



Who Has Births from Unintended Pregnancies in Colorado?

Brief No. 6

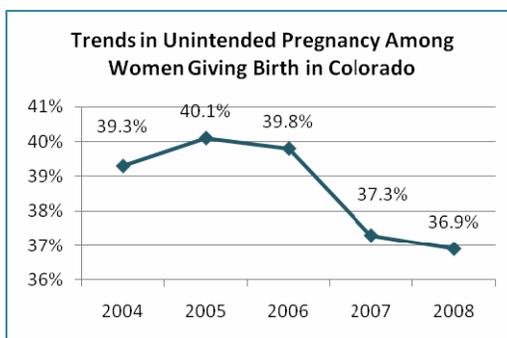
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“The percent of births among women in Colorado resulting from an unintended pregnancy remained at about 40% between 2004 and 2006, but then began to drop in 2007 and 2008 to about 37%”

Unintended Pregnancy in Colorado

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments, collects data on maternal attitudes and experiences before, during, and after pregnancy. Data include an indicator for whether a mother wanted to become pregnant at the time of her last pregnancy as well as information on select maternal characteristics. These are not total esti-

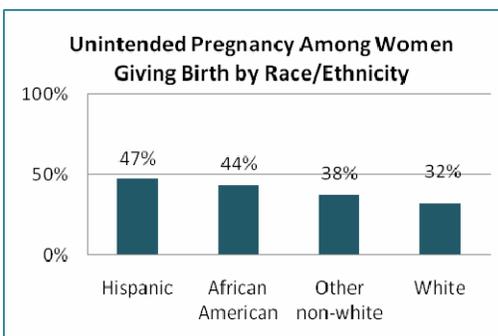
mates of unintended pregnancies in the state, as the data only include unintended pregnancies that come to term (live births). The percent of births among women in Colorado resulting from an unintended pregnancy remained at about 40% between 2004 and 2006, but then began to drop in 2007 and 2008 to about 37%. As high as these rates are, they obscure much higher rates of unintended pregnancy among various subgroups.



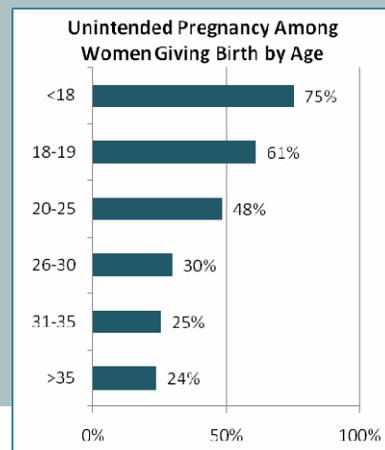
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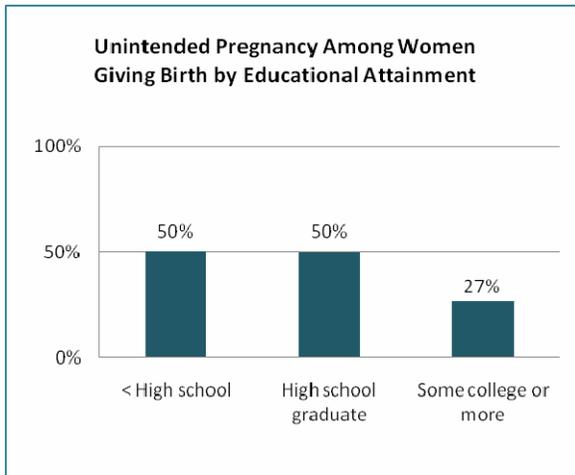
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Disparities in the Rate of Unintended Pregnancy Among Women Giving Birth in Colorado, 2008



