



# Alabama Vital Stats

Alabama Department of Public Health

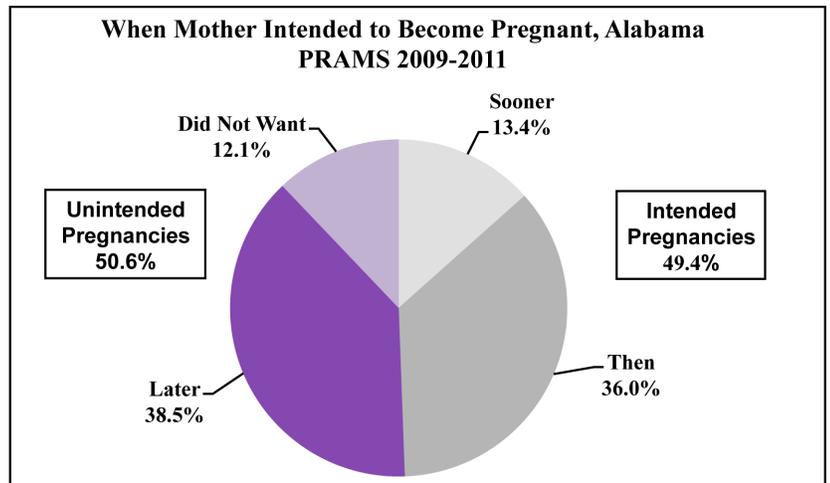
www.adph.org/healthstats

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## Unintended Pregnancies in Alabama, 2009-2011

### Importance

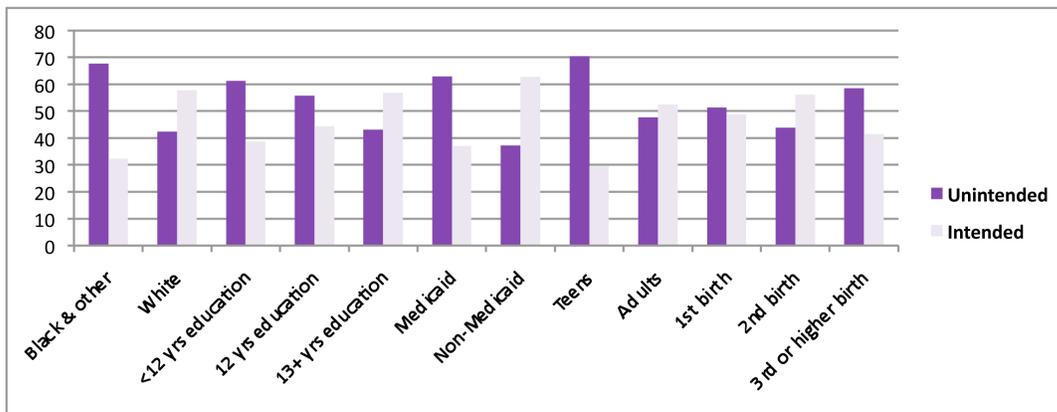
According to the CDC, unintended pregnancy is defined as a pregnancy that is mistimed, unplanned or unwanted at the time of conception. There is a link between unintended pregnancy and poor outcomes for the mom and infant.<sup>1</sup> Alabama PRAMS (Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System) asks women who have recently given birth, "Thinking back to just before you got pregnant with your new baby, how did you feel about becoming pregnant?"



