

# **Wanted and Unwanted Births in the United States: Trends, Measurement, and Implications**

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## Introduction and Background

Unwanted and mistimed births, together usually referred to as “unintended” births, are common in the United States (Finer and Henshaw, 2006; Chandra et al., 2005). Recent data show that 35 percent of births occurring to women between 1997 and 2002 were mistimed or unwanted (Chandra et al., 2005). Although researchers and policymakers have debated the best ways to measure unintended pregnancies, these numbers are important because unintended births, as traditionally measured, are associated with negative outcomes for mothers and children (David, 2006; Goodwin, 2000; Orr, 1997; Myhrman, 1995) and significant health care costs (Trussell, 2007).

About half of all unintended births occur to women using no contraceptive method (with no fecundity impairment or other circumstance making pregnancy unlikely or desired) (analysis of the 2002 NSFG). According to 2002 data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 7 percent of women of reproductive age, or 4.6 million women, were sexually active, not using contraception, and at risk of an unintended pregnancy. This is a slight increase from 1995, when 5.2 percent of women were not using contraception but were sexually active and at risk of an unintended pregnancy (Mosher et al., 2004). This information on women at risk of unintended pregnancy rounds out the information on women who actually had unintended pregnancies (leading to live births) for a more complete picture of the unintended fertility situation in the U.S.

Important insights can be gained by analyzing national data on these topics in new ways. The current analysis uses the NSFG toward 3 primary goals:

First, since the NSFG contains a time-series of pregnancy wantedness measures, we will show trends in wanted, mistimed, and unwanted births over the past two decades: from 1982 through 2002. These estimates have been published in separate reports since the NSFG’s inception in 1973, but the long-term trend has not been examined in one report.

Second, we explore the empirical relationships among the 3-category traditional measure of wantedness (intended, mistimed, unwanted) and a number of related measures:

a) 5 new measures of wantedness, including three 10-point scales;

- b) whether contraception was being used when an unintended pregnancy occurs,
- c) reasons for non-use of contraception,
- c) the extent to which wantedness measures are consistent with birth expectations,
- d) and fecundity.

Third, we will present analyses of factors associated with nonuse of contraception among the population of reproductive-aged women at risk of unintended pregnancy.

In sum, this paper attempts to advance our understanding of several important questions about the nature and measurement of fertility in the United States:

- 1) What are the trends in wanted and unwanted fertility in the United States in the last 2 decades? Are these trends related to changes in marital status and ethnic composition, or are they real trends in wantedness within groups?
- 2) What is the relationship of wanted and unwanted fertility measures to contraceptive use, fecundity, and birth expectations?
  - For example, how often do women who do not want to become pregnant actually use contraception?
  - How common is ambivalence about pregnancy and how can we measure this ambivalence with available data?
  - Do the empirical relationships in the data suggest that women are understanding the questions as they were originally intended? Does this vary by subgroup?
- 3) How common is unprotected intercourse among women at risk of pregnancy? And what empirical measures can we use to determine the reasons for and correlates of this non-use?

## **Methods**

This analysis will use data from the 1982, 1988, 1995 and 2002 rounds (Cycles 3, 4, 5, and 6) of the NSFG. The trend analyses will use all 4 of these cycles while the other analyses will highlight data from the 2002 cycle. The NSFG is based on multistage probability samples of the household population of women in the United States. All cycles of the NSFG have been conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics. Each of the six cycles of the NSFG to

date has included women aged 15-44; black women were oversampled in all survey years and Hispanic women were oversampled in 1995 and 2002. Cycle 3 (1982) was the first to include women of all marital statuses rather than being limited to ever-married women.

The series of questions resulting in the “traditional” measure of pregnancy wantedness has been included in every NSFG since the first cycle in 1973 (see London et al., 1995). The basic questions and the structure of the question series, that is, the universe of women who get asked each individual question, has remained consistent. Minor changes have been made to the wording of the questions to enhance their clarity and their consistency within the series.

These wantedness questions were originally developed for the 1965 and 1970 National Fertility Surveys, which were surveys of married women, at a time when over 90 percent of births in the United States were to married women (Peterson and Mosher, 1999). Now, at a time when nearly 40 percent of births in the U.S. are to unmarried women, one important issue, much discussed in the literature in the last decade, is whether the questions still measure an increasingly complex fertility landscape in a useful way (e.g.: Trussell et al, 1999; Bachrach and Newcomer, 1999; Peterson and Mosher, 1999; Speizer, Santelli, et al, PSRH, Sept/Oct 2004; Santelli et al, PSRH, March/April 2003).