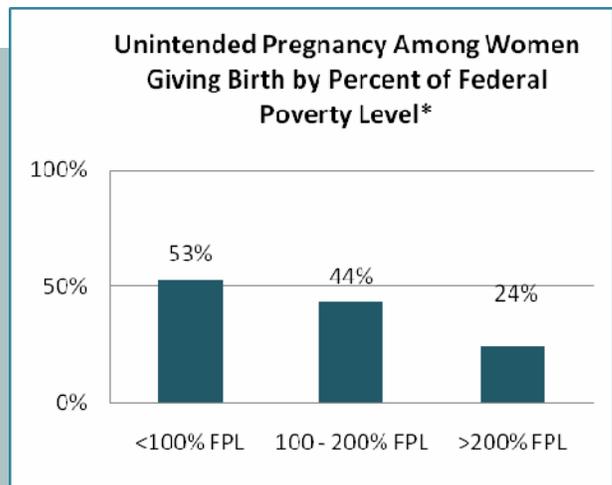
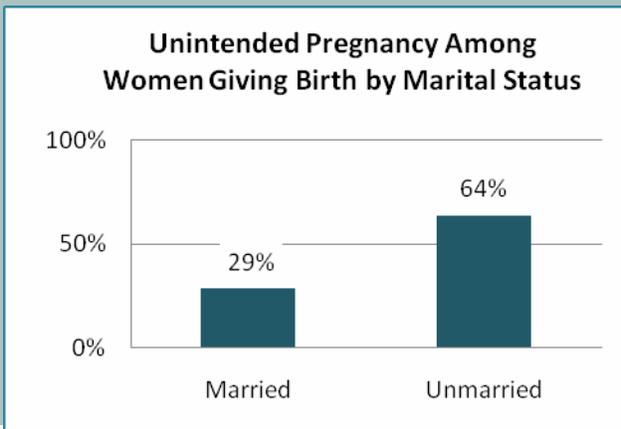
There are great differences among groups in rates of live births that are a result of an unintended pregnancy. These rates vary by **race/ethnicity** and by **age**. Across racial/ethnic groups, these rates are highest among Hispanics, followed by African-Americans, and lowest among Whites. By age group, rates are highest among women under age 18, and lowest among women over age 35.





The proportion of unintended pregnancies among women giving birth varies by the level of **education attained by the mother**, ranging from 27% for those with at least some college education to 50% among those who have a high school diploma or less.

The proportion of unintended pregnancies among women giving birth is over two times higher among **unmarried** (64%) than among **married** women (29%). The rate of unintended pregnancy among those women with an income <100% of the **Federal Poverty Level** is 53% compared to a rate of 24% for those with incomes greater than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.



*The federal Department of Health and Human Services provides poverty guidelines which are revised each calendar year. The poverty level is based on the number of family members residing in the household. In 2008, a family of four earning \$42,400 was at 200% of the federal poverty level.

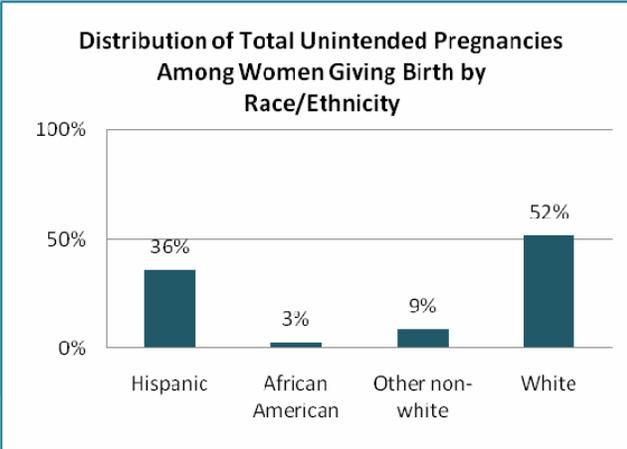
Creating a Profile

The factors associated with an increased risk of experiencing an unintended pregnancy are related to one another and often co-occur. There are some subgroups defined by combinations of these variables that have unintended pregnancy rates that are dramatically higher than the statewide average. PRAMS data for 2008 indicate very high rates of unintended pregnancy for each of the following subgroups:

