

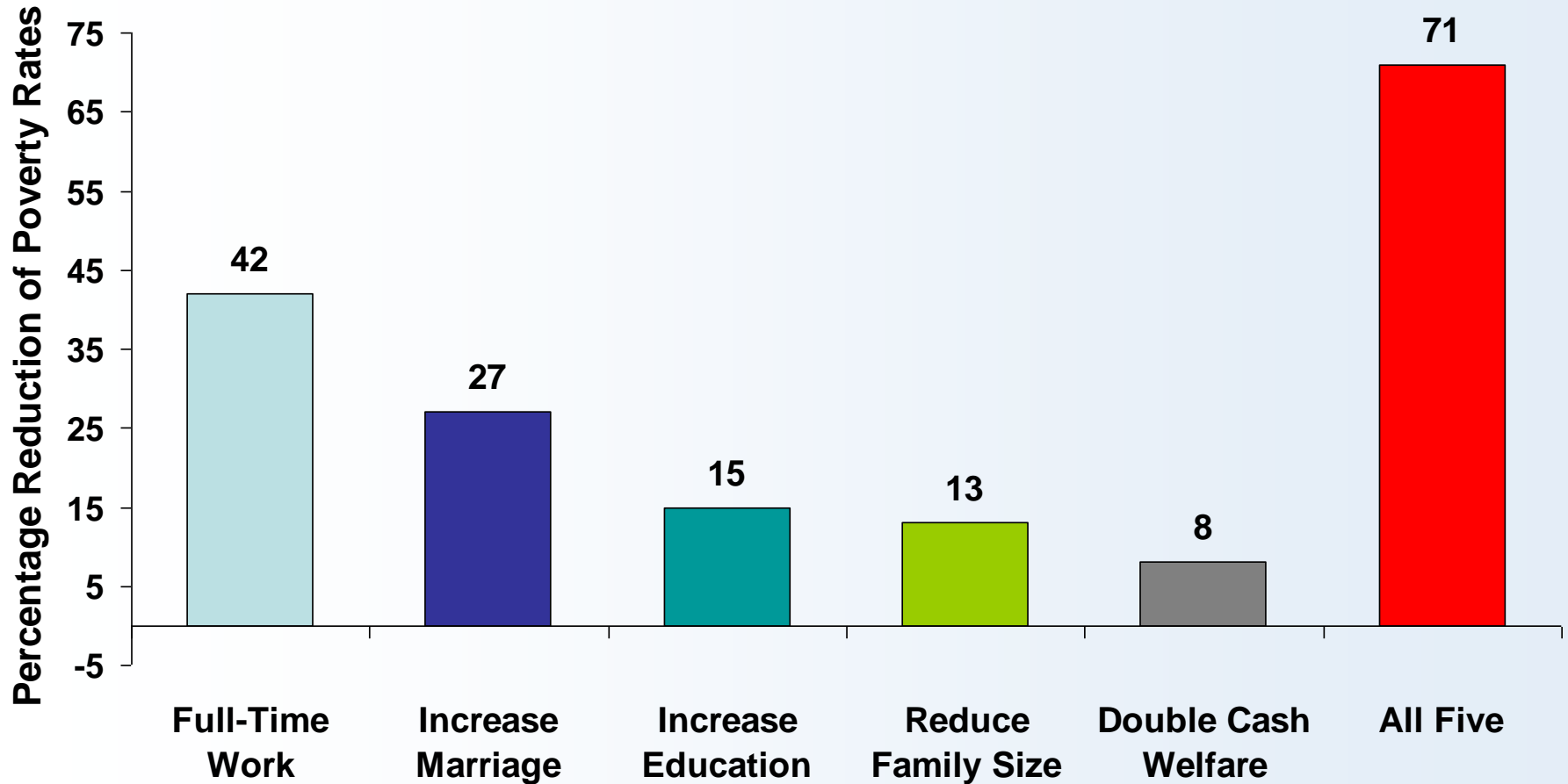
Marriage, Nonmarital Births, and Child Well-Being

