

Teen Pregnancy Rates (source: sexualityandu.ca)

Teen pregnancy rates are a key sexual health indicator for Canadian youth.

It is important not to generalize about the potentially negative outcomes of teenage pregnancy. Not all instances of teenage child bearing are detrimental for either the mother or child (Bissell, 2000). Nevertheless, most teen pregnancies are unintended.

Teen pregnancy rates are a significant marker of female adolescent sexual and reproductive health not only because an unintended pregnancy can have implications for a young woman's health and well-being, but also because trends in teen pregnancy can be a fairly direct indicator of young women's opportunities and capacity to control their sexual and reproductive health.

On this latter account, recent trends in the Canadian teen pregnancy rate are uniformly positive.

If the most recent 10-year trends in teen pregnancy rates in Canada for which data is available (i.e., 1992-2002) are examined, **a persistent and steady decline in teen pregnancy rates for both younger (15-17) and older (18-19) teens is evident.**

As indicated in the Table below, for Canadian teens aged 15-19, for the years 1992 to 2002, the teen pregnancy rate has fallen every year since 1994.

	15-17	18-19	Total/15-19
1992	30.2	74.9	48.1
1993	29.9	74.4	47.8
1994	30.2	76.2	48.8
1995	28.2	75.4	47.1
1996	27.0	72.7	45.2
1997	25.5	68.9	42.7
1998	24.8	68.5	42.4
1999	22.6	65.9	40.1
2000	21.4	62.5	38.0
2001	20.1	59.8	36.1
2002	18.1	57.1	33.9

Note: Statistics Canada includes live births, induced abortions, and miscarriages in the calculation of teenage pregnancy statistics.

Sources: Dryburgh, H. (2002). Teenage pregnancy. *Health Reports*, 12 (1), 9-18; Statistics Canada . (2005). *Health Indicators*, 2005, 2.