

Annual Summary of Vital Statistics: 2005

Hamilton BE, Miniñ M, Martin JA, Kochanek KD, Strobino DM, Guyer B.
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The general fertility rate in 2005 was 66.7 births per 1000 women aged 15 to 44 years, the highest level since 1993. The birth rate for teen mothers (aged 15 to 19 years) declined by 2% between 2004 and 2005, falling to 40.4 births per 1000 women, the lowest ever recorded in the 65 years for which there are consistent data. The birth rates for women 30 years of age rose in 2005 to levels not seen in almost 40 years. Childbearing by unmarried women also increased to historic record levels for the United States in 2005. The cesarean-delivery rate rose by 4% in 2005 to 30.2% of all births, another record high. The preterm birth rate continued to rise (to 12.7% in 2005), as did the rate for low birth weight births (8.2%). The infant mortality rate was 6.79 infant deaths per 1000 live births in 2004, not statistically different from the rate in 2003. Pronounced differences in infant mortality rates by race and Hispanic origin continue, with non-Hispanic black newborns more than twice as likely as non-Hispanic white and Hispanic infants to die within 1 year of birth. The expectation of life at birth reached a record high in 2004 of 77.8 years for all gender and race groups combined. Death rates in the United States continued to decline, with death rates decreasing for 9 of the 15 leading causes. The crude death rate for children aged 1 to 19 years did not decrease significantly between 2003 and 2004. Of the 10 leading causes of death for 2004 in this age group, only the rates for influenza and pneumonia showed a significant decrease. The death rates increased for intentional self-harm (suicide), whereas rates for other causes did not change significantly for children. A large proportion of childhood deaths continue to occur as a result of preventable injuries.

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