Ron Haskins

The Brookings Institution

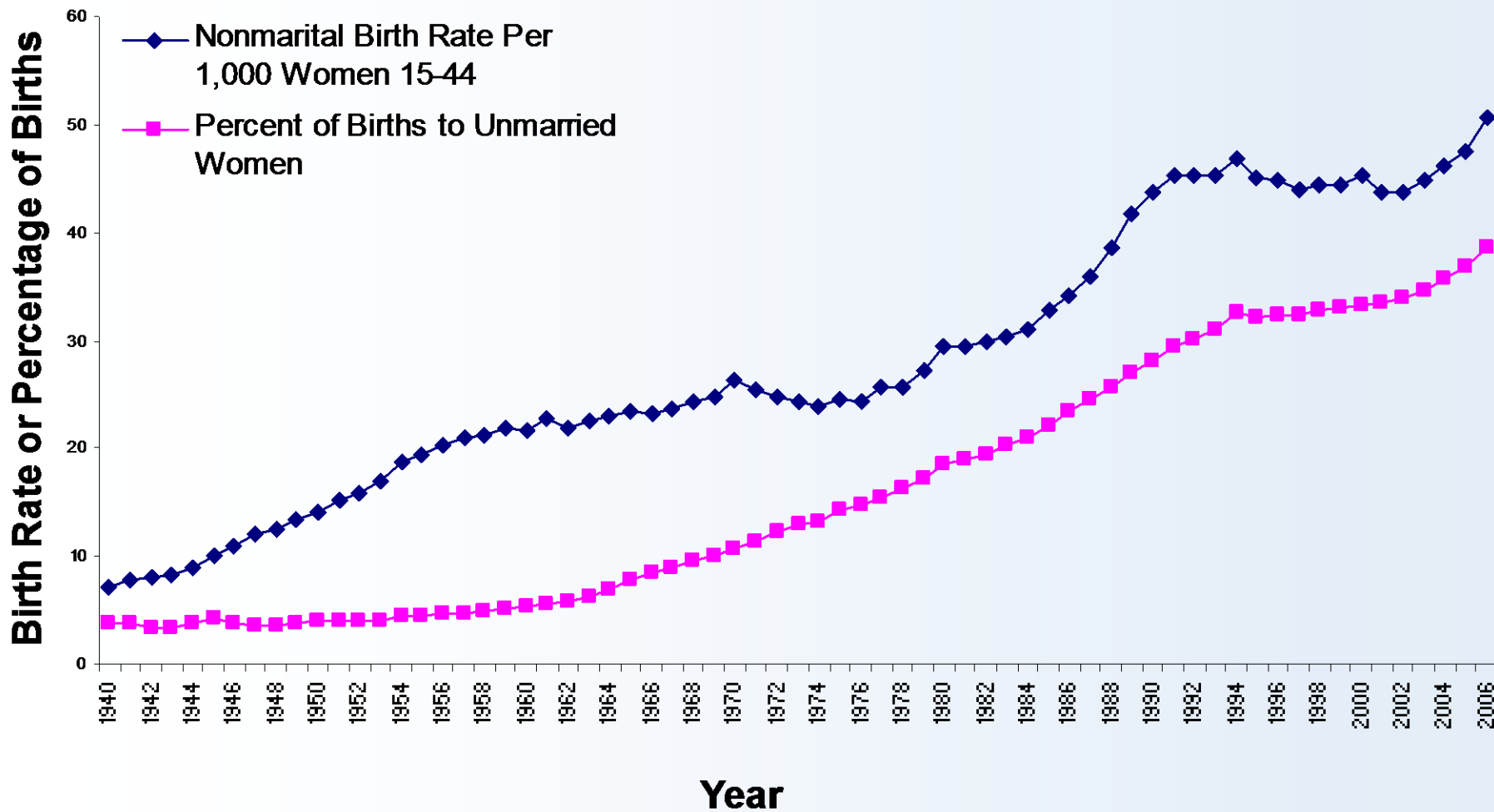
May 11, 2010

Effectiveness of Five Factors in Reducing Poverty Rates

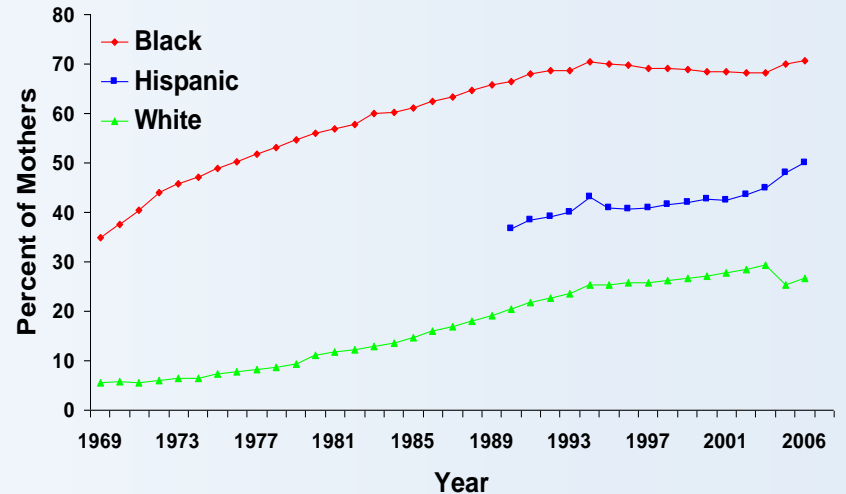
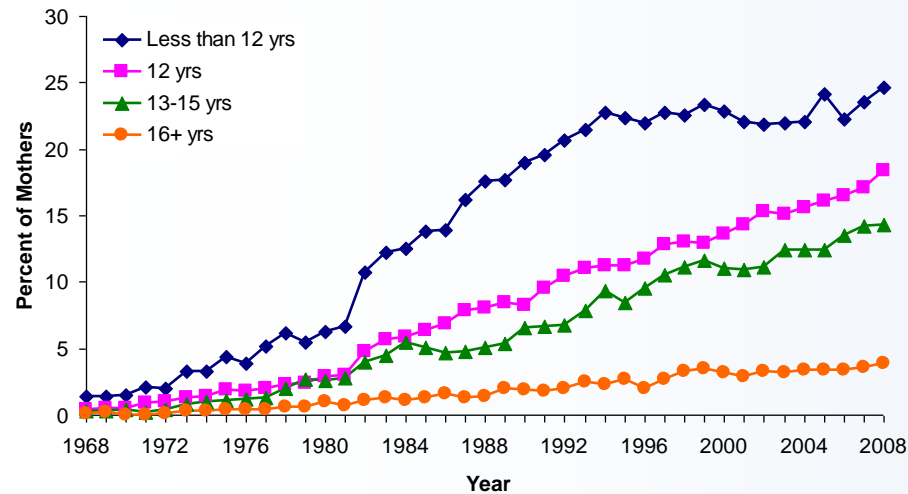


Based on Adam Thomas and Isabel V. Sawhill, "For Richer or for Poorer: Marriage as an Antipoverty Strategy," *Journal of Policy Analysis Management* 21, no. 4 (October 2002): 587-599; Ron Haskins and Isabel V. Sawhill, "Work and Marriage: The Way to End Poverty and Welfare," Welfare Reform and Beyond Policy Brief, The Brookings Institution (September 2003).

Birth Rate and Percent of Births to Unmarried Women, 1940 - 2007

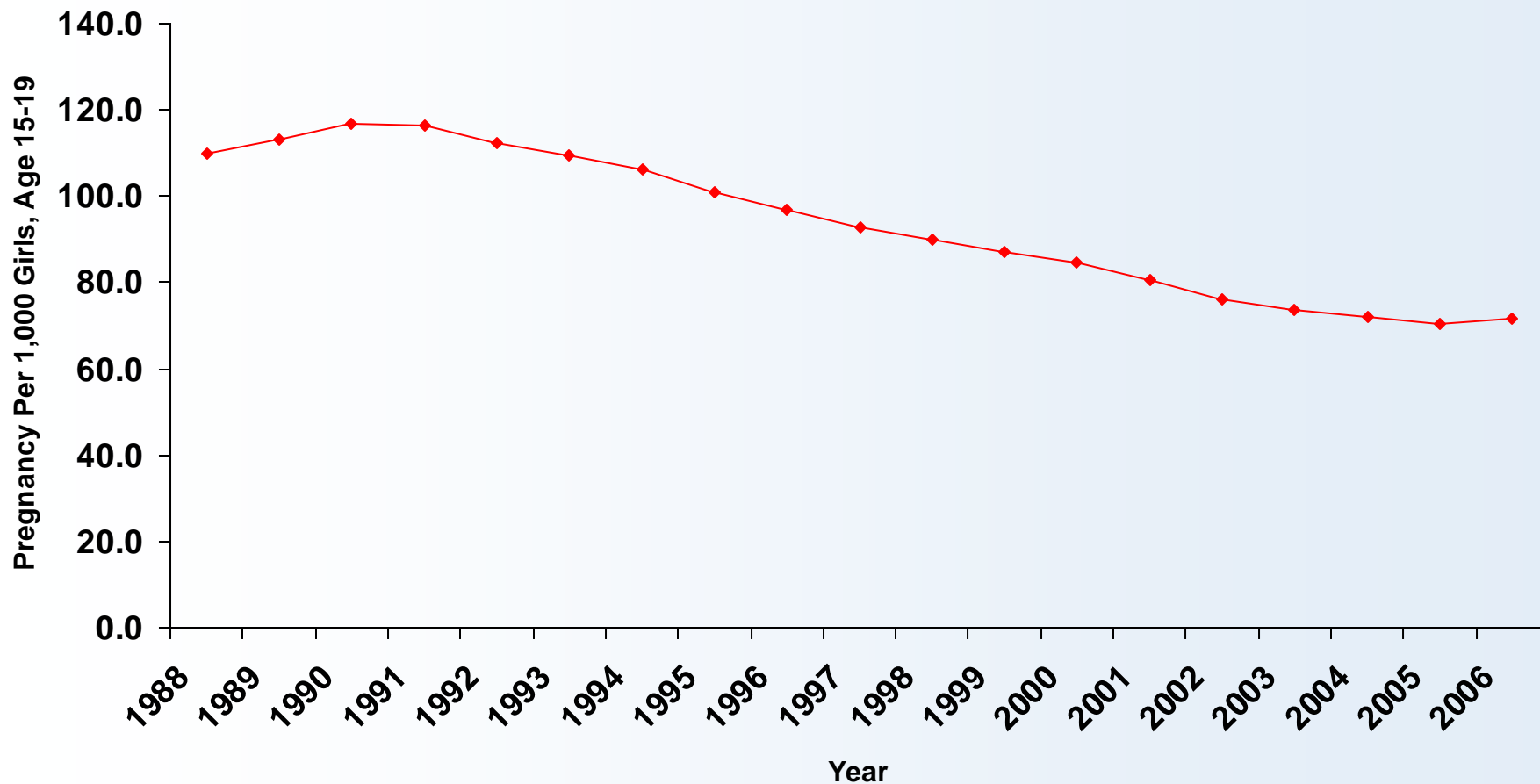


Differences in Non-marital Births by Mother's Education and Ethnicity, 1968 – 2006 or 2008



