

Lit Scan

Facts & Figures from the Colorado Literacy Research Initiative

Volume 7 - Number 4

April 16, 2003

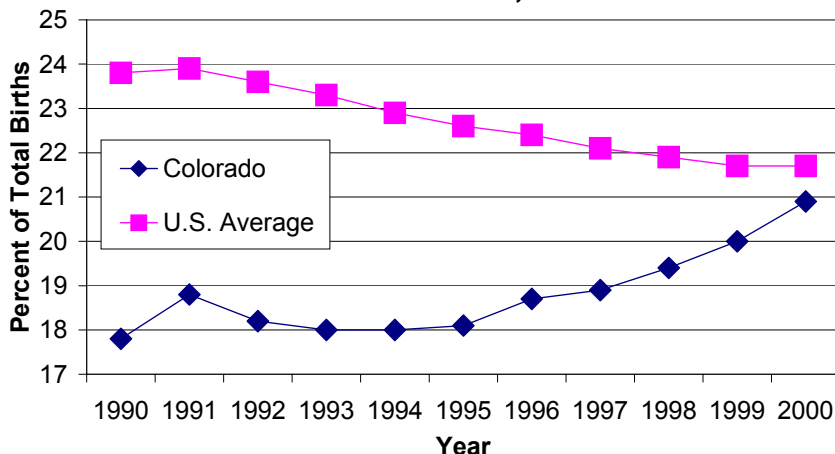
Births to Mothers with Less Than 12 Years of Education On the Rise in Colorado, 1990-2000

In 1990, Colorado ranked 22nd among the 50 states and D.C. on percent of total births to mothers with less than 12 years of education with only 17.8%. By 2000, the state ranked 34th on this statistic with 20.9% of births being to poorly educated mothers. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of such births nationally decreased modestly from 23.8% to 21.7%. (See Chart 1.)

Highlights

- Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of Colorado births to mothers with less than 12 years of education climbed from 17.8% to 20.9%.
- As a result, the state plunged from 22nd to 34th place on this statistic among the 50 states and D.C.
- In 2000, the percentage of such births for Denver, 37.7%, was almost double the state percentage.
- While births to mothers with less than 12 years of education are rising in Colorado, births to teen mothers are declining.

Chart 1.
Percent of Total Births to Mothers with Less Than 12 Years of Education, Colorado & U.S., 1990-2000

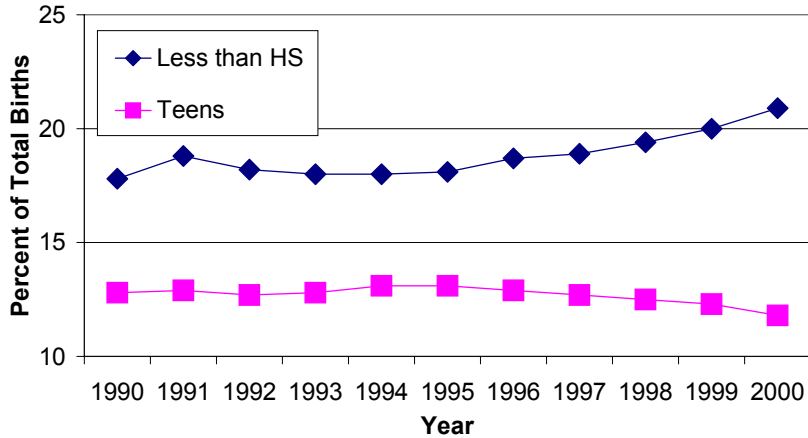


Notably, this trend cannot be explained as a consequence of young women becoming mothers while still in their



Lit Scan – Volume 7 – Number 4 – April 16, 2003
Births to Mothers with Less Than 12 Years of Education
On the Rise in Colorado, 1990-2000

Chart 2.
Colorado's Percent of Total Births to
Teen Mothers & Mothers with Less Than
12 Years of Education, 1990-2000