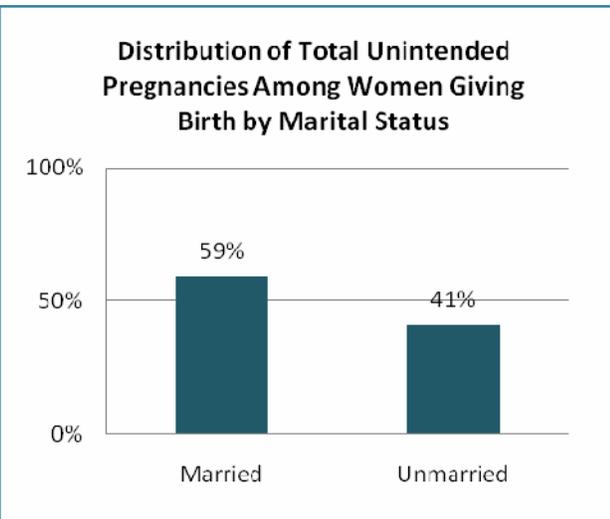
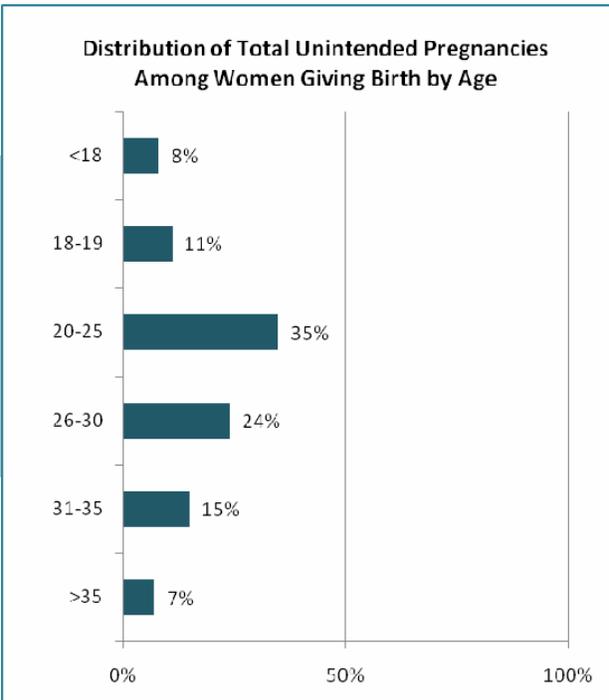
- Hispanics between the ages of 20 and 25 – 54%
- Women with a high school education who are <100% of the Federal Poverty Level – 56%
- Hispanics with a high school education – 57%
- Whites who have less than 12 years of education – 60%
- Women with a high school degree only and unmarried – 69%
- Whites less than 20 years of age – 84%

Distribution of Total Unintended Pregnancies Among Women giving Birth in Colorado, 2008

Even though Hispanic women have the highest rate of unintended pregnancy (47% compared to 32% among white women) the total **number** of births that were the result of an unintended pregnancy was higher for white women than Hispanics or any other group. For example, even though both Hispanic and Black women have a high rate of unplanned pregnancy, white women were estimated to have contributed 13,092 births from such pregnancies in 2008 while Hispanic women were estimated to have given birth to 8,989 children who were unplanned, and Black women accounted for only 873. PRAMS data for 2008 indicate that more than half of the total unintended pregnancies were to white women, while over a third were to Hispanic women. This is possible because US Census Bureau numbers show the overall population in Colorado is 20.3% Hispanic or Latino compared to 70.7% white.¹



Likewise, even though women under the age of 18 had the highest rate of unintended pregnancy (75%), these births only account for 8% of the total births from unintended pregnancies. The largest percentages of births as a result of unintended pregnancy were to 20-25 year olds (35%) and 26-30 year olds (24%). The estimated total number of births from such pregnancies in 2008 to women 20-25 years old was 8,861 while women under 18 only had 1,968 children who were unplanned.



Married women accounted for a higher proportion of the unintended pregnancies than did unmarried women, an estimated 14,887 births compared to 10,284 respectively, even though unmarried women have a higher rate of unintended pregnancy.



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For additional information, please see the following briefs:

Evaluating the Colorado Initiative to Reduce Unintended Pregnancies; February 2010.