Source: (Education) Authors' tabulations from the March Current Population Survey; (Ethnicity) National Center for Health Statistics, Table 1-17 Number and Percent of Births to Unmarried Women, by Race and Hispanic Origin: United States, 1940-2000; National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 56, No. 7, December 5, 2005 accessed at http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr56/nvsr56_07.pdf
 Note: 2004 Unavailable

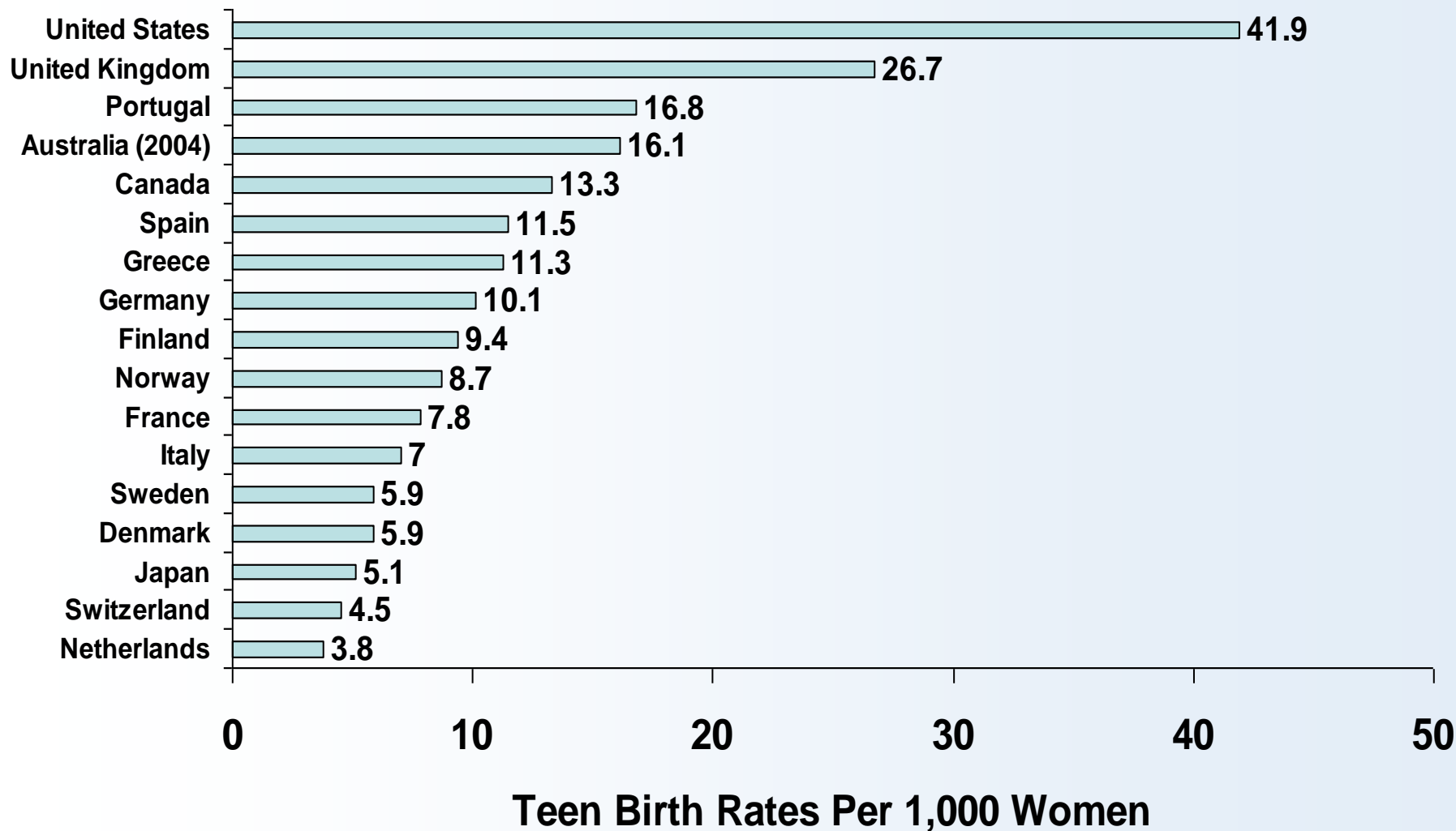
Teen Pregnancy Rates in the United States, 1988-2006



Source: National Center for Health Statistics.

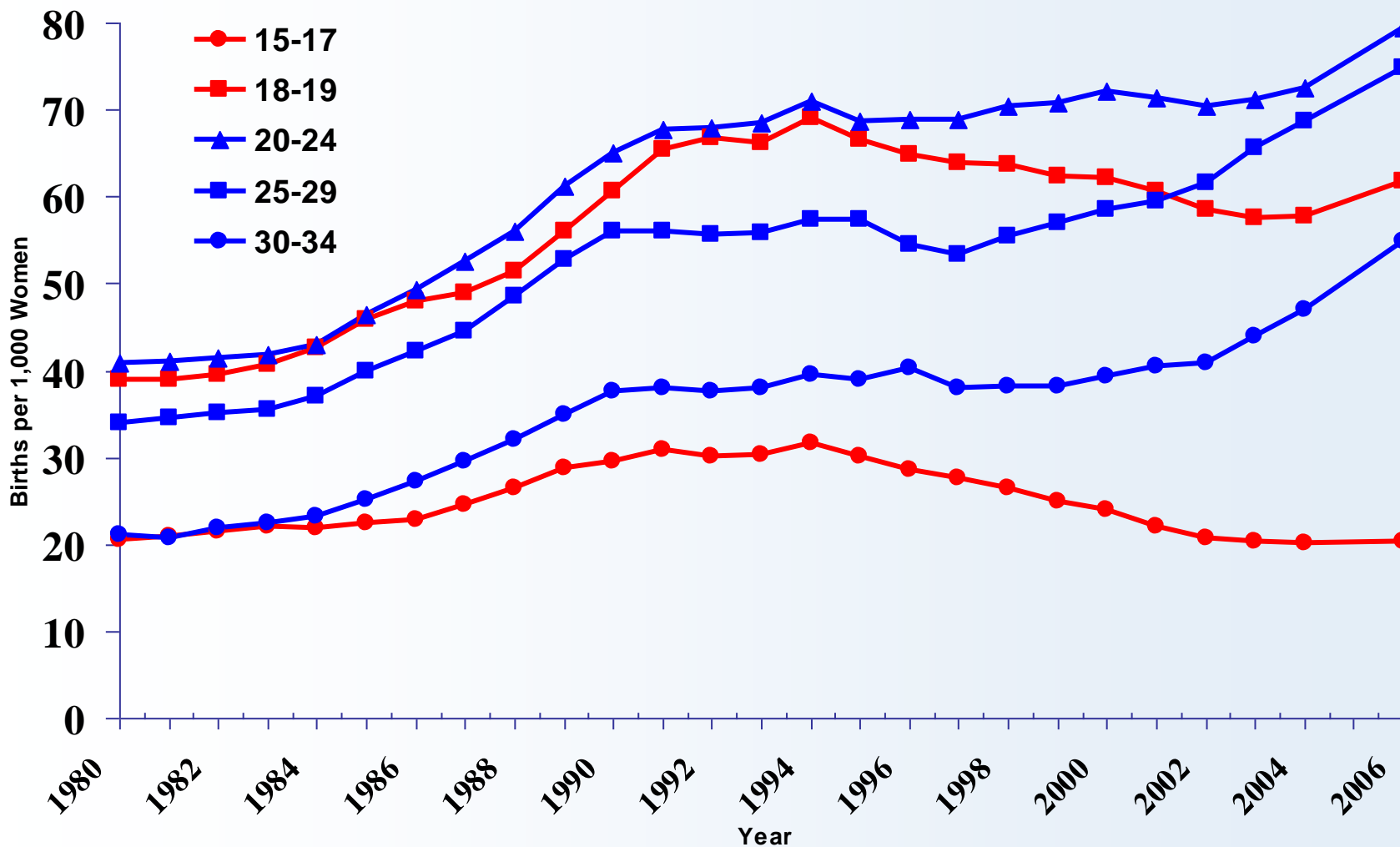
Note: Data for 1988-2005 was used from the National Center for Health Statistics. Data for 2006 was used from the Guttmacher Institute.

