



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
 Administration for Children and Families  
 Office of Family Assistance



National  
 Responsible  
 Fatherhood Clearinghouse

# NRFC Quick Statistics 2017

## Fathers and Fertility

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# Fathers and Fertility<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1. Father's Age at First Child's Birth by Educational Attainment, 2013**

Education	Number of Fathers (1000s)	Average Age	Less Than 20 Years	20-24 Years	25-29 Years	30-44 Years
<b>All*</b>	26,661	25.5	13.8%	32.4%	30.7%	23.1%
<b>No High School Diploma or GED</b>	4,559	22.9	23.1%	46.8%	22.1%	8.0%
<b>High School Diploma or GED</b>	8,158	24.1	18.0%	41.8%	26.6%	13.6%
<b>Some College, No Bachelor's Degree</b>	6,834	25.6	10.1%	32.9%	37.5%	19.5%
<b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	6,570	29.7	1.1%	10.8%	37.0%	51.1%

\*Education statistics are limited to men aged 22-44, the "All" category includes men aged 15-21 as well.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- The average age of fathers at the birth of their first child is significantly higher for fathers with higher education levels than with lower education levels.
- In 2013, fathers with no high school diploma or GED had their first child, on average, 6.8 years earlier than fathers with a bachelor's degree or higher.  
Fathers with a high school diploma/GED or less were significantly more likely than fathers who had some college or a bachelor's degree or more to have had their first child before age 20.
- In 2013, about half (46.8 percent) of fathers with no high school diploma or GED had their first child between 20 and 24 years of age while about half (51.1 percent) of those with a bachelor's degree or higher had their first child between 30 and 44 years of age.

<sup>1</sup> Significant ( $p < .05$ ) findings are discussed in the bulleted text below each table.

**Table 2. Father's Age at First Child's Birth by Race/Ethnicity, 2013**

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Fathers (1000s)	Average Age	Less Than 20 Years	20-24 Years	25-29 Years	30-44 Years
<b>All*</b>	26,661	25.5	13.8%	32.4%	30.7%	23.1%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	6,432	24.3	16.4%	41.1%	26.7%	15.7%
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	14,506	26.3	10.1%	28.6%	34.5%	26.7%
<b>Non-Hispanic Black</b>	3,396	23.8	22.8%	37.6%	25.0%	14.6%

\*Includes men of other or multiple races and origin groups, not shown separately.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, Hispanic<sup>2</sup> and non-Hispanic black fathers were significantly younger at their first child's birth than non-Hispanic white fathers. On average, Hispanic fathers reported having their first child two years earlier than non-Hispanic white fathers and non-Hispanic black fathers reported having their first child's birth two and a half years earlier than non-Hispanic white fathers.
- Nearly one in four non-Hispanic black fathers had their first child as a teenager (22.8 percent), a significantly higher proportion than the one in six (16.4 percent) of Hispanic fathers and one in ten (10.1 percent) of non-Hispanic white fathers.
- Hispanic fathers and non-Hispanic black fathers most commonly had their first child between the ages of 20 and 24 (41.1 and 37.6 percent, respectively), while non-Hispanic white fathers most commonly had their first child between the ages of 25 and 29 (34.5 percent).

<sup>2</sup> "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably in this brief.

**Table 3. Birth Rates by Age of Father, 1980-2015**

Age of Father	Year							
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
<b>15-54 Years<sup>1</sup></b>	57.0	55.6	58.4	51.0	50.0	49.3	46.8	46.1
<b>15-19 Years<sup>2</sup></b>	18.8	18.0	23.5	23.9	19.8	16.4	16.1	10.4
<b>20-24 Years</b>	92.0	81.2	88.0	83.9	82.1	72.7	64.6	51.6
<b>25-29 Years</b>	123.1	112.3	116.4	103.2	106.5	109.4	97.1	87.4
<b>30-34 Years</b>	91.0	91.1	97.8	90.7	99.5	105.9	103.6	103.8
<b>35-39 Years</b>	42.8	47.3	53.0	50.4	56.3	63.4	63.4	69.1
<b>40-44 Years</b>	17.1	18.1	21.0	20.3	22.2	24.5	25.9	28.6
<b>45-49 Years</b>	6.1	6.6	7.5	7.0	7.3	7.9	8.2	9.6
<b>50-54 Years</b>	2.2	2.5	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.9
<b>55 Years and Over</b>	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4

<sup>1</sup>Rates computed by relating total births, regardless of age of father, to men aged 15-54 years.

