



November 2014

# MINNESOTA BIRTHS YET TO REBOUND TO PRE-RECESSION LEVEL

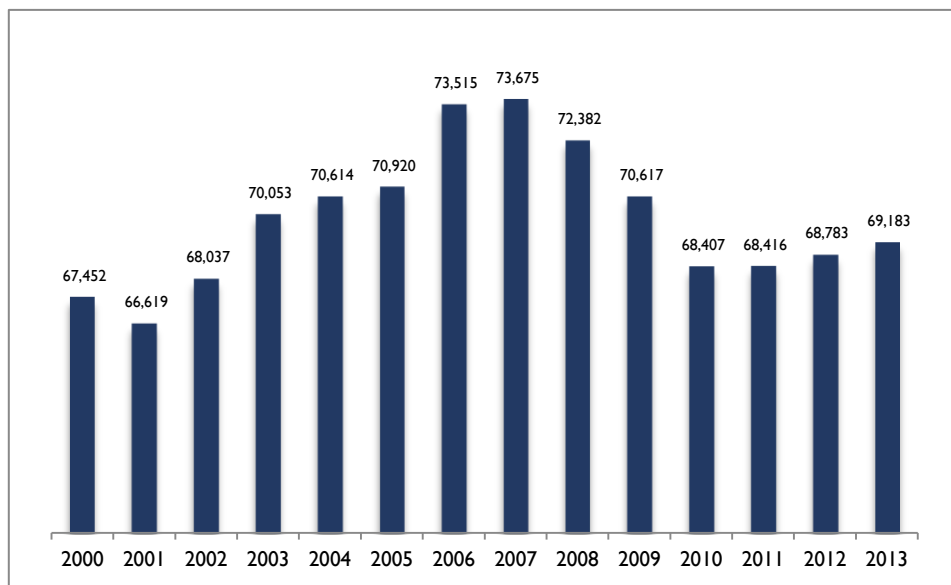
## MORE DIVERSITY IN STATE'S NURSERIES

By Megan Dayton

A MN State Demographic Center analysis of recent birth trends finds that the number of births in Minnesota has yet to rebound to the level seen before the latest recession. Minnesotan families welcomed 69,183 babies<sup>1</sup> in 2013, nearly 4,500 fewer births than the most recent peak year in 2007. Birth certificates from the Minnesota Department of Health reveal that there were 73,675 births in Minnesota in 2007, the highest number in four decades.

However, the state saw a relatively sharp decline in the number of births between 2007 and 2011, leveling off at 68,416 births in 2011. Since 2011, Minnesota births have increased by about 300-400 births each year to climb to 69,183 births in 2013 (the most recent year for which data are available).

Figure 1: Total Births in Minnesota, 2000-2013



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics.

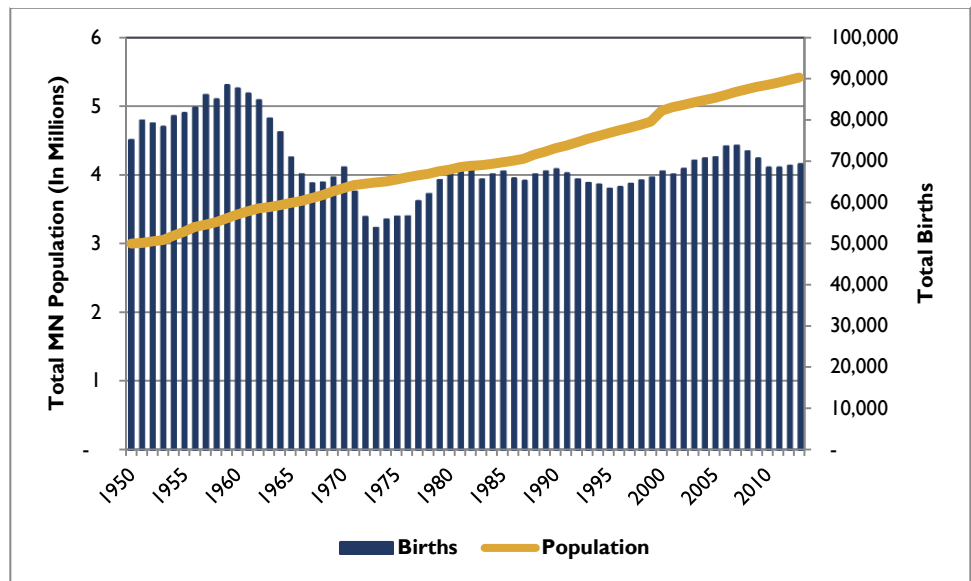
<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, “babies”, “births”, and “newborns” are used interchangeably and refer to live births occurring to mothers who reside in Minnesota, regardless where the birth occurred.