Teen Birth Rates for Selected Countries, 2006



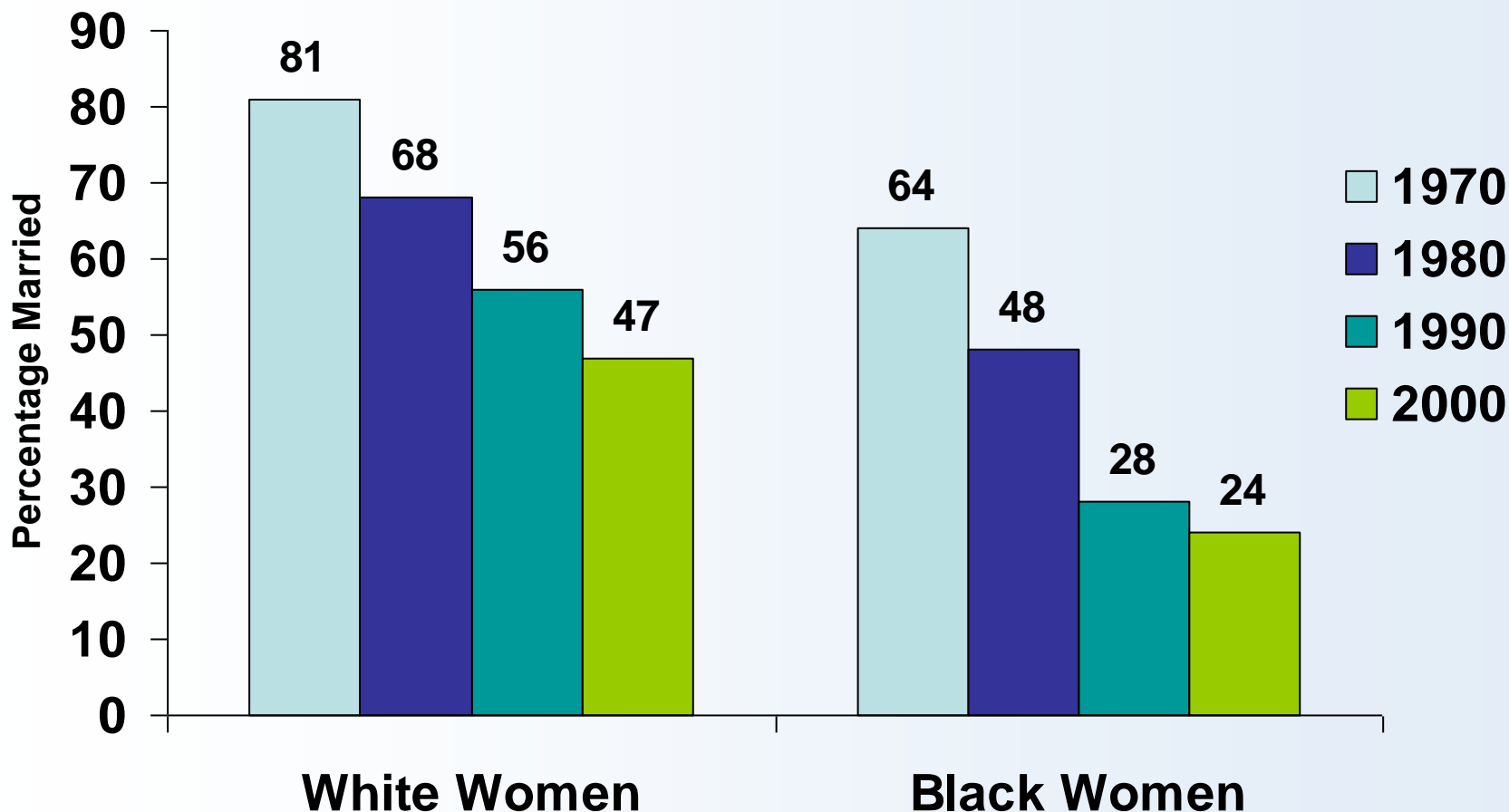
Source: United Nations Statistics Division. *Demographic Yearbook 2006*.

