

# Teen Births in Massachusetts

## Risk Factors and Disparities

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### Identified Risk Factors

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations:

*“Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic events, including abuse and neglect.”*

According to the Office of Adolescent Health:

- Girls who have experienced trauma or abuse, or who’ve grown up in foster care systems or welfare systems, are more likely to become pregnant.

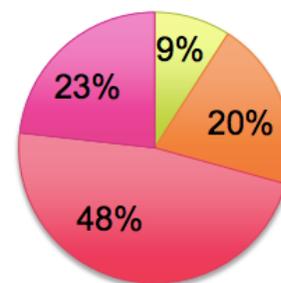
### Identified Disparities in Teen Pregnancy

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

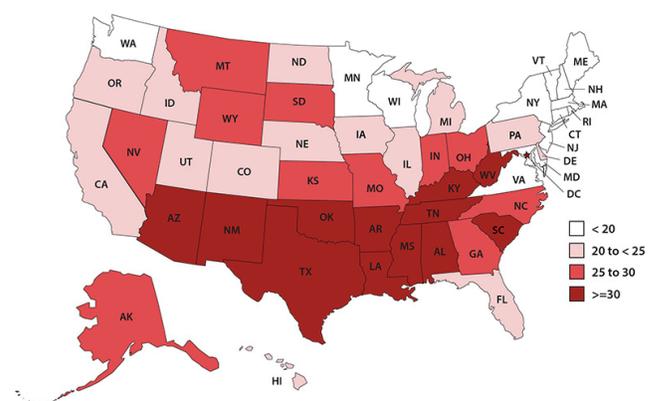
- There are **geographic, socio-economic, and racial disparities** in teen pregnancy rates across the U.S.
- Teen birth rates are higher in rural counties than urban or suburban counties, regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Teen birth rates are higher among teens in child welfare systems and amongst teens that come from families with low-income levels or low-education levels.
- Hispanic girls, Non-Hispanic black girls and Alaskan Native girls are significantly more at risk of having teen births, having roughly twice the teen birth rate of their Non-Hispanic White peers nationally.

### ACE Scores for Females with First Pregnancy at Age <18

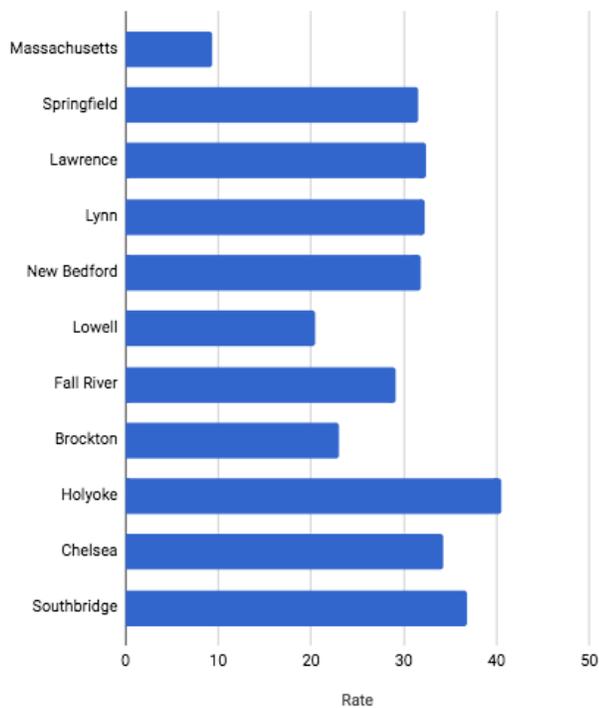
■ 0 ■ 1 to 3 ■ 4 to 7 ■ 8 to 10



*The Office of Adolescent Health. (2016). Breaking the Cycle of Intergenerational Teen Pregnancy Using a Trauma Informed Approach.*



*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). Social Determinants and Eliminating Disparities in Teen Pregnancy.*



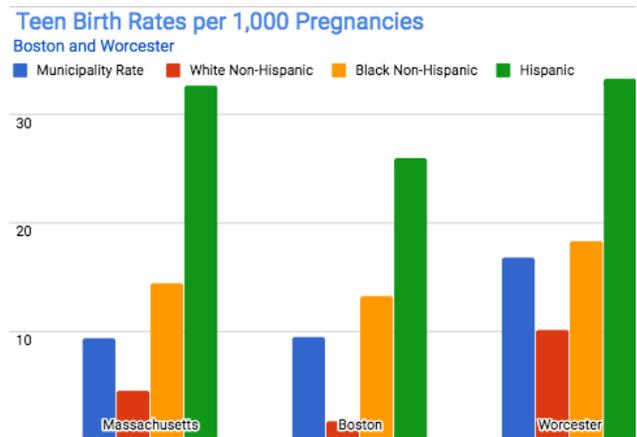
## Teen Birth Disparities in Massachusetts

Municipalities with the highest rates of teen pregnancy consistently have the following correlated disparities:

- Lower median household incomes
- Higher rates of poverty
- Higher rates of child poverty
- Higher violent crime rates

## Teen Birth Disparities in Worcester

- It is important to note although the average rates for the state and municipalities are seemingly low, the disparity between racial groups is astounding.
- Girls of color maintain higher teen birth rates than their white peers consistently. Moreover, girls of color in Boston and Worcester have higher teen birth rates than their municipality average and the state average.



Visit [malegislature.gov/Bills/190/SD912](http://malegislature.gov/Bills/190/SD912) for more information on The Healthy Youth Act.

\*Charts: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services Department of Public Health. (2015).