<sup>2</sup>Rates computed by relating total births of fathers under 20 years of age to men aged 15-19 years.

Source: Table 17. Birth rates, by age and race of father: United States, 1980–2015-Con. in Martin JA, Hamilton BE, Osterman MJ, et al. Births: Final Data for 2015. National Vital Statistics Reports; Vol 66 No. 1. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2017.

Note: Rates are live births per 1,000 men in specified group.

- Since 1990, the birth rate for men aged 15-54 years has been declining. The observed birth rate in 2015 was 46.1 live births per 1,000 men, about a 12 percent decrease from the 1990 birth rate of 58.4 live births per 1,000 men.
- Since 1990, birth rates for men aged 30-54 years have, overall, been increasing while birth rates for men aged 15-29 years have been declining.
- Between 1980 and 2005 the highest birth rate was for men aged 25-29 years; since 2010 the highest birth rate has been for men aged 30-34 years.
- The birth rate for teenage men aged 15-19 was nearly 24 live births per 1,000 men in 1995. By 2015, their birth rate was less than half that at 10.4 live births per 1,000 men.

**Table 4. Total Births Occurring Between 2006 and 2015 by Father's Education Level**

Education Level	Number of Births (1000s)	% Total
<b>Total*</b>	13,965	
<b>No High School Diploma or GED</b>	2,363	16.9%
<b>High School Diploma or GED</b>	4,145	29.7%
<b>Some College, No Bachelor's Degree</b>	3,553	25.4%
<b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	3,904	28.0%

\*Education information is limited to men aged 20-44, "Total" includes men aged 15-19 as well.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- Most births that occurred between 2006 and 2015 were to fathers with a high school diploma/GED or higher (83.1 percent).
- Fathers with no high school diploma/GED had the lowest reported birth rate (16.9 percent).

**Table 5. Total Births Occurring Between 2006 and 2015 by Father's Income**

Percent of Poverty Level	Number of Births (1000s)	% Total
<b>Total*</b>	13,965	
<b>0-149 Percent</b>	4,402	31.5%
<b>150-299 Percent</b>	4,175	29.9%
<b>300 Percent or Higher</b>	5,388	38.6%

\*Income information is limited to men aged 20-44, "Total" includes men aged 15-19 as well.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- Between 2006 and 2015, the majority of births (61 percent) were to fathers whose income was less than 300 percent of the poverty level, which equated to an income of less than \$72,750 for a family of four in 2015.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2015-Federal-Poverty-Guidelines.pdf>

**Table 6. Total Births Occurring Between 2006 and 2015 by Father's Marital or Cohabiting Status**

Marital or Cohabiting Status	Number of Births (1000s)	% Total
<b>Total</b>	14,149	
<b>Married to Child's Mother</b>	7,689	54.3%
<b>Cohabiting with Child's Mother</b>	4,112	29.1%
<b>Living Alone or Apart from Mother of Child</b>	2,348	16.6%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- Just over half (54.3 percent) of births occurring between 2006 and 2015 were to fathers who were married to the mother of their child.
- If the child was born outside of marriage, fathers were more likely to be cohabiting with the child's mother (29.1 percent) than living apart from her (16.6 percent).

**Table 7. Prevalence of Multiple-Partner Fertility by Age, 2013**

Age	% of Men Who Have Experienced Multiple Partner Fertility
<b>15-25 Years</b>	6.8%
<b>26-30 Years</b>	9.9%
<b>31-35 Years</b>	15.1%
<b>36-40 Years</b>	17.0%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Limited to men aged 15-40 at time of interview. Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-40 in 2013.

- The proportion of men who had fathered children with more than one woman increased significantly with age.
- In 2013, almost 7 percent of men had experienced multiple-partner fertility by age 25. This percentage increased significantly to 17 percent by the age of 40.

**Table 8. Prevalence of Multiple-Partner Fertility by Marital Status, 2013**

Marital Status at Time of Births	% of Men Who Have Experienced Multiple Partner Fertility
<b>Nonmarital Only</b>	17.8%
<b>Marital Only</b>	2.4%
<b>Nonmarital First Birth and Marital Subsequent Birth(s)</b>	41.6%
<b>Marital First Birth and Nonmarital Subsequent Birth(s)</b>	66.9%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, men who had nonmarital only births were significantly more likely to have fathered children with more than one woman (17.8 percent) than men who had marital only births (2.4%).
- Men who had nonmarital first births and marital subsequent births or marital first births and nonmarital subsequent births were significantly more likely to have fathered children with more than one woman (41.6% and 66.9%, respectively) than men who had nonmarital or marital only births.