Birth Rates for Unmarried Women by Age of Mother, 1980-2006

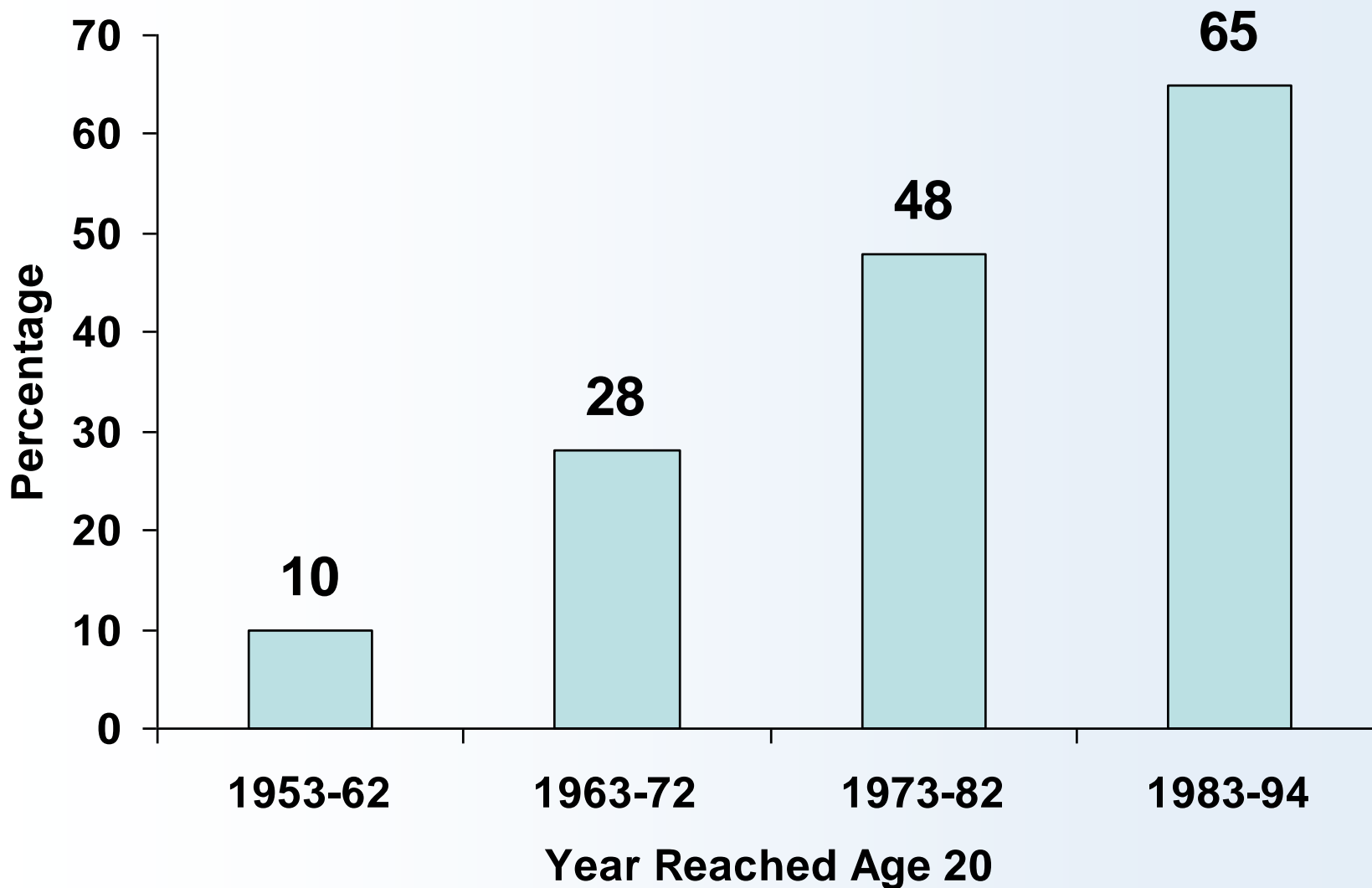


Source: Forum on Child and Family Statistics, "America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2007," [HTTP://WWW.CHILDSTATS.GOV/AMERICASCHILDREN/TABLES.ASP#F29](http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables.asp#f29). Note: 2005 data not included.

Married at Age 25 by Race and Sex, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

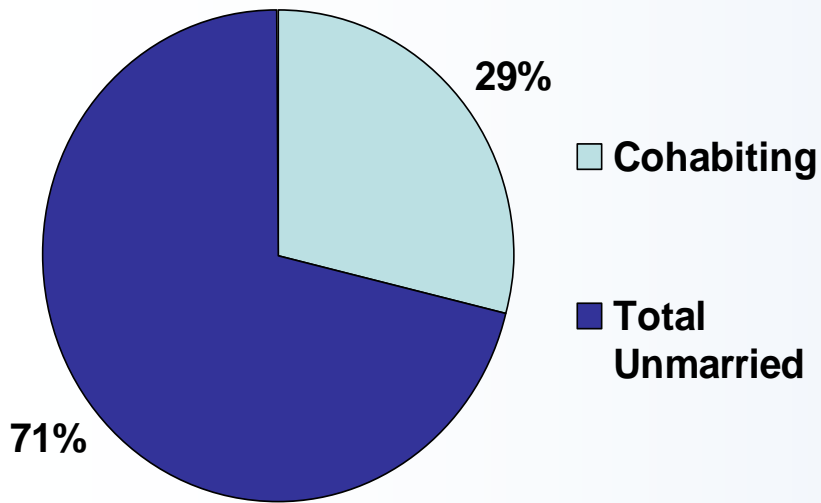


Cohabit at Least Once Prior to Marriage, 1950s-1990s

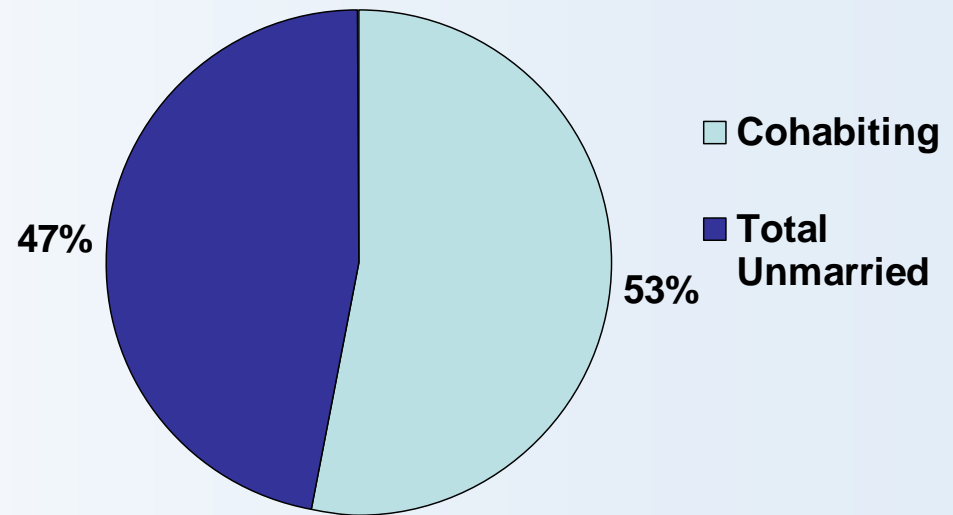


Births to Cohabiting Couples as Percentage of Births to Unmarried Women, 1980-84 and 1997-2001