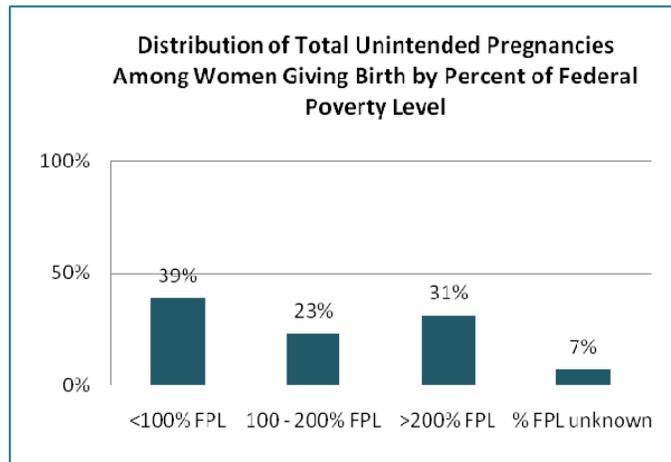
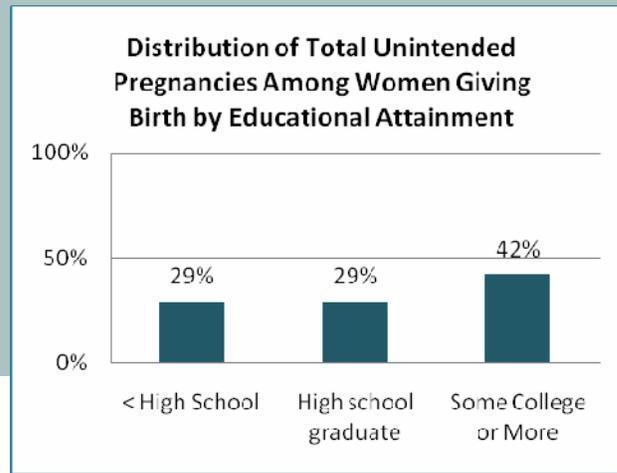
Unintended Pregnancy: The Colorado Experience in National Context; June 2010

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Colorado Title X Agencies

- Broomfield City-County Public Health and Environment
- Children's Hospital-Adolescent Clinic
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless- Stout Street Clinic
- Delta County Health Department
- Denver Health and Hospital Authority Community Health Services
- Denver Health and Hospital Authority STD Clinic
- Eagle County Public Health Agency
- El Paso County Department of Health and Environment
- Gunnison County Department of Health and Human Services
- Jefferson County Public Health
- Kit Carson County Health and Human Services
- Lake County Public Health Department
- Larimer County Health Department
- Mesa County Health Department
- Montrose County Department of Health and Human Services
- Northeast Colorado Health Department
- Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association
- Pitkin County Public Health Agency
- Pueblo City-County Health Department
- Rio Blanco County Department of Public Health and Environment
- San Juan Basin Health Department
- San Miguel County Department of Health and Environment
- Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center
- Summit Community Care Clinic
- Teller County Public Health Department
- Tri-County Health Department
- Weld County Dept. of Public Health and Environment
- Women's Health (Boulder Valley)

Even though women with a high school diploma or less have a higher rate of unintended pregnancy (50% compared to 27% among women with some college or more), a greater percentage of the unintended pregnancies in Colorado in 2008 were to women with more education. Women with some college or more were estimated to have contributed 10,542 births from such pregnancies in 2008, while women with less than a high school education were estimated to have given birth to 7,042 children who were unplanned.



While 39% of the total unintended pregnancies were to women with an income <100% of the Federal Poverty Level, another 31% were to women with an income >200% of the Federal Poverty Level. US Census Bureau numbers show that 11.2% of the overall population in Colorado is below poverty level.ⁱⁱ

Conclusions

At first glance, rates of unintended pregnancies seem to indicate the need for services that are tailored to higher risk groups. But at closer scrutiny, these higher risk groups are a small part of the overall population of the state of Colorado. The estimated total **number** of births that are the result of unintended pregnancies to these higher risk groups is lower than that of other groups. This would indicate that the present focus of Initiative providers on serving all women in the state should continue.

References:

- ⁱ US Census Bureau. Colorado QuickFacts. retrieved from: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08000.html> .
- ⁱⁱ US Census Bureau. Colorado QuickFacts. retrieved from: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08000.html> .