**Table 9. Prevalence of Multiple-Partner Fertility by Race/Ethnicity, 2013**

Race/Ethnicity	% of Men Who Have Experienced Multiple Partner Fertility
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	11.8%
<b>Non-Hispanic Black</b>	22.4%
<b>Hispanic</b>	14.7%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, more than one in five non-Hispanic black men had experienced multiple partner fertility (22.4 percent). This rate is significantly higher than those of their Hispanic and non-Hispanic white counterparts (14.7 percent and 11.8 percent, respectively).

**Table 10. Number of Children Fathered by Men's Age, 2013**

Current Age	Total Men (1000s)	Number of Children Fathered			
		Zero	One	Two	Three or More
<b>All (Ages 15-44)</b>	60,875	56.2%	15.6%	16.2%	12.0%
<b>15-19 Years</b>	9,997	98.1%	1.8%	0.1%	0.0%
<b>20-24 Years</b>	10,598	86.9%	9.5%	2.6%	1.0%
<b>25-29 Years</b>	10,472	62.8%	21.1%	10.8%	5.3%
<b>30-34 Years</b>	10,290	41.4%	21.0%	22.0%	15.6%
<b>35-39 Years</b>	9,462	25.2%	20.1%	32.7%	22.1%
<b>40-44 Years</b>	10,055	19.6%	20.2%	30.9%	29.3%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, nearly 44 percent of all men aged 15-44 years had fathered at least one child. Only 1.9 percent of men aged 15-19 years had fathered a child. By age 44, four out of five men (80.4 percent) had fathered at least one child.
- In 2013, over 15 percent of men had fathered one child, 16 percent of men had fathered two children, and 12 percent had fathered 3 or more children.
- Older men, those in the 40-44 age range, were significantly more likely to have fathered three or more children (29.3 percent) than all other age groups.

**Table 11. Number of Children Fathered by Education Level, 2013**

Education Level	Total Men (1000s)	Number of Children Fathered			
		Zero	One	Two	Three or More
<b>All*</b>	60,875	56.2%	15.6%	16.2%	12.0%
<b>No High School Diploma or GED</b>	6,130	25.6%	21.1%	26.4%	26.8%
<b>High School Diploma or GED</b>	13,205	38.2%	23.2%	21.0%	17.6%
<b>Some College, No Bachelor's Degree</b>	13,822	50.6%	18.6%	18.2%	12.6%
<b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	13,448	51.2%	15.4%	21.8%	11.6%

\*Education statistics are limited to men aged 22-44, the "All" category includes men aged 15-21 as well.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, men with higher levels of education (some college or more) were significantly less likely to have fathered a child than men with lower levels of education (high school diploma, GED, or less).
- Only 11.6 percent of men with a bachelor's degree or higher had fathered three or more children, significantly less than the 26.8 percent of men with no high school diploma or GED.

**Table 12. Number of Children Fathered by Marital or Cohabiting Status, 2013**

Marital or Cohabiting Status	Total Men (1000s)	Number of Children Fathered			
		Zero	One	Two	Three or More
<b>All</b>	60,875	56.2%	15.6%	16.2%	12.0%
<b>Currently Married</b>	22,041	20.0%	22.4%	33.2%	24.5%
<b>Currently Cohabiting</b>	8,078	45.5%	25.5%	15.9%	13.1%
<b>Never Married, Not Cohabiting</b>	27,648	91.2%	6.2%	1.6%	1.0%
<b>Formerly Married, Not Cohabiting</b>	3,107	29.9%	25.1%	26.9%	18.0%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, 80 percent of currently married men and 70 percent of formerly married (and not cohabiting) men had fathered one or more children.
- Men who were both never married and non-cohabiting were significantly less likely to have fathered a child (91.2 percent) than all other groups.
- Over one half of currently cohabiting men had fathered one or more children (54.5 percent).

**Table 13. Number of Children Fathered by Race/Ethnicity, 2013**

Men's Race/Ethnicity	Total Men (1000s)	Number of Children Fathered			
		Zero	One	Two	Three or More
<b>All*</b>	60,875	56.2%	15.6%	16.2%	12.0%
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	12,908	50.2%	15.8%	18.2%	15.8%
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	34,304	57.7%	15.0%	16.9%	10.4%
<b>Non-Hispanic Black</b>	7,286	53.4%	17.7%	14.4%	14.5%

\*Includes men of other or multiple races and origin groups, not shown separately.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, non-Hispanic white men were significantly less likely to have fathered a child (42.3 percent) than Hispanic and non-Hispanic black men (49.8% and 46.6%, respectively).
- Hispanic and non-Hispanic black men were significantly more likely to have fathered three or more children (15.8 and 14.5 percent, respectively) compared to non-Hispanic white men (10.4 percent).