1980-1984

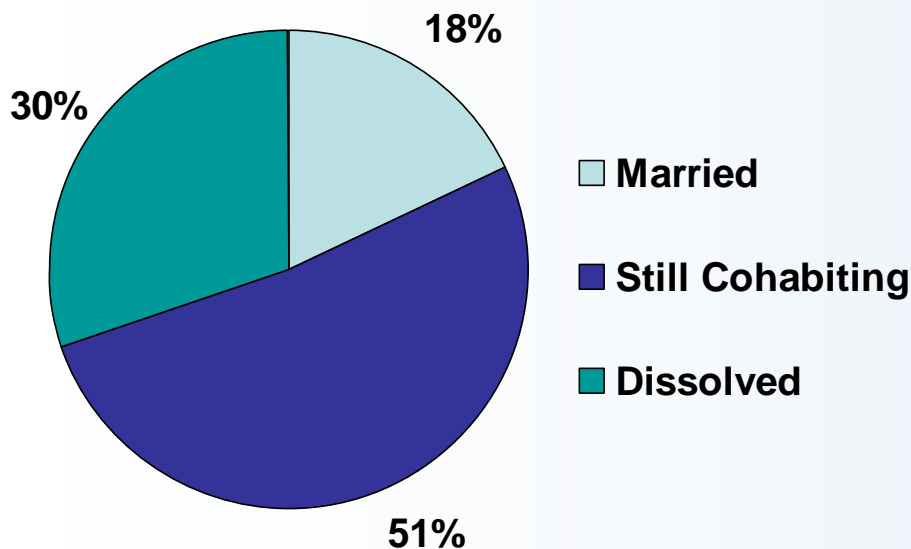


1997-2001

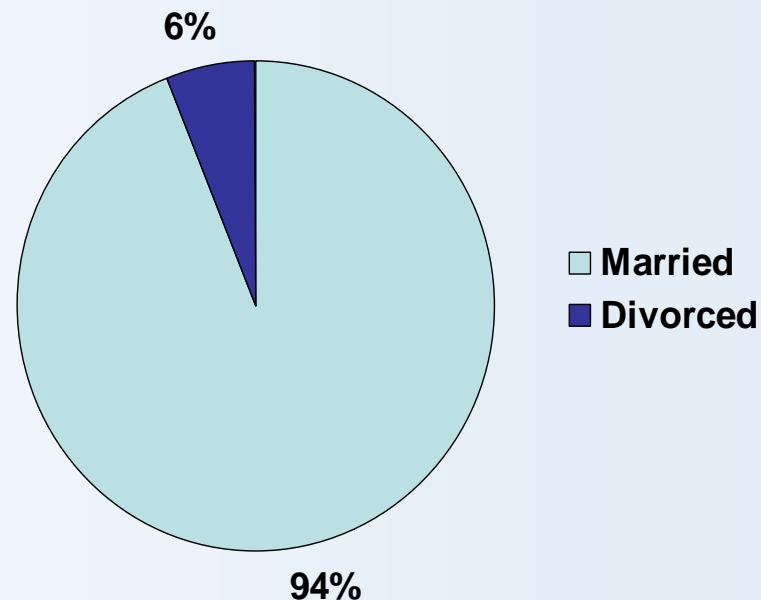


Status of Couples When Baby is Age 2, by Status at Birth, 2004

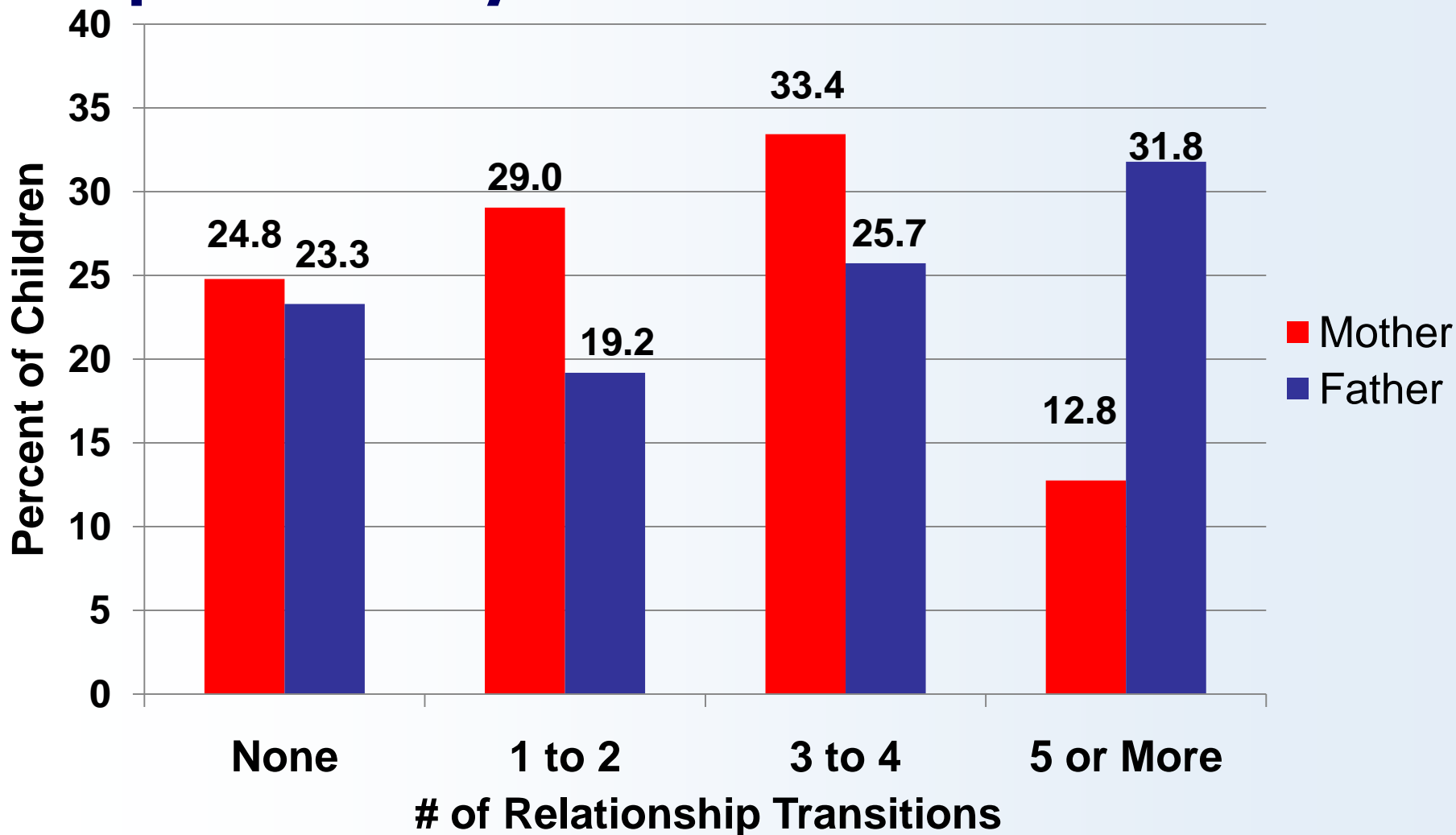
Cohabiting Parents



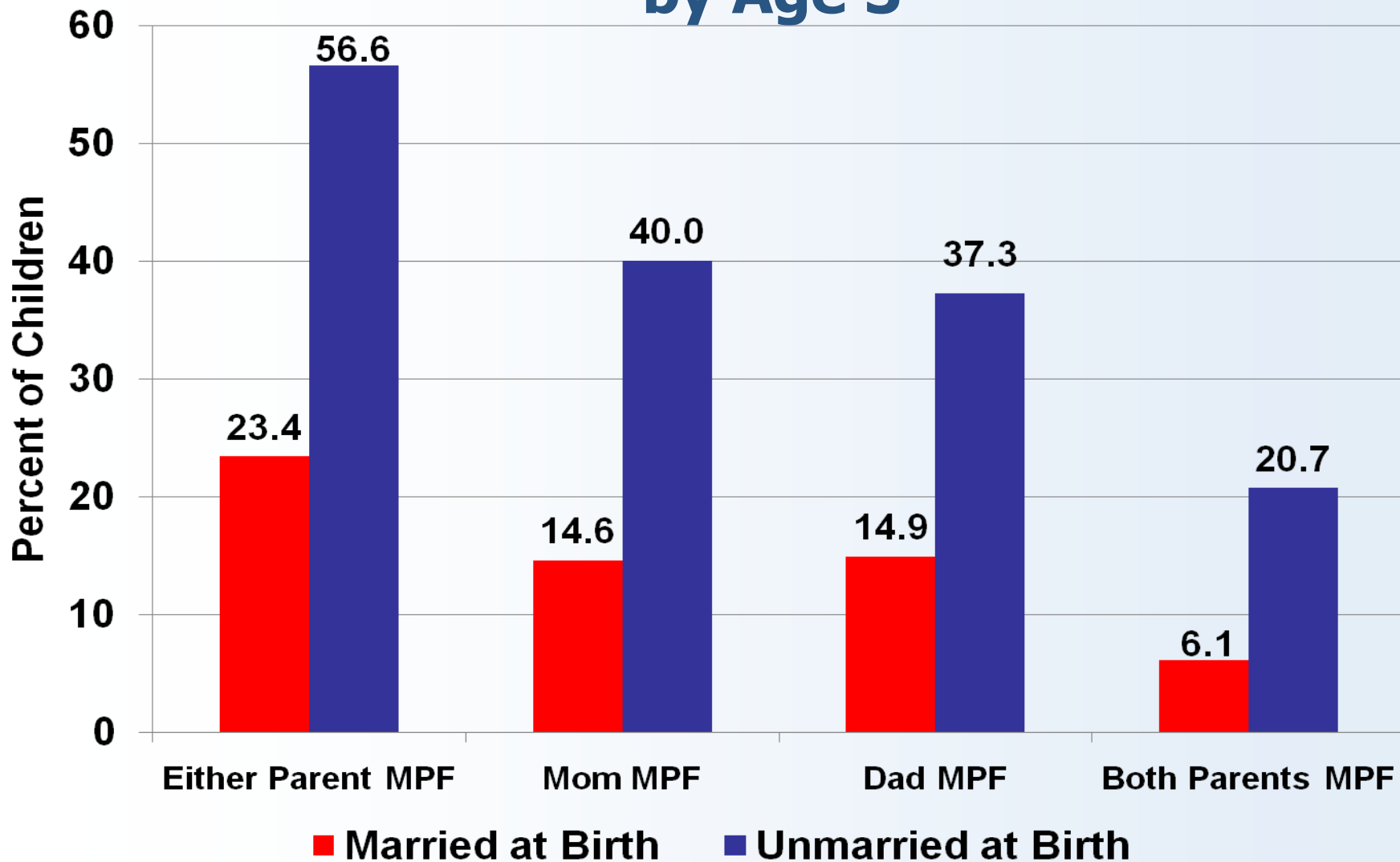
Married Parents



Number of Parental Relationship Transitions Experienced by Nonmarital Child's 5th Birthday