## POPULATION GROWTH OUTPACING GROWTH IN BIRTHS

The total number of births since about 1980 has been relatively stable or increasing slightly during certain spans (see Figure 2). But when total births are compared to the far more rapid increase in the total population of Minnesota, the significance of this trend is clear: because the population has been increasing, births per person have been on a relatively steady decrease. Figure 3 shows the fertility rate (births divided by total population) in Minnesota over time.

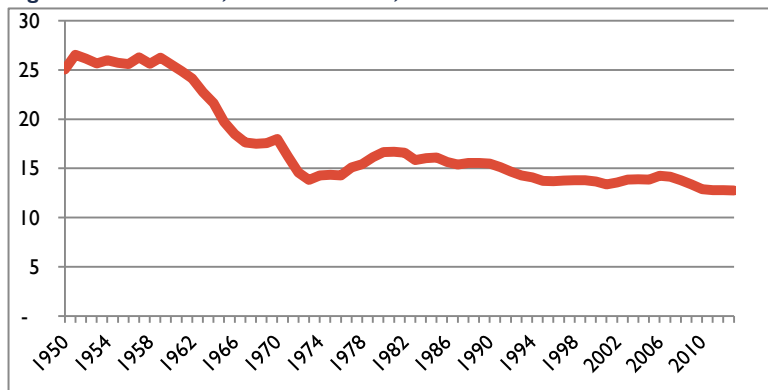
The declining birth rate in Minnesota is nothing new. The birth rate fell from a peak of 17 births per person in 1981 to 13 births per person in 2001, a nearly 20% decline. A brief, but steady increase of almost 6.5% occurred between 2001 and 2006; however, this was followed by a sharp decline of over -10% through 2011. Despite a recent increase in total births since 2011, this modest gain has still been outpaced by total population growth. Because of this trend, the fertility rate during the same time period has been still decreasing by an average of -0.1% annually.

Figure 2: Total Births and Population in Minnesota, 1950-2013



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics.

Figure 3: Births Per 1,000 Minnesotans, 1950-2013



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics; U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates.

Just as occurred nationally during the slumping economy during and following the Great Recession,<sup>2</sup> it appears that some Minnesotans may have chosen to postpone or forgo having children during a period of financial uncertainty and economic hardship. A 2010 report from the Pew Research Center<sup>3</sup> found greater declines in fertility in states most affected by the economic downturn. The causality of the decline in fertility remains uncertain, however; the Pew study also cites survey results showing many families reported delaying births due to economic factors.