### What Alabama moms are saying about unintended pregnancy:

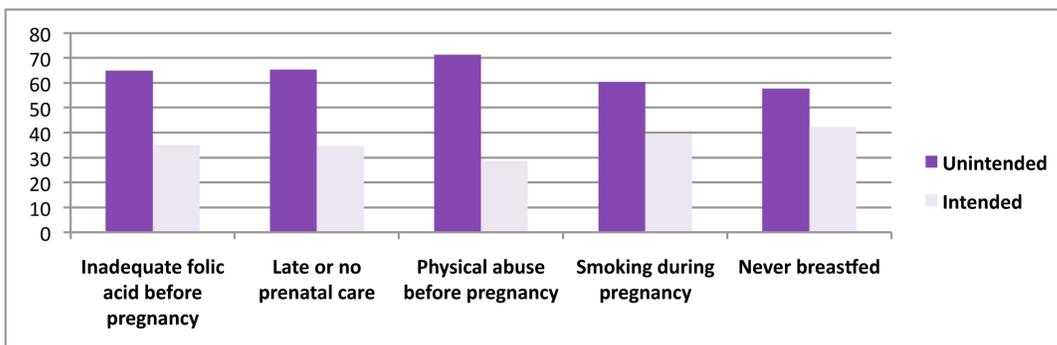
- "I think it is very important for mothers to plan ahead and begin taking care of themselves months before they plan on trying to become pregnant."
- "I was unaware that I was pregnant until the morning I had the baby."
- "All ladies make sure you have somebody to be there for you and the baby and a job before getting pregnant."
- "We didn't know we were going to get pregnant so soon after I had my baby..."
- "I had two children already. Didn't want to bring another child into the world until we were more settled and doing better! It's kind of a financial problem."

## Unintended Pregnancy by Maternal Characteristics, Alabama PRAMS 2009-2011



Although all women of childbearing age may have an unintended pregnancy, teens are at a greater risk. Other risk factors include black and other race, less education, Medicaid status and third or higher birth.<sup>2</sup>

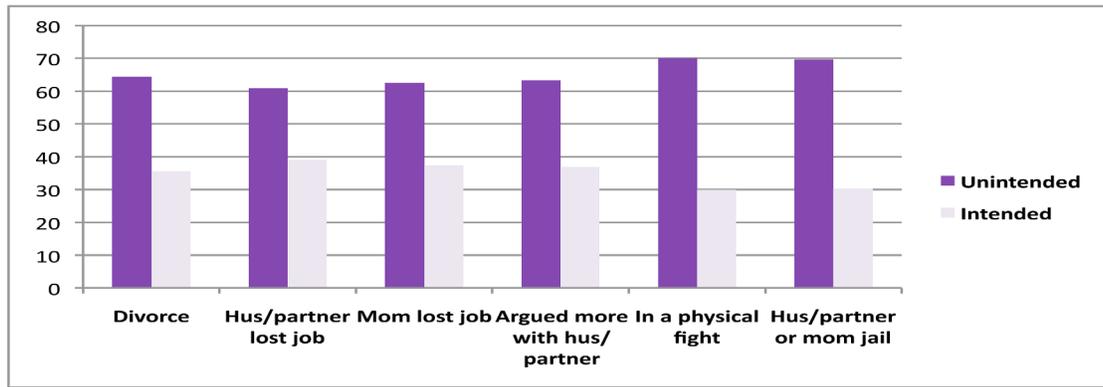
## Health Related Behaviors and Outcomes by Pregnancy Intention, Alabama PRAMS 2009-2011



There is a link between unintended pregnancy and a delay in prenatal care. Mothers with unintended pregnancies are also more likely to engage in unhealthy behaviors such as smoking during pregnancy and not consuming adequate amounts of folic acid before pregnancy. These mothers are also more likely to be physically abused before pregnancy and to never initiate breastfeeding.<sup>3</sup>

