

Family Planning and Birth Spacing

DESCRIPTION

Family planning helps people achieve desired birth spacing and family size, and contributes to improved health outcomes for infants, children, women and families. In 2015, publicly funded family planning services helped prevent 1.9 million unintended pregnancies in the U.S., including 440,000 teen pregnancies. In 2010, every public dollar spent on family planning saved federal and state governments \$7.09.¹

Unintended pregnancies are reported by women as being mistimed or unwanted. Each year, 45 percent of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended. Negative outcomes associated with unintended pregnancy can include: delays in starting prenatal care; reduced likelihood of breastfeeding; increased risk of maternal depression; and increased risk of physical violence during pregnancy.² Eighteen months or more is the ideal interval for birth spacing. Research suggests that beginning a pregnancy within six months of a live birth is associated with an increased risk of premature birth; low birth weight; congenital disorders and more.¹ Recent research suggests that a pregnancy within less than two years of a live birth may be associated with an increased risk of autism in second-born children. The risk is highest for pregnancies spaced less than 12 months apart.³ “Rapid repeat pregnancy” or “repeat teen birth” is defined as having two or more pregnancies resulting in a live birth before age 20. Repeat teen childbearing further constrains the mother’s education and employment possibilities. Rates of preterm and low birth weight are higher in teens with a repeat birth, compared with first births.⁴

HOW ARE WE DOING

In 2016, there were 9,399 pregnancies (a rate of 81.6 for every 1,000 population) and 7,731 births among Ramsey County women. Ramsey County had the highest pregnancy rate among all counties in Minnesota. Also in 2016, 3.3 percent of Ramsey County women with children had second births within a year. This means they became pregnant within three months of childbirth. For Ramsey County teens age 15-19, 3.3 percent had a second birth within a year of a previous birth.⁵

BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020: The current objective measures spacing between a birth and the next pregnancy, not between two consecutive births.²

DISPARITIES

During 2011-2015, 2.4 percent of Ramsey County women with less than four years of high school had a repeat birth within a year (3.3 percent for African-American mothers; 2.5 percent for Asian mothers; 1.9 percent for white mothers; 1.5 percent for Hispanic mothers).

RISK FACTORS

Nationally, the rates of unintended pregnancy are highest among the following groups: women ages 18 to 24; women who are cohabitating, living in poverty and with less than a high school diploma; and black or Hispanic women.⁶ Traditional estimates understate the risk of teen pregnancy among adolescents because they typically include all women,

Information to note

- In 2016, 3.3% of Ramsey County women delivered a second child within a year of a previous birth, the highest rate in the metro area.

¹ Guttmacher Institute. <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/unintended-pregnancy-united-states>. Accessed October 27, 2017.

² Healthy People 2020. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/family-planning/>. Accessed October 27, 2017.

³ Mayo Clinic. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/getting-pregnant/in-depth/family-planning/art-20044072>. Retrieved October 27, 2017.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6213a4.htm> Accessed October 27, 2017.

⁵ Minnesota County Health Tables. Minnesota Department of Health Website. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/countytables/profiles2017/index.html>. Accessed February 14, 2018.

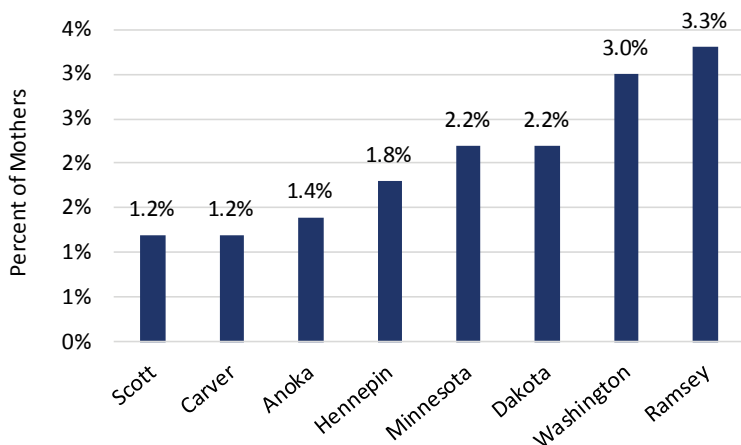
⁶ Healthy People 2020. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/family-planning/>. Accessed October 27, 2017.

regardless of whether they are sexually active. When rates are recalculated including only those sexually active, women 15–19 have the highest unintended pregnancy rate of any age group.⁷

WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

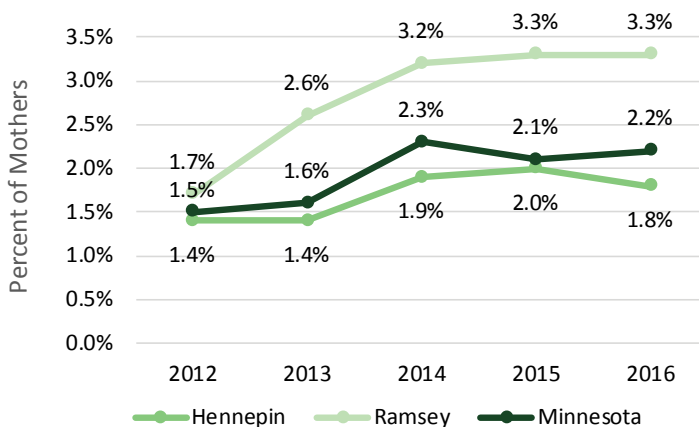
Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health offers numerous medically accepted forms of birth control through the Clinic 555 program, offered on a sliding fee based on family size and income. Public Health Nurses working in the Family Health division in Public Health provide education and resource to encourage healthy birth spacing to adult clients as well as to teen clients seen through the MFIP program. Additionally, Ramsey County provides funding to five Ramsey County community clinics to help off-set the cost of services, including family planning services, provided to uninsured and underinsured clients.

Births Within One Year of a Previous Birth, 2016



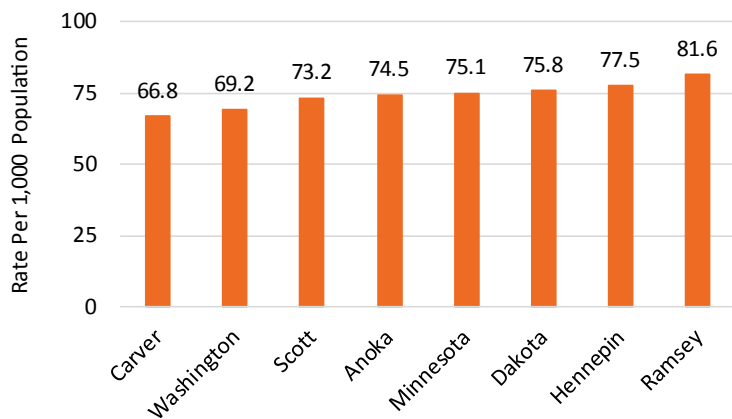
Source: Minnesota Department of Health Web site.⁸

Live Births within One Year Over Time



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Center for Health Statistics, County Health Tables

Pregnancy Rate, 2016



Source: Minnesota Department of Health Website.⁹

⁷ Guttmacher Institute. <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/unintended-pregnancy-united-states>. Accessed October 27, 2017.

⁸ 2017 Minnesota County Health Tables. Minnesota Department of Health Web site. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/countytables/profiles2017/index.html>. Accessed February 7, 2018.

⁹ Minnesota County Health Tables. Minnesota Department of Health Website. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/countytables/profiles2017/index.html>. Accessed February 14, 2018.