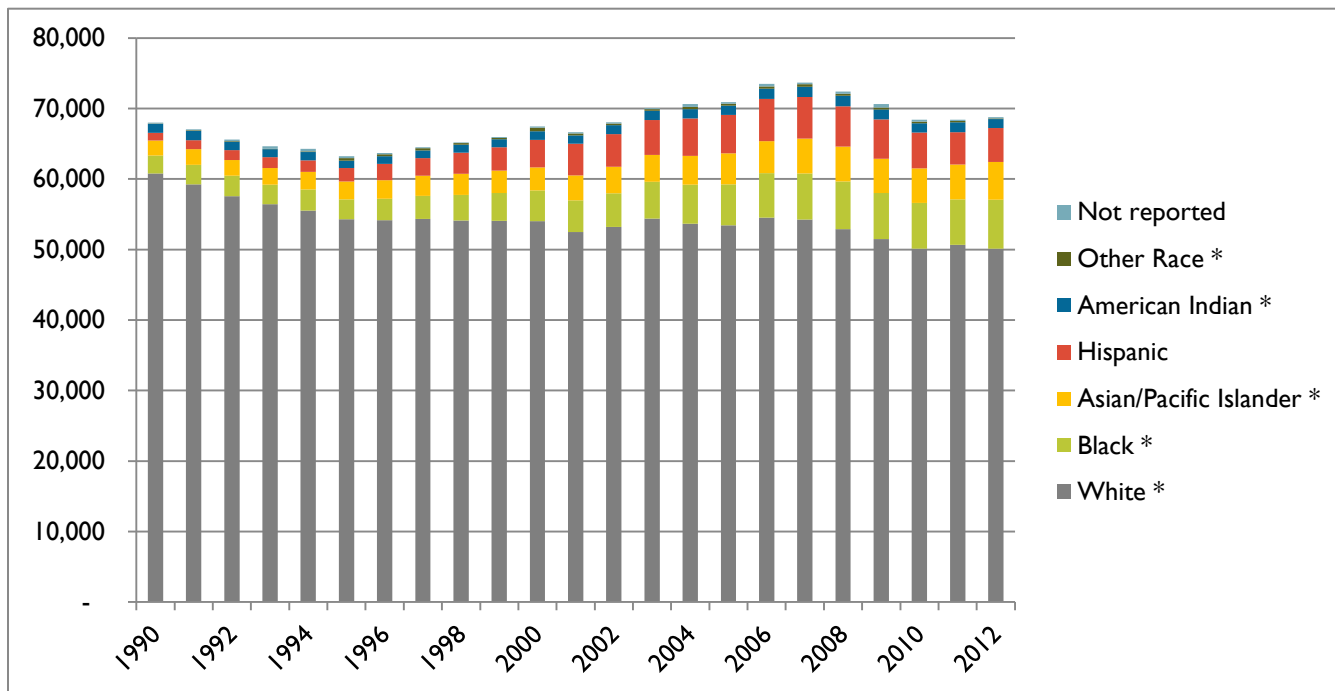
<sup>2</sup> "Births Decline in Minnesota in 2008 and 2009," Population Notes, March 2011, OSD-11-143.

<sup>3</sup> "U.S. Birth Rate Decline Linked to Recession," Pew Research Center, April 6, 2010. <http://pewsocialtrends.org/2010/04/06/us-birth-rate-decline-linked-to-recession/>

## NURSERY DIVERSITY

Birth certificate forms ask mothers to indicate their race, and therefore, data on births report the race of the mother. Since 1990, growing numbers of Minnesota’s newborns have mothers who self-identify as one or more races other than non-Hispanic white, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Total Births by Race of Mother, Minnesota, 1990-2012



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics; U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates.  
 \* Groups are non-Hispanic. "Other race" includes unknown race, but indicated non-Hispanic ethnicity. "Hispanic" may be of any race, including unknown race but Hispanic ethnicity indicated.  
 "Not reported" includes mothers who did not indicate race, nor ethnicity.

As the state has become more diverse, so too have births, which in time will further advance the racial diversification of the total population. In 1990, births to non-Hispanic white mothers accounted for over 90% of births in Minnesota. Twenty-two years later, in 2012, births to non-Hispanic white mothers accounted for less than three-quarters of all births.

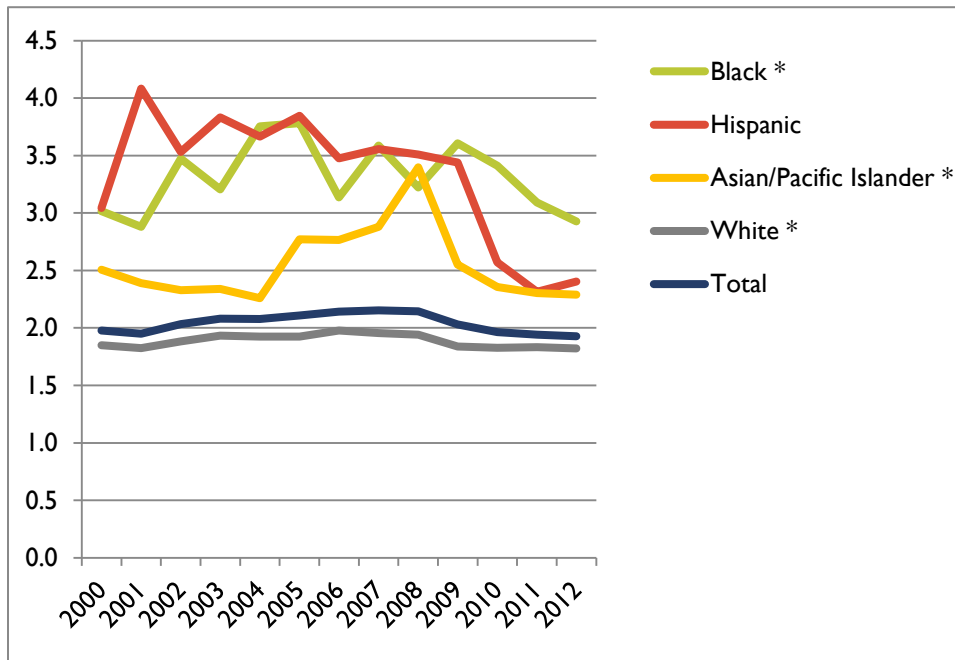
Since 1990, all races have experienced an increase in the overall number of births — except for non-Hispanic White mothers, with a decrease of more than 8,400 births between 1990 and 2012. Annual births to non-Hispanic White mothers have been relatively constant (just over 50,000) since 1993, the year that saw the fewest total births between 1990 and the present. Virtually all of the increase in total births since the low point in 1993 is due to births by mothers of color.