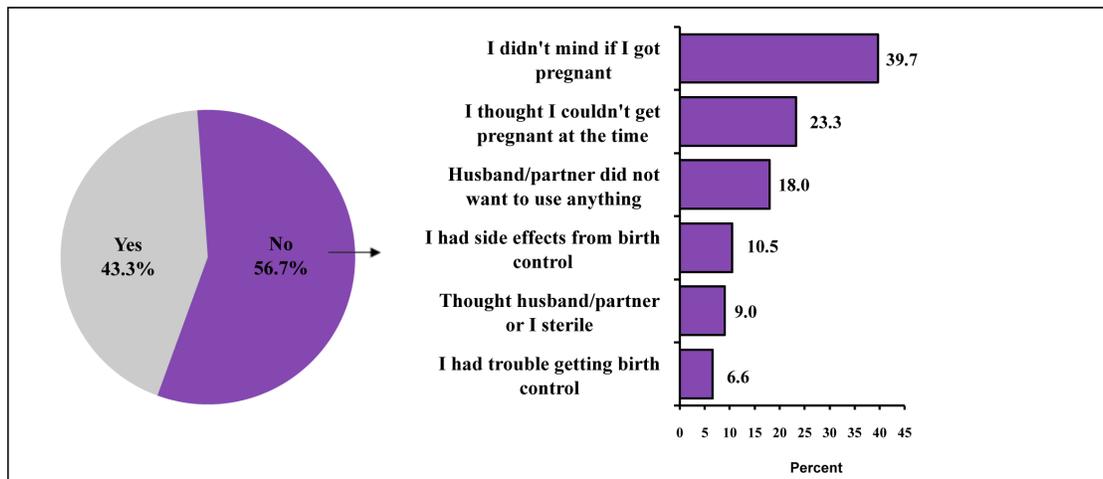
## Stressful life events (during the 12 months before the birth)

Mothers who had not intended to become pregnant were more likely to experience stressful events such as divorce, job loss, arguments, physical fights, and incarceration than mothers who intended to become pregnant.



## Mother Not Planning Pregnancy using Birth Control at Conception, 2009-2011

Among moms who were not planning a pregnancy, 56.7% stated that they weren't using birth control at the time of conception. Their main reasons for not using birth control at the time of conception were that they didn't mind getting pregnant, they didn't think they could get pregnant at the time, or their husband/partner did not want to use anything.



### Recommendations:

- Increase access to family planning services, including education and access to reliable forms of contraception.
- Educate men and women of reproductive age about the risks of unintended pregnancy.
- Screening a woman about her history with an unplanned pregnancy is useful in assessing her risk for a future unplanned pregnancy.<sup>4</sup>

### CDC recommends that all women of reproductive age<sup>1</sup>:

- Take folic acid
- Maintain a healthy diet and weight
- Quit tobacco use
- Talk to your health care provider about management of chronic conditions
- Use effective contraception if you are sexually active

This fact sheet was produced by Qun Zheng, M.S., Izza Cagle, M.P.H. and Albert Woolbright, PhD, of the Alabama Center for Health Statistics, Statistical Analysis Division. The Alabama Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a joint surveillance project of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Alabama Department of Public Health. The PRAMS survey collects state-specific, population-based data on maternal attitudes, behaviors and experiences before, during and shortly after pregnancy. To view the most recent PRAMS publications, please visit <http://www.adph.org/healthstats/>. For more information about PRAMS or to see if PRAMS data might be useful in your program area, contact Izza Cagle, PRAMS Project Coordinator, at (334) 206-2689.



### Resources:

- Information on unplanned pregnancy, including tips, links to additional web sites and organizations: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/before-you-get-pregnant/unplanned-pregnancy.cfm#pubs>
- Alabama Family Planning Program: <http://www.adph.org/FamilyPlanning/Default.asp?id=1439>

### References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Unintended Pregnancy Prevention. <<http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/unintendedpregnancy/>>, accessed February, 2013.
2. Finer LB and Zolna MR, Unintended pregnancy in the United States: incidence and disparities, 2006, *Contraception*, 2011, 84(5):478-485.
3. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Fast Facts: The Consequences of Unplanned Pregnancy. <<http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/fast-facts-consequences-of-unplanned-pregnancy.pdf>>, accessed May, 2013.
4. Kuroki LM. Allsworth JE. Redding CA. Blume JD. Peipert JF. Is a previous unplanned pregnancy a risk factor for a subsequent unplanned pregnancy? *Am J Obstet Gynecol*. 2008;199:517.e1-517.e7.