**Table 14. Number and Percent of Fathers by Age and Marital and Cohabiting Status at First Birth, 2013**

Father's Age at First Birth	All Fathers Aged 15-44 in 2013 (1000s)	Marital First Birth	Nonmarital First Birth	
			Within Cohabiting Union	Living Alone or Apart from Mother
<b>All Ages</b>	26,661	53.1%	28.7%	18.2%
<b>15-19 Years</b>	3,691	8.3%	40.5%	51.2%
<b>20-24 Years</b>	8,631	40.3%	37.8%	21.9%
<b>25-29 Years</b>	8,174	65.5%	24.4%	10.1%
<b>30-44 Years</b>	6,165	81.3%	14.4%	4.3%

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, just over half (53 percent) of fathers were married to the mother of their child at time of first birth.
- Fathers under 20 years old at their first birth were significantly less likely to have had the birth within a marriage, as nearly 92 percent of these births were nonmarital.
- Teenage fathers who had a nonmarital first birth were significantly more likely to have been living apart from the mother than cohabiting (51.2 percent vs. 40.5 percent). Older fathers who had a nonmarital first birth (18.7 percent), however, were more likely to have been in a cohabiting relationship with the mother than living apart (14.4 percent vs. 4.3 percent).
- The older a father is at the birth of his first child, the more likely he is to be married. For example, 81.3 percent of fathers aged 30-44 years were married at the birth of their first child compared to 65.5 percent of fathers aged 25-29 and 40.3 percent of fathers aged 20-24 years.

**Table 15. Number and Percent of Fathers by Income and Marital and Cohabiting Status at First Birth, 2013**

Percent of Poverty Level	All Fathers Aged 20-44 in 2013 (1000s)	Marital first Birth	Nonmarital First Birth	
			Within Cohabiting Union	Living Alone or Apart from Mother
<b>All*</b>	26,661	53.1%	28.7%	18.2%
<b>0-149 Percent</b>	8,074	36.1%	40.6%	23.3%
<b>150-299 Percent</b>	7,592	46.5%	33.9%	19.6%
<b>300 Percent or Higher</b>	10,808	70.6%	16.0%	13.5%

\*Income information is limited to men aged 20-44, the "All" category includes men aged 15-19 as well.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- Men with lower incomes (living below 150 percent of the poverty level) were significantly more likely (63.9 percent) than those with higher incomes (53.5 percent and 29.5 percent) to have had a nonmarital first birth.
- Men with incomes below 300 percent of the poverty level who had had a nonmarital first birth were significantly more likely to have lived alone or apart from the mother (23.3 percent and 19.6 percent, respectively) than men with incomes higher than 300 percent of the poverty level (13.5 percent).

**Table 16. Number and Percent of Fathers with a Nonmarital First Birth by Race/Ethnicity and Cohabiting Status, 2013**

Father's Race/Ethnicity	All Fathers Aged 15-44 in 2013 (1000s)	Marital First Birth	Nonmarital First Birth	
			Within Cohabiting Union	Living Alone or Apart from Mother
<b>All*</b>	26,661	53.1%	28.7%	18.2%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	6,432	41.1%	39.9%	19.1%
<b>Non-Hispanic White</b>	14,506	64.6%	22.3%	13.2%
<b>Non-Hispanic Black</b>	3,396	24.4%	36.0%	39.7%

\*Includes men of other or multiple races and origin groups, not shown separately.

Source: The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). National Center for Health Statistics. 2011-2015.

Note: Data are weighted. When weighted, the 2011-2015 wave of the NSFG is representative of men ages 15-44 in 2013.

- In 2013, non-Hispanic black fathers (75.7 percent) were significantly more likely to have had a nonmarital first birth than Hispanic and non-Hispanic white fathers (59.0 percent and 35.5 percent). Hispanic fathers were also significantly more likely to have had a nonmarital first birth than non-Hispanic white fathers.
- At the time of nonmarital first birth, non-Hispanic black fathers were significantly more likely to be living apart from the mother (39.7 percent) than their Hispanic (19.1 percent) and non-Hispanic white (13.2 percent) peers. Hispanic fathers were also significantly more likely to be living apart from the mother than non-Hispanic white fathers.