In response to this discussion, Cycle 6 (2002) of the NSFG contains several additions to the pregnancy wantedness question series. These were developed by researchers who evaluated the existing series and identified the most important areas to be addressed to enhance the traditional measure. The resulting questions arose from smaller-scale survey and focus group work (see Klerman and Pulley, 1999). The first two address the notion that both pregnancy desires and pregnancy intent are important and distinct dimensions of pregnancy wantedness (Miller, 1994).

(This question captures intent) Look at the scale on card 40, where a 0 means trying hard NOT to get pregnant, and a 10 means trying hard to get pregnant. If you had to rate how much you were trying to get pregnant or avoid pregnancy, how would you rate yourself?”

(This question captures desires) Look at the scale on card 41, where a 0 means you wanted to avoid a pregnancy and a 10 means you wanted to get pregnant. If you had to

rate how much you wanted or didn't want a pregnancy right before you got pregnant that time, how would you rate yourself?"

The following question, new in Cycle 6, was added due to the potential importance of the effects of the partner on a woman's pregnancy intentions (Zabin, 2000).

"Right before the pregnancy, did you think you might ever want to have a baby with that partner?"

The following questions were added to Cycle 5 of the NSFG (1995) and were kept as part of the Cycle 6 series. The first question addressed the possibility that attitudes toward a pregnancy can fall along a continuum. The second addresses the notion that the extent of the mistiming of a pregnancy that occurred too soon, is important (Pulley et al., 2002).

"Please look at the scale on Card 39. On this scale, a 1 means that you were very unhappy to be pregnant, and a 10 means that you were very happy to be pregnant. Tell me which number on the card best describes how you felt when you found out you were pregnant."

(For women reporting "too soon" to the question about pregnancy timing): "How much sooner than you wanted did you become pregnant?" (answers are reported in months and years).

A final issue that has been addressed in the NSFG content involves reports of "unwanted" pregnancies. Following the dissemination of findings from the 1988 NSFG, experts in the field recommended that a confirmatory question be asked of women who said a pregnancy was unwanted. This stemmed from concern with high percents, especially among younger women, reporting first births as "unwanted". This confirmatory question was asked of all women in 1995 and retained in 2002, but limited to ages 24 and younger.

This analysis is limited to live births instead of all pregnancies. Estimates of all pregnancies from the NSFG are not considered to be reliable due to underreporting of abortions,

a phenomenon common to social surveys. It is possible to adjust for this underreporting, to obtain estimates of unintended pregnancies (Finer and Henshaw, 2006). However, this makes it impossible or difficult to use the rich array of possibly related information in the NSFG corresponding to each pregnancy. Furthermore, mothers' sentiments surrounding the conception of a pregnancy that results in a live birth are uniquely important because they have implications for child wellbeing.

## **Results**

Below are some highlights of results from descriptive tables we have produced so far. As we explore these results we will examine associations by subgroups where useful and possible. In most respects, the tables will remain the same, particularly the outcome measures. Significance testing will be performed for important comparisons.

### *Trends*

Tables 1 and 2 present the percent distributions of births in the 5 years preceding the survey year, by wantedness status at conception. This is shown for the years 1982, 1988, 1995, 2002, by race and Hispanic origin (Table 1) and mother's age at the birth (Table 2). The traditional measure of pregnancy wantedness is used, augmented by distinguishing between the "seriously mistimed" (2 or more years too soon) and the "less-seriously mistimed" (less than 2 years too soon) for the surveys in which it is available (1995 and 2002).

Table 1 shows that, in in this 20 year period, overall, there has been a slight upward trend in the percent of births unwanted and a slight downward trend in the percent mistimed. Hispanics, non-Hispanic whites, and non-Hispanic blacks all show modest increases in percents of births unwanted, with the largest being among Hispanics: 17 percent of births to Hispanics in 1997-2002 were unwanted compared to 11 percent in 1978-1982. There also appears to have been a decrease in the percent of births to non-Hispanic black and white women that were mistimed: for example, among births to non-Hispanic white women, there was a 9 percentage point decrease in the percent mistimed, from 33.2 to 24.4 over the past 2 decades.