The total fertility rate, detailed in Figure 5, expresses the total number of children a woman is likely to have in a given lifetime. Since 2007 the decline in total births is primarily due to a decline in the total fertility rate of Asian, Black, and Hispanic women. Black women in Minnesota (including African American and African-born) have the highest total fertility rate yet. Historically, Minnesota’s White women have maintained total fertility at or below “replacement.”<sup>4</sup> In 2011, the total fertility rate of Minnesota’s Asian women and Hispanic women dropped to near replacement as well. The total fertility rate of African American women had a significant drop after 2009 as well but the rate still rests just under 3.

<sup>4</sup> Replacement fertility is defined as the total fertility rate at which women would give birth to only enough children to replace themselves and their partners. Replacement fertility for industrialized countries is 2.1 to account for male-female ratios and infant mortality.

The growing numbers of babies whose mothers are races other than non-Hispanic White reflects more immigrant mothers represented among those giving birth in Minnesota. In 1990, just over 5 percent, or 1 in 20 births in our state was to a mother who was born outside of the United States. By 2012 nearly 18%, or more than 1 in 6 babies born in Minnesota, had an immigrant mother (see Figure 7).

**Figure 5: Total Fertility Rate by Race of Mother, Minnesota, 2000-2012**



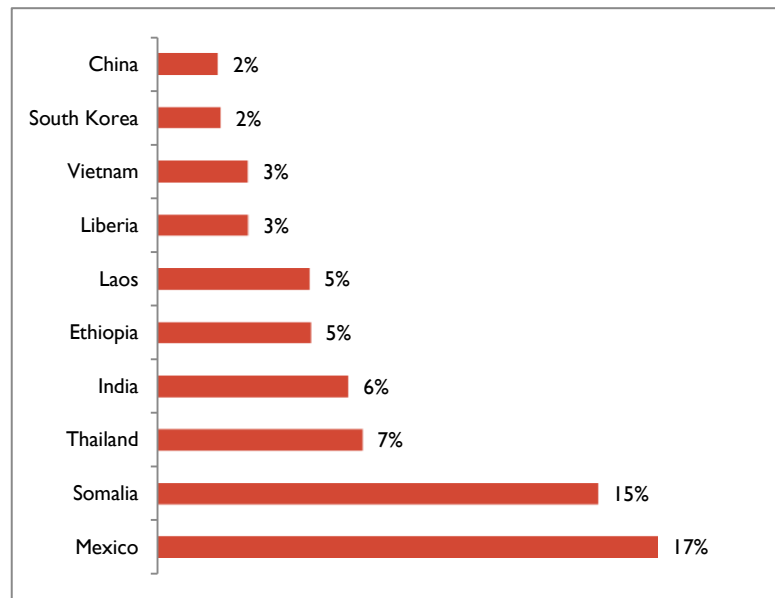
Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics; U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates.  
 \* Groups are non-Hispanic. "Other race" includes unknown race, but indicated non-Hispanic ethnicity. "Hispanic" may be of any race, including unknown race but Hispanic ethnicity indicated. "Not reported" includes mothers who did not indicate race, nor ethnicity. Rate for American Indians is not shown in this graph, because it was extremely unstable year-to-year due to the relatively small population. Please see Tables 1 and 2 at the end of this document for birth totals and total fertility rates for all race groups.

