

SEXUAL HEALTH

Teen Pregnancy Is Down, and There Is a Simple Reason

BY PROMA KHOSLA AUGUST 30, 2016 5:00 PM

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Thanks, Obama.

We may still be fighting over the [Affordable Care Act](#) and health care in general in America, but there's one area where things are definitely getting better: teen pregnancy. According to a study in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, the birth rate among teenagers in the United States dropped 36 percent between 2007 and 2013, and the reason is crazy simple: Teen pregnancy is down because teens are using birth control better and more often.

Though many schools and other programs still teach teens to practice abstinence and postpone sexual activity, the study authors noted that "Sexual activity in the last three months did not change significantly from 2007 to 2012" among adolescents.

Not only are teens using contraception more often, but they're using more kinds of effective birth control. 86 percent of the teenagers surveyed reported using at least one method of birth control, with 37 of the total subjects using two or more methods. Though the birth control pill and condoms remain the two most popular methods, use of IUDs, implants, rings and more increased from 38 percent to 51 percent between 2009 and 2012.



The study, by Laura Lindberg, John Santelli, and Sheila Desai, noted that the U.S.

teen birth rate declined steadily in the 1990s and early 2000s, but was stagnant from 2005 to 2007. The drop of teenage birth and pregnancy among 15- to 19-year-olds was concluded to be a result of "improvements in contraceptive use." The researchers used information in answers from the National Surveys of Family Growth, a household survey for women.

The birth rate is down "in all 50 states, across racial and ethnic groups, and among both younger and older teens." The study also notes that "Increasing use of abortion has not contributed to these declines, and abortion ratios (the ratio of abortions to live births) have declined very slowly over this period."



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