Table 2 shows that the changes seen in total births, are largely due to births to younger women, including teens. Births to mothers both under 20 and 20-24 were more commonly unwanted in the most recent time period (1997-2002) than in the earliest time period (1978-

1982). 22 percent of births to women under 20 in 1997-2002 were unwanted, up from 13 percent among births 1978-1982. There was no change at all in the percent mistimed, for this group under age 20 at the birth. Among births to mothers aged 20-24, the pattern across cycles was not linear, but there was a 10 percentage point increase in the 2002 percent unwanted compared to the 1982 percent.

We plan to examine these trends in birth intendedness by marital status at the pregnancy outcome, to determine the role of changes in age at marriage across the past 20 years.

Table 3 is included to show the differences between the wantedness measure used in Tables 1 and 2, and the new measure (used in all subsequent tables), begun with the 1995 cycle, that incorporates the response to the confirmatory question for women who reported pregnancies as unwanted, as described in the “Methods” section. This table shows almost no change in the wantedness classification when the confirmation question is taken into account. This suggests that women are not misunderstanding the questions and response choices, but are indeed reporting on their true feelings at the time of the pregnancy. From one perspective, it is not critical whether women who reported a pregnancy as “unwanted” could accurately state their lifetime fertility goals at the time, because their subjective definition of their situation is the most important determinant of their mindset and behavior during the pregnancy and after. For women without plans for fertility, the unwanted response may represent not a careful assessment of their future intentions, but rather an expression of their strong feeling at the time, given that it is the most extreme choice of the different choices to describe pregnancy attitudes.

#### *Descriptive analyses: births occurring 1997 - 2002*

Tables 4 and 5 present, for births occurring in 1997 to 2002, for each category of pregnancy wantedness, percent distributions by selected characteristics. Table 6 presents first births within this same time frame. These tables address questions about linkages of partners (the father of the pregnancy) and first sex circumstances with unintended births. Contraceptive use surrounding pregnancy is addressed in Table 5, including reasons for nonuse, or perceived reasons for pregnancy despite using contraception.

One interesting set of findings is presented in Table 4. The partner with whom the woman had an unwanted or mistimed birth, is an important factor in the experience of unwanted and mistimed births. For more than half of the unwanted births to never-married women, 55

percent, the mother reported she definitely did not ever want a birth with that partner. This percent was only 16, among the mistimed births. Interestingly, these associations with not wanting the birth with that particular partner, held for those who were married at the birth as well. That is, unwanted births even within marriages were more heavily skewed toward those whose mothers never wanted a birth with that partner (65 percent “probably no” or “definitely no”) and this is only 5 percent for mistimed births. *[sorry, Jo, I see the point of your added comment but could not figure out a way to say it clearly right now, will add post-submission]*

#### *Attitude and intention “scale” measures*

Tables 7, 8, and 9 present various characteristics—including the woman’s wantedness of the birth at the time of conception—according to each of the 3 items on attitudes toward the pregnancy, described in the Methods section. For each pregnancy, each woman was asked:

- 1) how happy or unhappy she was to be pregnant (scale 1-10),
- 2) how hard she was trying to get or to not get pregnant (scale 0-10), and
- 3) how much she wanted to avoid or to get pregnant (scale 0-10).

These tables present the percent distributions by characteristic on these scaled variables and, for each characteristic, the mean value on the scale.

Table 7 shows a high level of congruency between the wantedness measure and the “happy-to-be-pregnant” scale. Births that were intended had the highest mean scale value (9.2), unwanted births had the lowest value (4.6), and mistimed births had values that fell between the two (7.3 for births less than 2 years too soon and 5.8 for births 2 years or more too soon). There is a similar linearity with the desire of the woman to have the baby with the baby’s father. Births whose mothers definitely wanted a child with this partner had a mean scale value that was twice as large as births whose mothers definitely did not want to have a birth with this partner. The same pattern holds for the mother’s perception of the baby’s father’s wantedness of the birth.

Births to mothers who had ever used infertility services (not necessarily for the pregnancy resulting in this birth) had slightly higher values on this scale than births to women who had never used infertility services. Births to surgically sterile women had lower scale values than births to women who were fecund or who had impaired fecundity, indicating that women who were surgically sterile did not want to have a(nother) child at the time the baby was conceived.



