Rates of Late Prenatal Care  
by Age Group, Oregon Residents, 2000-2003



Late Prenatal Care = Care began during third trimester. Calculations exclude births with unknown prenatal care.

<b>Low Birthweight Rates<sup>1</sup> By Mother's Age and Smoking Status, Oregon, 2003</b>		
	<b>&lt;20</b>	<b>20+</b>
Nonsmokers	59.9	56.6
Smokers	70.0	92.6
1 All Rates per 1,000 births.		



more likely than older women to go through pregnancy without a single visit to a medical provider; in 2003, the rate of no prenatal care among teens under age 18 was 19.7 per 1,000 live births, almost two times the rate of women age 20 and older (11.1 per 1,000 live births). [Figure 4-10.]

### Low Apgar Score

The Apgar score recorded by the birth attendant five minutes after birth provides another measure of infant health at the time of delivery. A score of less than seven is considered low and indicates that an infant is at greater than normal risk for morbidity and mortality. The 2003 low Apgar rate for newborns of mothers age 10-19 was 21.7 per 1,000 births (Table 4-9), a 17.9 percent increase from 2002 (18.4 per 1,000). The low Apgar rate for infants born to women under age 20 was 23.3 percent higher than the rate for infants born to women 20 years or older (17.6).

### SUBSTANCE USE DURING PREGNANCY

Estimates of tobacco and alcohol use during pregnancy are presumed to be minimum counts due to under-reporting on birth certificates. The legal age to purchase or possess alcohol in Oregon is 21 years old. The legal age to purchase tobacco products is age 18.

### Tobacco

Teens age 15 to 19 were twice as likely to report smoking during pregnancy than were women age 20 and over (22.3% vs. 11.0%). [Table 4-9]. Women who smoked during pregnancy



were more likely to have low birthweight babies than non-smokers. Mothers age 20 or older show the greatest difference between low birthweight rates by tobacco use (92.6 vs. 56.6 per 1,000 live births). However, this is in part because the low birthweight rate for teen mothers is already higher than that of women age 20 and older (see sidebar). Tobacco use remains one of the most important preventable causes of low birthweight infants for teen mothers.

**Alcohol**

Reported alcohol use by teens age 15 to 19 during pregnancy increased from 11.4 per 1,000 live births in 2002 to 16.4 in 2003, an increase of 43.9 percent. Teens age 15 to 19 were more likely to report the use of alcohol during pregnancy than were women age 20 and over (16.4 vs. 15.6 per 1,000 births). [Table 4-9]. Alcohol use for women age 20 and over increased 15.6 percent, from 13.5 per 1,000 live births in 2002 to 15.6 in 2003.

**SOURCE OF PAYMENT**

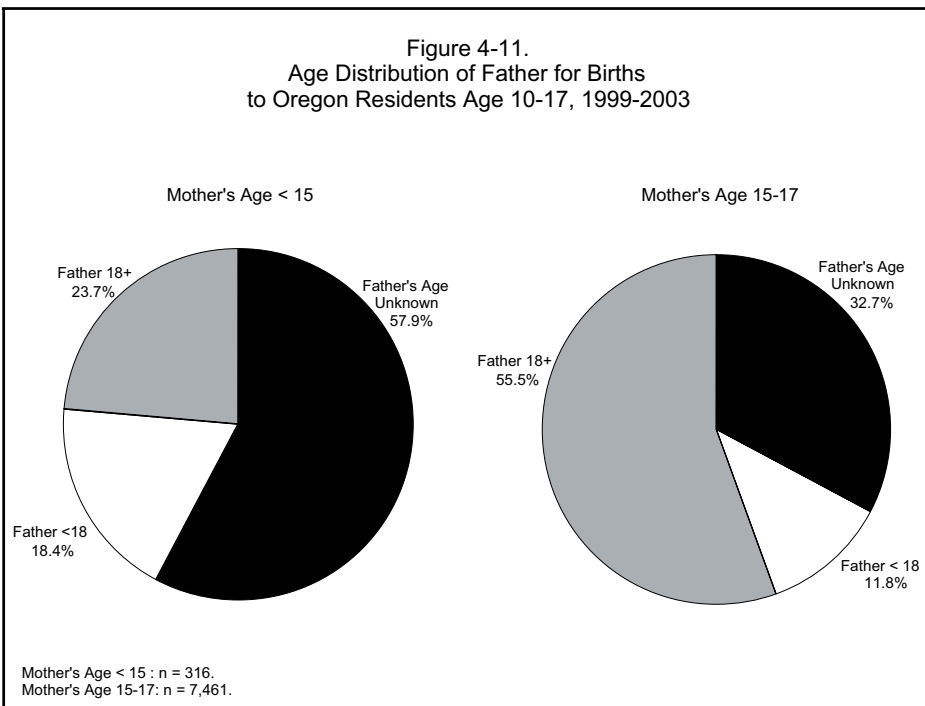
Costs associated with births to teen mothers were more than twice as likely to be paid with public funds as births to older women. In 2003, Medicaid paid for 68.9 percent of births to teens (under age 20) and 34.3 percent of births to women age 20 and older where payor source was reported. [Table 4-10].