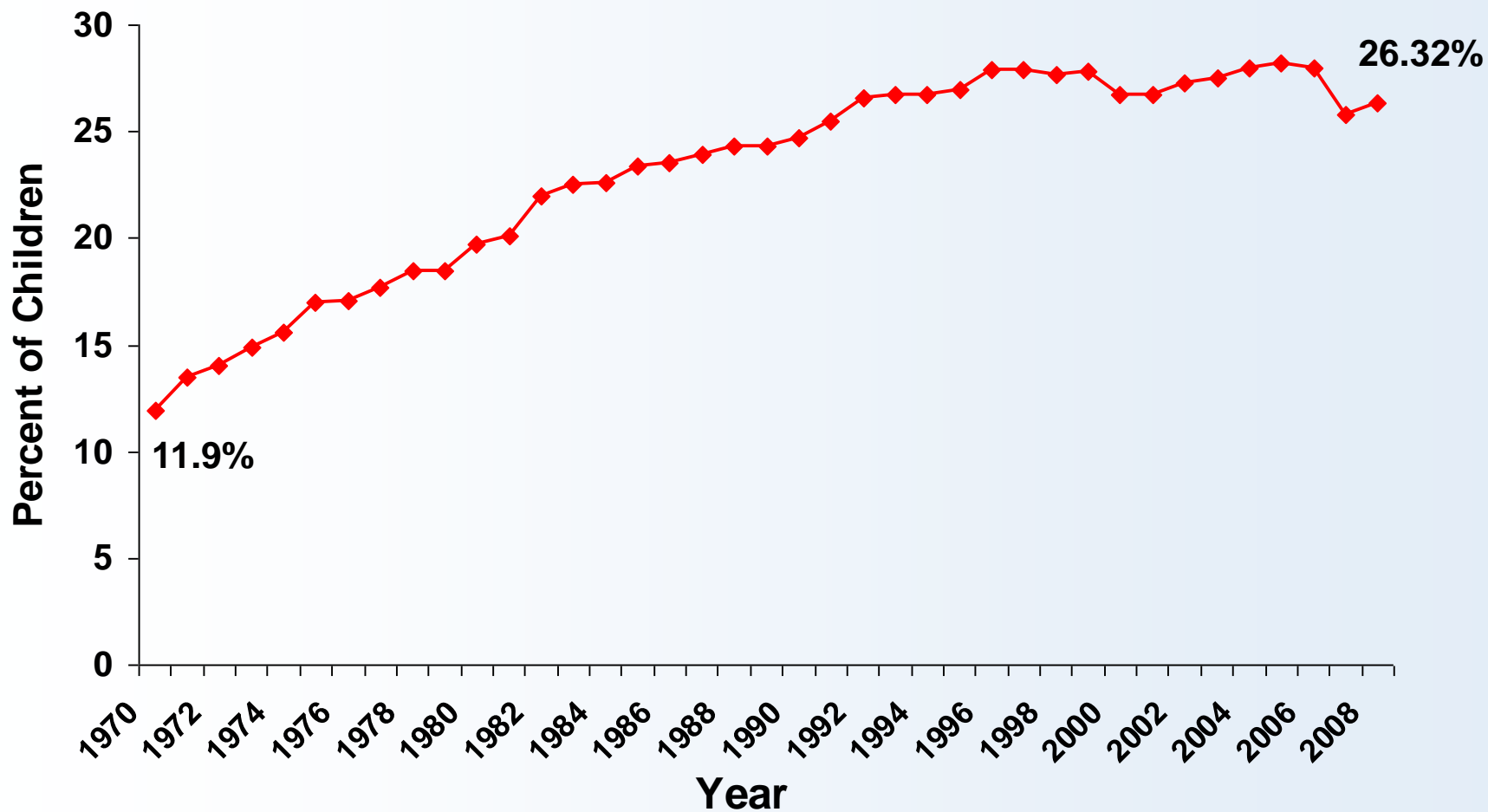


Children in Multiple-Partner Fertility Families by Age 3



Source: Sara McLanahan. "The Reciprocal Effects of Income Inequality and Non-marital Childbearing." Paper presented at the Tobin Conference on Understanding the Effects of America's Economic Stratification" April 30-May 3, Beverly MA. 2010.

Percent of Children Living in Single-Parent Families, 1970 - 2008



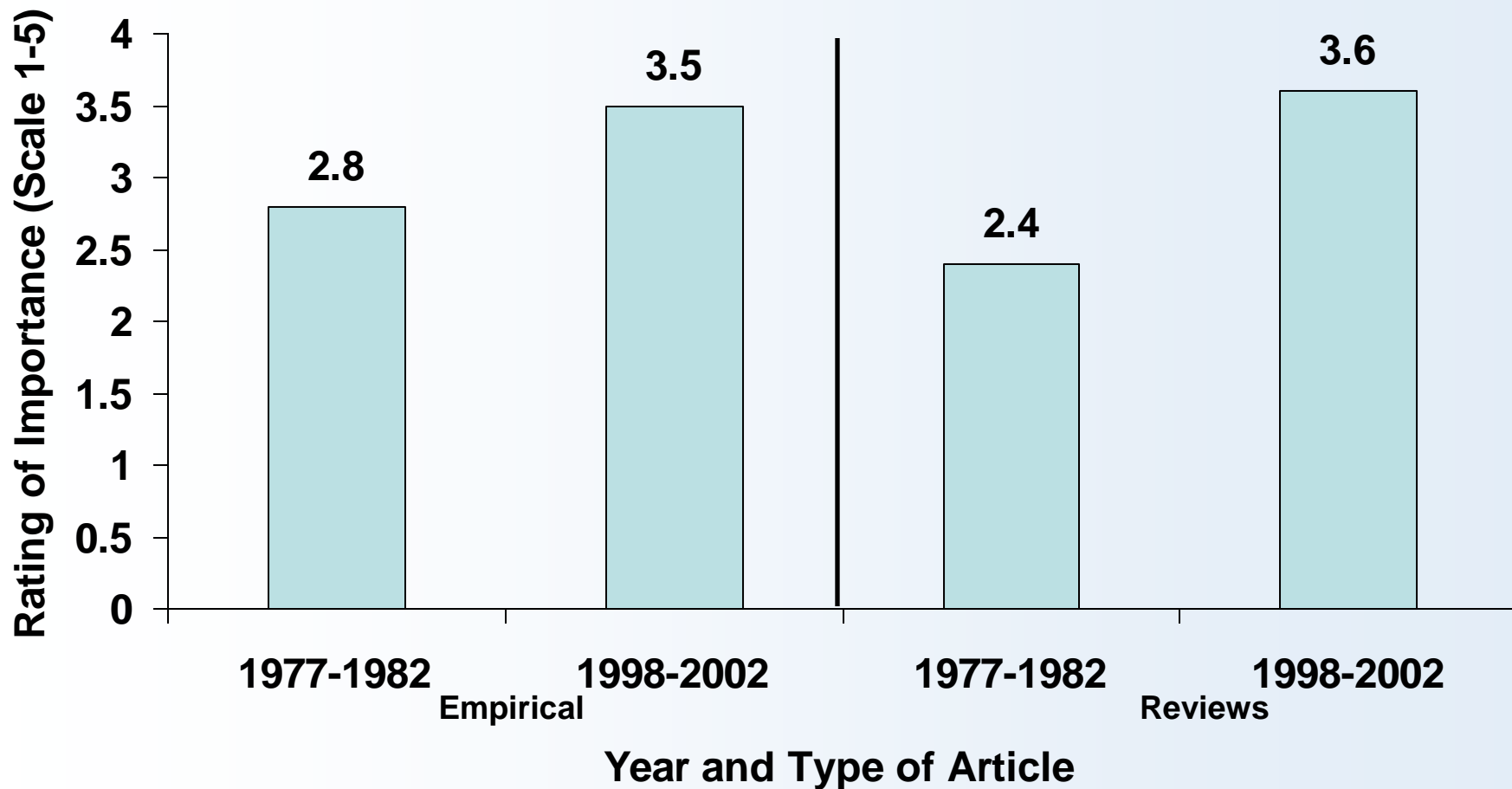
*2007 and 2008 are estimates produced using PELNMOM and PELNDAD, the new parent variables introduced in 2007.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007 and earlier data available at <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/ch1.xls>.