Among all births occurring in 2012 in Minnesota, 56,581 babies were born to mothers native to the U.S., while 12,202 babies were born to immigrant mothers.

The foreign-born mothers giving birth in Minnesota hail from numerous countries around the globe. Considering only births to immigrant mothers, Mexico was the most common country of origin for the mother (17% of births to foreign-born mothers), followed closely by Somalia (15%). Minnesota mothers originally from Thailand, India, Ethiopia, Laos, Liberia, Vietnam, South Korea, and China also had significant shares of babies (see Figure 6).

In terms of births, Minnesota families in which the mother was born in Mexico welcomed 2,053 babies, followed by 1,808 babies born to Somalia-born mothers, and 840 babies born to mothers originally born in Thailand. Between 200 and 800 babies were born to families in which the mother hailed from India, Ethiopia, Laos, Liberia, Vietnam, South Korea, China, Canada and Guatemala (respectively, in descending order of births). Additionally, between 75 and 199 babies apiece were born to Minnesota mothers originally from El Salvador, Ecuador, Burma (Myanmar), Kenya, Philippines, Nigeria, Russia, Cambodia, Germany, Ukraine, Honduras, Sudan and Ghana (respectively, in descending order), while more than 2,000 births were to mothers from other countries.

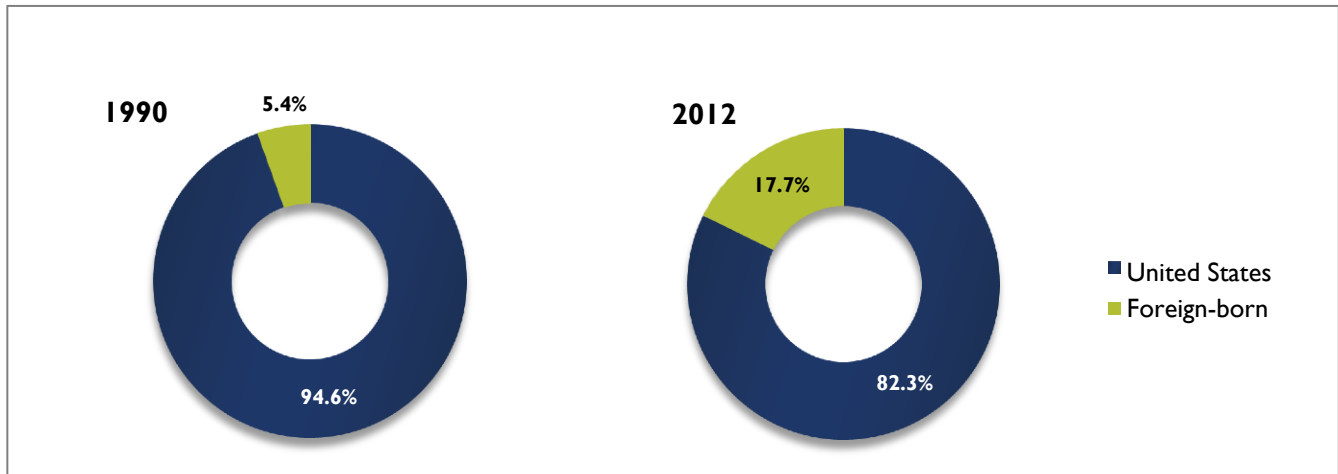
**Figure 6: Among Births to Foreign-Born Mothers Only, Percent of Births by Mother's Country of Origin, Minnesota, 2012**



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics.  
 \* Representing the 10 most common foreign countries of birth among mothers giving birth in Minnesota

As a group, the Minnesotans being born today are more likely to racially identify as children of color, and have more influences from other communities around the world, than at any time in our state’s history. This has implications for health care and child care settings most immediately, and the public education system in five or six years, when these children will enter kindergarten. Cultural competency will be required from those professionals serving and interacting with these growing numbers of youth whose influences span the globe, and culturally-tailored approaches may be needed in the classroom, the clinic, and other spheres of public life. The growing racial and cultural diversity seen among births will continue to diversify the total population of the state.