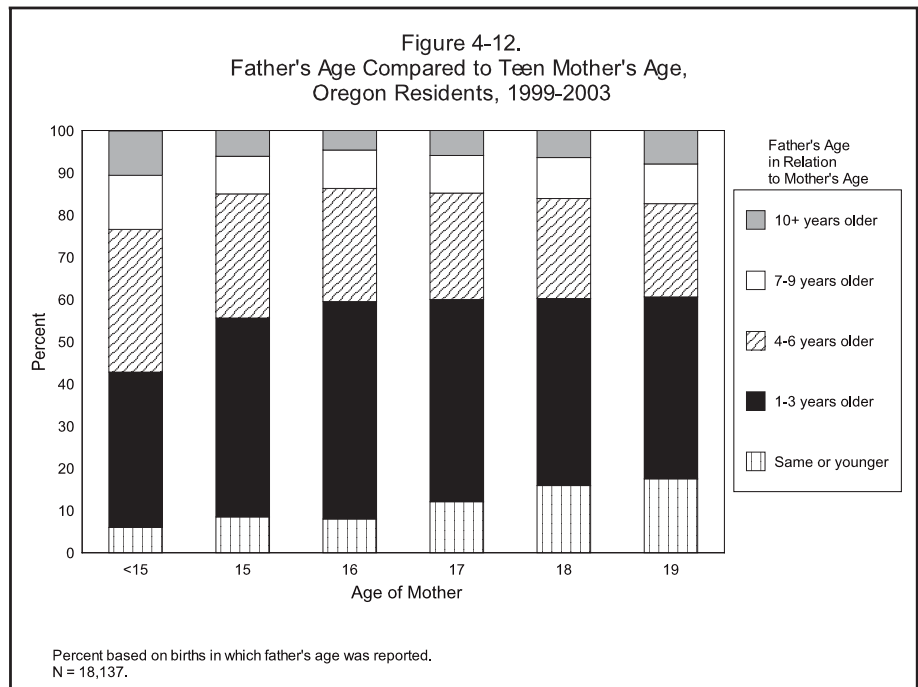
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**Medicaid paid for  
68.9 percent of  
births to teens.**

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Figure 4-11.  
Age Distribution of Father for Births  
to Oregon Residents Age 10-17, 1999-2003





### AGE OF FATHER

During 1999-2003, 33.8 percent of birth records for babies born to teens age 10 to 17 didn't indicate father's age, because the father wasn't identified on the certificate. [Figure 4-11; Table 4-13]. Over half (57.9%) of the birth records where mother was under age 15 did not list father's age. Where father's age was reported for teen mothers under age 15, 43.6 percent were younger than age 18 and 56.4 percent were age 18 or older. Birth records for mothers age 15 to 17 report father's age for 67.3 percent of the births. Where father's age was reported, 17.6 percent of fathers were under age 18 and 82.4 percent were age 18 or older.

For all teens, including the youngest mothers (age less than 15 years), the father was more than six years older than