*Contraceptive nonuse and risk of unintended pregnancy: 2002*

Table 10 presents information on the prevalence of risk for unintended pregnancy in the U.S. population, and characteristics and circumstances of those at risk. It shows the percent of women in detailed categories of contraceptive use status in 2002, including specific methods being used, and if no method was being used, statuses with regard to risk for pregnancy. Overall, 4 percent of women were sexually active and not using contraception in the month of interview, nor at the last occurrence of intercourse.

Although statistical significance remains to be seen, the data suggest that not having used contraception at first intercourse is associated with being at risk of unintended pregnancy, that is, being sexually active and not using contraception.

**NOTE TO REVIEWERS:**

The next steps for this paper include the following:

- 1) A more complete description of the literature and the hypotheses it suggests.
- 2) More detailed examination of the correlates and predictors of non-use of contraception.
- 3) Factor analysis to sort out the relationships among the wantedness measures in a more formal way.

(The analysis can be done separately for a few important sub-groups to see how robust the answers are.)

- 4) For meeting presentation, we will focus on a particular aspect of the findings that are most informative.

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Table 1. Number of births in the five years prior to interview to women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent distribution by wantedness status at conception by Hispanic origin and race for selected years: United States, 1982 - 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Wantedness status					
		Total	Intended	Unwanted	Total mistimed	Mistimed	
						Less than 2 years too soon	2 or more years too soon
Percent							
Total 1/							
1982	18,442	100.0	63.4	9.8	26.7	n.a	n.a
1988	19,020	100.0	60.8	12.4	26.7	n.a	n.a
1995	19,863	100.0	69.0	10.1	20.7	35.6	64.4
2002	21,018	100.0	64.9	14.1	20.8	39.8	60.3
Hispanic origin and race							
Hispanic or Latino							
1982	2,131	100.0	61.8	11.0	27.3	n.a	n.a
1988	2,436	100.0	61.5	13.7	24.6	n.a	n.a
1995	3,078	100.0	69.3	12.9	17.7	32.8	67.2
2002	4,242	100.0	56.4	16.9	26.4	43.0	57.0
Not Hispanic or Latino:							
White							
1982	13,261	100.0	67.3	7.2	25.4	n.a	n.a
1988	12,973	100.0	64.4	8.5	26.9	n.a	n.a
1995	13,052	100.0	73.2	6.9	19.7	41.4	58.6
2002	12,309	100.0	70.7	10.7	18.3	45.1	54.9
Black or African American							
1982	2,617	100.0	44.8	21.7	33.2	n.a	n.a
1988	2,738	100.0	39.6	29.6	30.4	n.a	n.a
1995	2,830	100.0	48.5	21.1	29.5	20.3	79.7
2002	2,818	100.0	49.5	26.1	24.4	21.6	78.4

1/ Includes births to women of other or multiple race and origin groups and births with missing information on how much too soon, not shown separately.

Note: Percents of wanted, unwanted, and total mistimed do not add to 100 because births with wantedness status reported as "don't know" are not shown separately. Percents of amount mistimed may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Note: Percents for 1995, 1988, and 1982 presented here will be slightly different from published figures because this table includes births in the 60th month prior to interview, i.e., in the "past 5 years" time frame, while the earlier reports excluded them.

n.a. Not available

Table 2. Number of births in the five years prior to interview to women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent distribution by wantedness status at conception by age at birth for selected years: United States, 1982 - 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Wantedness status					
		Total	Intended	Unwanted	Total mistimed	Mistimed	
						Less than 2 years too soon	2 or more years too soon
Percent							
Age at birth							
Under 20							
1982	2,522	100.0	30.5	12.5	57.0	n.a	n.a
1988	2,140	100.0	28.5	17.3	53.9	n.a	n.a
1995	2,351	100.0	34.8	12.4	52.3	11.7	88.3
2002	2,215	100.0	21.6	21.6	56.8	16.2	83.8
20-24							
1982	6,211	100.0	62.4	7.2	30.2	n.a	n.a
1988	5,322	100.0	55.4	11.6	33.1	n.a	n.a
1995	5,227	100.0	61.2	9.5	29.1	33.2	66.8
2002	5,553	100.0	55.8	17.2	26.9	36.6	63.4
25-44							
1982	9,709	100.0	72.6	10.7	16.7	n.a	n.a
1988	11,559	100.0	69.2	11.8	18.8	n.a	n.a
1995	12,285	100.0	79.0	9.9	11.0	59.7	40.3
2002	13,250	100.0	75.9	11.6	12.2	61.0	39.0