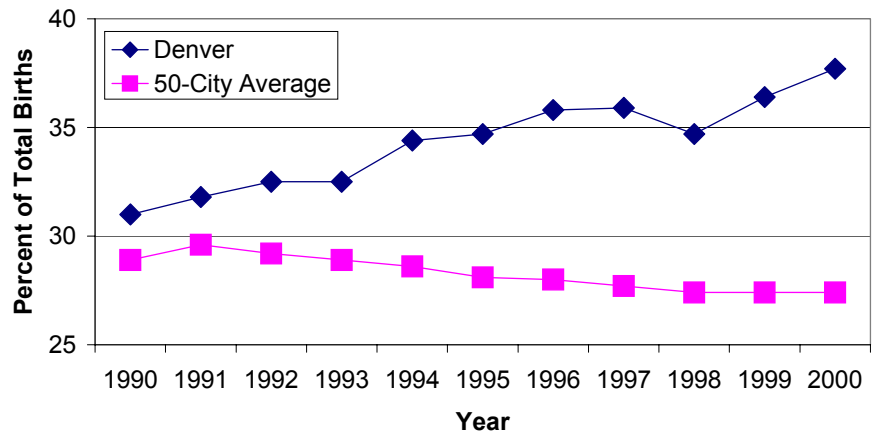
teens. Statewide, the percentage of births to teen mothers has actually declined, while the percentage of births to mothers with less than 12 years of schooling has increased. (See Chart 2.)

In 2000, Denver ranked 44th out of the top 50 U.S. cities on percent of total births to mothers with less than 12 years of education with 37.7%, up from 31.0% in 1990 and almost double the state percentage for 2000. (See Chart 3.)

As for the state as a whole, this trend in Denver cannot be explained away by births to teen mothers. (See Chart 4.)

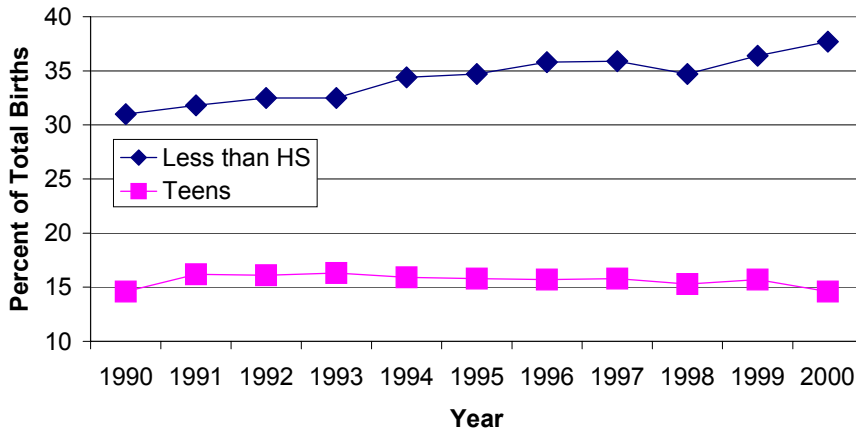


Percent of Total Births to Mothers with
Less Than 12 Years of Education,
Denver & 50-City Average, 1990-2000



Lit Scan – Volume 7 – Number 4 – April 16, 2003
Births to Mothers with Less Than 12 Years of Education
On the Rise in Colorado, 1990-2000

Chart 4.
Denver's Percent of Total Births to
Teen Mothers & Mothers with Less Than
12 Years of Education, 1990-2000



Through Adult Education and Family Literacy programs, the Center for At-Risk Education (CARE) of the Colorado Department of Education supports multiple efforts to enable mothers—of all ages—who did not graduate from high school to resume their own educational journeys.

Whether these mothers earn GED diplomas that qualify them for better jobs, or go on to pursue higher education and careers, the fact that they themselves completed their education is a major

achievement for both them and for society. Such achievements improve dramatically the odds that their children will get a good education, too, breaking the often vicious generational cycle of low educational attainment and poverty. Better-educated parents tend to create home environments that encourage learning by creating stronger linkages between home and school and by transmitting to children high expectations that they will achieve academically.

SOURCES

- **The Right Start Online.** Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/rightstart2003/>.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about this study or other projects of the Colorado Literacy Research Initiative, contact: Keith Curry Lance, Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Suite 309, Denver, CO 80203-1799, (303) 866-6737, fax (303) 866-6940, e-mail lance_k@cde.state.co.us