**Figure 7: Percent of All Births By Birthplace of Mother, Minnesota, 1990 and 2012**



Source: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics

While it appears certain that a growing share of babies born in Minnesota in the years to come will be children of color, it remains to be seen whether total fertility rates and thus the total number of babies will climb over 70,000 annually again as we move further away from the most recent recession. If Minnesota’s overall population growth continues to outpace the growth in births, our state will continue to become older on balance as the size of older age cohorts will predominate over younger ones.

**Table 1: Total Births By Race of Mother, Minnesota, 1990 and 2000-2012**

|                          | 1990   | 2000   | 2001   | 2002   | 2003   | 2004   | 2005   | 2006   | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   | 2010   | 2011   | 2012   |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| White *                  | 60,798 | 54,017 | 52,459 | 53,215 | 54,376 | 53,650 | 53,429 | 54,507 | 54,226 | 52,899 | 51,500 | 50,101 | 50,640 | 50,109 |
| Black *                  | 2,549  | 4,342  | 4,503  | 4,759  | 5,238  | 5,559  | 5,821  | 6,323  | 6,575  | 6,750  | 6,536  | 6,506  | 6,457  | 6,957  |
| American Indian *        | 1,281  | 1,198  | 1,217  | 1,309  | 1,343  | 1,295  | 1,280  | 1,473  | 1,440  | 1,493  | 1,407  | 1,319  | 1,385  | 1,265  |
| Asian/Pacific Islander * | 2,132  | 3,281  | 3,548  | 3,744  | 3,819  | 4,067  | 4,384  | 4,541  | 4,951  | 4,957  | 4,845  | 4,897  | 4,963  | 5,354  |
| Other Race *             | 63     | 494    | 239    | 230    | 210    | 346    | 311    | 323    | 344    | 286    | 285    | 206    | 182    | 106    |
| Hispanic                 | 1,059  | 3,921  | 4,477  | 4,629  | 4,910  | 5,330  | 5,477  | 5,986  | 5,902  | 5,711  | 5,582  | 5,098  | 4,593  | 4,811  |
| Not reported             | 103    | 199    | 176    | 151    | 157    | 367    | 218    | 362    | 237    | 286    | 462    | 280    | 196    | 181    |
| Total                    | 67,985 | 67,452 | 66,619 | 68,037 | 70,053 | 70,614 | 70,920 | 73,515 | 73,675 | 72,382 | 70,617 | 68,407 | 68,416 | 68,783 |

**Table 2: Total Fertility Rate By Race of Mother, Minnesota, 1990 and 2000-2012**

|                          | 1990 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| White *                  | 1.8  | 1.9  | 1.8  | 1.9  | 1.9  | 1.9  | 1.9  | 2.0  | 2.0  | 1.9  | 1.8  | 1.8  | 1.8  | 1.8  |
| Black *                  | 3.1  | 3.0  | 2.9  | 3.5  | 3.2  | 3.8  | 3.8  | 3.1  | 3.6  | 3.2  | 3.6  | 3.4  | 3.1  | 2.9  |
| American Indian *        | 2.7  | 3.0  | 2.0  | 5.4  | 5.3  | 4.0  | 2.5  | 4.2  | 4.9  | 3.1  | 3.2  | 4.1  | 4.2  | 3.6  |
| Asian/Pacific Islander * | 3.1  | 2.5  | 2.4  | 2.3  | 2.3  | 2.3  | 2.8  | 2.8  | 2.9  | 3.4  | 2.6  | 2.4  | 2.3  | 2.3  |
| Hispanic                 | 2.4  | 3.0  | 4.1  | 3.5  | 3.8  | 3.7  | 3.8  | 3.5  | 3.6  | 3.5  | 3.4  | 2.6  | 2.3  | 2.4  |
| Total                    | 1.9  | 2.0  | 2.0  | 2.0  | 2.1  | 2.1  | 2.1  | 2.1  | 2.2  | 2.1  | 2.0  | 2.0  | 1.9  | 1.9  |

Sources for above tables: Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics; U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates.  
 \* Groups are non-Hispanic. "Other race" includes unknown race, but indicated non-Hispanic ethnicity. "Hispanic" may be of any race, including unknown race but Hispanic ethnicity indicated. "Not reported" includes mothers who did not indicate race, nor ethnicity. Rate for "Other Race" is not shown in this table, because it was extremely unstable year-to-year due to the relatively small population.