Note: Percents of wanted, unwanted, and total mistimed do not add to 100 because births with wantedness status reported as "don't know" are not shown separately. Percents of amount mistimed may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Note: Percents for 1995, 1988, and 1982 presented here will be slightly different from published figures because this table includes births in the 60th month prior to interview, i.e., in the "past 5 years" time frame, while the earlier reports excluded them.

n.a. Not available

Table 3. Number of births in the last 5 years to women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent distribution by wantedness status at conception categories: old and new measures: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Number of births in thousands	Total	Old Measure			New Measure		
			Intended	Unwanted	Mistimed	Intended	Unwanted	Mistimed
Number of births in last 5 years 1/	21,018	100.0	64.9	14.1	20.8	64.9	14.1	20.8
Hispanic origin and race								
Hispanic	4,242	100.0	56.4	16.9	26.4	56.4	16.8	26.5
Non-Hispanic White	12,584	100.0	70.7	10.7	18.3	70.7	10.7	18.3
Non-Hispanic Black	2,954	100.0	49.5	26.1	24.4	49.5	26.1	24.4
Age at birth								
Under 20	2,215	100.0	21.6	21.6	56.8	21.6	21.4	56.9
20-24	5,553	100.0	55.8	17.2	26.9	55.8	17.2	26.9
25-44	13,250	100.0	75.9	11.6	12.2	75.9	11.6	12.2

1/ Includes births to women of other or multiple race and origin groups, not shown separately.

Note: Percents do not add to 100 because births with wantedness status reported as "don't know" are not shown separately.

Table 4. Number of births in the last 5 years to women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent distribution by selected characteristics: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Intended	Unwanted	Total mistimed 1/	Mistimed	
				Less than 2 years too soon	2 or more years too soon
Births in last 5 years	13,638	2,969	4,364	1,677	2,542
	Percent distribution				
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Marital status at birth and wanted with that partner					
Married					
Definitely yes	95.7	20.4	82.7	89.0	73.9
Probably yes	2.9	14.4	12.4	8.6	17.6
Probably no	0.8	28.7	2.3	1.5	3.7
Definitely no	0.7	36.5	2.6	*	4.9
Never married					
Definitely yes	70.8	12.5	48.6	70.2	44.4
Probably yes	15.3	16.9	22.3	14.1	24.3
Probably no	7.2	16.2	12.3	*	12.8
Definitely no	6.7	54.5	15.7	7.6	17.7
Mother's perception of baby's father's wantedness					
Intended	85.1	27.4	29.8	38.6	23.9
Unwanted	5.3	47.9	19.2	7.6	25.9
Mistimed	7.1	17.0	45.7	50.5	43.8
Don't know	2.5	7.8	5.3	3.1	6.3
Parity					
1st birth	39.7	24.3	53.7	42.0	61.0
2nd birth	37.3	27.0	28.0	34.9	24.0
3rd or higher order birth	23.0	48.6	18.3	23.1	15.0

\*Figure does meet standard of reliability or precision.

1/ Includes cases where length of time too soon could not be calculated.

Table 5. Number of births in the last 5 years to women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent distribution by selected characteristics: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Intended	Unwanted	Mistimed		
			Total mistimed 1/	Less than 2 years too soon	2 or more years too soon
Births in last 5 years	13,638	2,969	4,364	1,677	2,542
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Using a method at conception (total)<sup>2</sup></b>					
Reason for unintended pregnancy <sup>3/</sup>					
Birth control method failed					
Mentioned	n.a.	36.9	38.2	33.2	42.1
Not mentioned	n.a.	63.2	61.8	66.8	57.9
Did not use birth control method properly					
Mentioned	n.a.	50.7	50.7	60.2	43.8
Not mentioned	n.a.	49.3	49.3	39.8	56.2
<b>Not using a method at conception (total)<sup>2</sup></b>					
Reason for non-use of contraception before unintended pregnancy <sup>3/</sup>					
Did not expect to have sex					
Mentioned	n.a.	39.0	21.3	21.3	20.7
Not mentioned	n.a.	61.0	78.7	78.7	79.3
Did not think could get pregnant					
Mentioned	n.a.	41.7	47.7	42.6	51.8
Not mentioned	n.a.	58.3	52.3	57.4	48.2
Did not really mind if got pregnant					
Mentioned	n.a.	9.2	22.3	32.0	15.3
Not mentioned	n.a.	90.8	77.7	68.0	84.7
Worried about the side effects of birth control					
Mentioned	n.a.	9.5	4.9	6.4	3.8
Not mentioned	n.a.	90.5	95.1	93.6	96.2
Partner did not want R to use method					
Mentioned	n.a.	6.0	7.0	3.5	9.9
Not mentioned	n.a.	94.0	93.0	96.5	90.2
Partner did not want to use method					
Mentioned	n.a.	9.7	6.9	4.2	9.1
Not mentioned	n.a.	90.3	93.1	95.8	90.9

n.a. Not applicable

1/ Includes cases where length of time too soon could not be calculated.

2/ Births since January 1999, which is beginning of contraceptive method calendar

3/ These were response choices to "choose all that apply" questions. Mentioned indicates they chose this category



Table 6. Number of first births in the last 5 years to women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent distribution by selected characteristics of the mother: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Total	Intended	Unwanted	Mistimed		
					Total mistimed 1/	Less than 2 years too soon	2 or more years too soon
Total 1/	8,481	100.0	63.9	8.5	27.6	31.3	68.8
Contraceptive use at 1st sex							
Used a method	5,470	100.0	66.4	6.6	27.0	28.4	71.6
Did not use a method	2,741	100.0	58.5	12.4	29.0	36.9	63.1
First sex voluntariness							
First sex was voluntary	7,427	100.0	67.3	7.9	24.8	32.5	67.5
First sex was not voluntary	634	100.0	44.3	11.0	44.8	32.8	67.2

1/ Includes births with missing information on how much too soon and births with missing information on the voluntariness of the mother's first sex, not shown separately.

Table 7. Number of births in January 1999 or later to women 15-44 years of age at interview, percent distribution by value on the scale of how happy she was to be pregnant, and mean scale value, by selected characteristics: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Total	Scale value 1/					Mean scale value
			1	2-4	5	6-9	10	
Percent distribution								
Total 2/	15,674	100.0	6.7	7.2	7.7	21.4	56.9	8.0
Wantedness at conception								
Intended	10,145	100.0	1.6	1.6	3.5	16.3	77.0	9.2
Mistimed 3/	3,294	100.0	7.7	15.3	16.0	38.0	23.0	6.4
Less than two years too soon	1,297	100.0	4.1	7.7	16.2	36.7	32.4	7.3
Two or more years too soon	1,881	100.0	10.6	20.8	15.6	36.5	16.4	5.8
Unwanted	2,206	100.0	28.5	21.3	14.5	19.9	15.9	4.6
With this partner								
Definitely yes	11,733	100.0	2.9	3.6	4.9	19.1	69.5	8.8
Probably yes	1,436	100.0	9.4	12.0	14.4	34.9	29.3	6.7
Probably no	1,025	100.0	15.7	22.4	17.1	29.5	15.3	5.4
Definitely no	1,455	100.0	28.6	21.1	16.2	22.0	12.2	4.4
Mother's perception of baby's father's wantedness								
Intended	10,249	100.0	3.4	3.7	4.1	16.4	72.5	8.9
Unwanted	2,146	100.0	15.4	16.1	15.6	31.8	21.1	5.8
Mistimed	2,684	100.0	12.3	12.6	12.3	30.9	31.9	6.6
Don't know	595	100.0	7.3	12.8	21.2	28.2	30.5	6.7
Ever used infertility services								
Yes	2539	100.0	3.7	5.5	4.3	16.2	70.3	8.7
No	13136	100.0	7.3	7.6	8.4	22.4	54.4	7.9
Current fecundity status								
Surgically sterile	3156	100.0	10.8	8.0	11.1	20.9	49.2	7.4
Impaired fecundity	1604	100.0	5.5	6.4	6.4	22.9	58.8	8.1
Fecund	10914	100.0	5.7	7.2	6.9	21.4	58.9	8.2

1/ Based on women's responses to a 1-10 scale, with 1 being "very unhappy to be pregnant" and 10 being "very happy to be pregnant."

2/ Includes births to women with missing data on wantedness at conception, length of mistiming, or wanted with this partner, not shown separately.

3/ Includes births to women with missing data on length of mistiming, not shown separately.

Note: Percents may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 8. Number of births in January 1999 or later to women 15-44 years of age at interview, percent distribution by value on the scale of how hard she was trying to become pregnant, and mean scale value, by selected characteristics: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Total	Scale value 1/					Mean scale value
			0	1-4	5	6-9	10	
Percent distribution								
Total 2/	15,654	100.0	15.8	15.7	17.4	19.9	31.3	5.9
Wantedness at conception								
Intended	10,136	100.0	4.8	7.7	15.3	26.0	46.3	7.6
Mistimed 3/	3,283	100.0	27.5	32.2	25.3	11.0	4.0	3.3
Less than two years too soon	1,297	100.0	21.3	26.4	31.1	14.2	6.9	4.0
Two or more years too soon	1,881	100.0	31.6	37.3	21.2	7.6	2.3	2.8
Unwanted	2,206	100.0	48.5	26.9	15.3	5.9	3.4	2.1
With this partner								
Definitely yes	11,724	100.0	8.5	11.6	16.8	23.1	39.9	6.9
Probably yes	1,436	100.0	30.3	20.1	24.1	16.3	9.2	3.8
Probably no	1,025	100.0	30.1	39.7	20.6	6.8	2.8	2.8
Definitely no	1,455	100.0	48.7	27.3	12.9	7.3	3.8	2.2
Mother's perception of baby's father's wantedness								
Intended	10,239	100.0	6.5	8.8	15.6	24.2	44.9	7.3
Unwanted	2,137	100.0	39.1	33.3	13.3	9.5	4.7	2.6
Mistimed	2,684	100.0	29.0	26.1	25.5	13.6	5.8	3.5
Don't know	595	100.0	30.9	22.4	24.9	13.8	7.7	3.6
Ever used infertility services								
Yes	2539	100.0	7.7	9.1	11.7	21.6	49.9	7.5
No	13116	100.0	17.3	16.9	18.5	19.6	27.7	5.6
Current fecundity status								
Surgically sterile	3156	100.0	23.0	18.5	18.2	12.9	27.4	5.1
Impaired fecundity	1604	100.0	19.3	11.9	14.2	19.2	35.3	6.0
Fecund	10894	100.0	13.1	15.4	17.6	22.1	31.8	6.1

1/ Based on women's responses to a 0-10 scale, with 0 being "trying hard not to get pregnant" and 10 being "trying hard to get pregnant."

2/ Includes births to women with missing data on wantedness at conception, length of mistiming, or wanted with this partner, not shown separately.

3/ Includes births to women with missing data on length of mistiming, not shown separately.

Note: Percents may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 9. Number of births in January 1999 or later to women 15-44 years of age at interview, percent distribution by value on the scale of how much she wanted to get pregnant, and mean scale value, according to selected characteristics: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Scale value 1/						Mean scale value
		Total	0	1-4	5	6-9	10	
		Percent distribution						
Total 2/	15,665	100.0	17.4	12.2	12.7	13.8	43.9	6.4
Wantedness at conception								
Intended	10,136	100.0	3.4	5.3	9.3	16.8	65.3	8.4
Mistimed 3/	3,294	100.0	31.9	25.1	24.6	12.3	6.2	3.4
Less than two years too soon	1,297	100.0	18.1	21.4	29.1	21.1	10.3	4.5
Two or more years too soon	1,881	100.0	41.5	28.9	20.3	6.9	2.4	2.5
Unwanted	2,206	100.0	60.1	24.5	10.3	2.5	2.7	1.5
With this partner								
Definitely yes	11,724	100.0	7.4	9.0	11.2	15.9	56.5	7.7
Probably yes	1,436	100.0	33.1	18.8	22.0	14.8	11.2	3.7
Probably no	1,025	100.0	44.1	25.4	19.6	6.1	4.8	2.5
Definitely no	1,455	100.0	62.8	22.4	10.4	1.3	3.1	1.5
Mother's perception of baby's father's wantedness								
Intended	10,249	100.0	5.8	6.2	11.2	16.0	60.8	8.1
Unwanted	2,137	100.0	49.2	23.6	10.6	8.3	8.3	2.5
Mistimed	2,684	100.0	32.3	24.7	16.7	11.1	15.2	3.7
Don't know	595	100.0	35.8	18.4	26.9	8.3	10.6	3.5
Ever used infertility services								
Yes	2539	100.0	8.4	8.2	7.5	13.7	62.2	7.9
No	13126	100.0	19.1	13.0	13.7	13.8	40.4	6.1
Current fecundity status								
Surgically sterile	3156	100.0	25.6	15.1	13.5	10.5	35.3	5.3
Impaired fecundity	1604	100.0	19.0	11.5	10.8	15.5	43.2	6.4
Fecund	10904	100.0	14.8	11.5	12.7	14.5	46.6	6.7

1/ Based on women's responses to a 0-10 scale, with 0 being "you wanted to avoid a pregnancy" and 10 being "you wanted to get pregnant."

2/ Includes births to women with missing data on wantedness at conception, length of mistiming, or wanted with this partner, not shown separately.

3/ Includes births to women with missing data on length of mistiming, not shown separately.

Note: Percents may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 10. Number of women 15-44 years of age at interview and percent in specified categories of current contraceptive method use and nonuse, by selected characteristics: United States, 2002

Characteristic	Number in thousands	Using a method					Not using a method				
		Total using a method	Sterilization	Hormonal	Condom	Other methods	No current use, used a method in past 3 months	PPSP or sterile	Never had sex	No sex past 3 months	Had sex in past 3 months- no method used
Total	61,561	65.0	22.4	23.0	11.1	5.4	3.1	12.6	10.9	7.2	4.4
Age											
15-19 years	9,834	36.0	0.0	21.5	8.5	1.5	4.5	5.4	49.5	6.7	2.4
20-24 years	9,840	65.0	2.7	38.9	14.0	5.2	4.3	13.0	11.4	6.6	4.1
25-29 years	9,249	71.2	13.1	31.7	14.0	9.3	3.1	15.1	2.7	6.2	4.8
30-44 years	32,638	71.9	37.8	16.2	10.2	5.5	2.2	13.9	1.4	7.8	4.9
Fecundity status											
Contraceptively sterile	13,518	99.9	99.9	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	0.1	n.a	n.a	n.a
Impaired fecundity	7,263	45.0	1.1	23.8	10.4	8.4	1.4	32.3	2.2	7.1	13.4
Fecund	39,858	58.2	0.5	31.2	15.3	6.8	4.5	11.2	16.4	9.8	4.3
Method discontinuation											
Discontinued a method due to dissatisfaction	25,067	76.9	28.6	23.2	13.5	8.0	3.6	12.2	0.6	5.8	4.5
Never discontinued a method due to dissatisfaction	29,251.8	70.7	22.7	28.5	11.8	4.4	3.4	14.5	1.1	9.2	4.4
Never used a method	7,225.3	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	6.3	86.1	3.7	3.9
Birth history											
Never had a birth	25,622	50.1	2.4	29.1	11.2	3.3	4.3	11.0	26.1	9.1	3.6
Had a birth	35,938	75.5	36.7	18.6	11.0	6.9	2.3	13.7	n.a	5.8	5.0
Any unintended birth	23,476	76.3	39.7	16.6	10.7	7.0	2.4	12.4	n.a	6.6	4.7
Only intended births	12,462	74.1	31.0	22.5	11.8	6.7	2.2	16.2	n.a	4.4	5.3
Birth intentions											
Intends no (more) births	32,391	74.5	42.5	15.7	8.9	5.1	2.4	11.6	2.5	7.2	4.2
Intends future birth(s)	28,231	54.2	0.1	31.2	13.5	5.6	3.9	13.5	20.7	7.1	4.5
Doesn't know intent	939	58.5	0.9	29.8	16.3	10.1	1.5	19.2	3.8	12.5	5.9
First sex voluntariness											
First sex was voluntary	46,599	73.2	26.0	25.5	12.3	6.1	3.3	13.9	n.a	7.8	4.8
First sex was not voluntary	4,241	68.8	27.8	16.7	13.2	7.8	3.3	16.7	n.a	6.9	7.0
Contraceptive use at 1st sex 1/											
Used a method	34,107	74.5	22.4	28.7	13.4	5.9	4.1	13.7	n.a	8.0	3.7
Did not use a method	20,083	69.4	30.6	18.7	11.2	6.5	2.4	14.9	n.a	8.5	7.1

Hormonal methods include: Pill, Depo-Provera injectable, Lunelle injectable, emergency contraception, contraceptive patch, Norplant implants

PPSP or sterile: preg, post partum, seeking preg or sterile (for sterile: codes 33,34,35,36,38)

1/ Limited to sexually experienced

n.a. Not applicable