Lone Parenting: Consequences

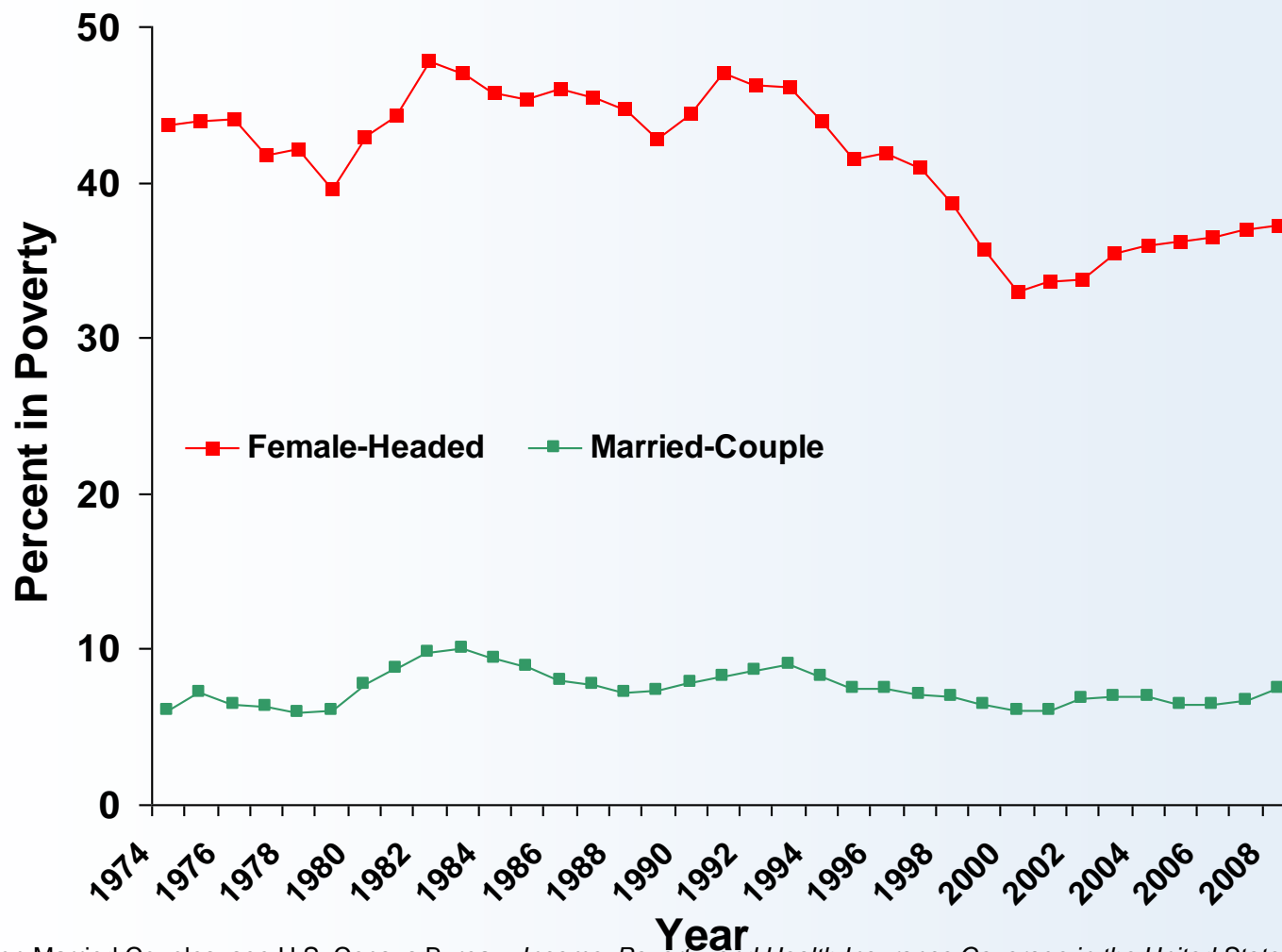
The Breakthrough: McLanahan and Sandefur (1994)

- Loss of income
- Less parental involvement and supervision
- Isolation of lone parent
- More residential mobility
- Decline in male employment
- Community effects, especially violence

Rating of Degree of Concern by Family Researchers for Impact of Divorce and Unwed Births on Child Well-Being, 1977-1982 vs. 1998-2002



Poverty in Female-Headed and Married-Couple Households with Children, 1974-2008



Source: For data on Married Couples, see U.S. Census Bureau, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008*, Table B-3; for data on Female-Headed Households with Children, see: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/histpov/famindex.html>, Table 4.

Well-Being of Adolescents Aged Twelve to Eighteen, 2002 Estimates

Problem	2002 Estimate	Estimated change based on two-parent families in:		
		1980	1970	1960
Repeated Grade	6,948,530	-299,968	-643,264	-746,587
Suspended from school	8,570,096	-485,165	-1,040,410	-1,207,523
Delinquency	11,632,086	-216,498	-464,269	-538,841
Violence	11,490,072	-211,282	-453,082	-525,857
Therapy	3,412,678	-247,799	-531,392	-616,745
Smoked in last month	5,083,513	-239,974	-514,611	-597,269
Thought of suicide	3,692,358	-83,469	-178,995	-207,746
Attempted suicide	636,164	-28,693	-61,350	-71,413

Summary

- Could reduce poverty and improve child development if more children lived with their married parents, but --
- Marriage rates are declining
- Nonmarital births are increasing
- Cohabitation is increasing
- As nonmarital teen births declined, births to unmarried women 20-34 increased
- More children in single-parent families than ever before

What To Do:

- Reduce nonmarital births (including to teens)
- Increase marriage rates

Ten Characteristics of Effective Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

- Focus on one or more sexual behaviors that lead to unintended pregnancy
- Employ behavioral goals, methods, and materials appropriate for the age, sexual experience, and culture of the students
- Theory-based programs with evidence of impacts on risky behaviors
- Sufficient length of program
- Consistent emphasis on messages about abstaining from sex or using condoms
- Multiple teaching methods (not just lecture)
- Provide accurate information about risks of pregnancy and methods of avoiding
- Address social pressures to have sex
- Teach and practice refusal skills
- Teachers believe in program

Components of Carrera Program

- Education
- Employment
- Family life and sexuality education
- Self-expression
- Lifetime individual sports and fitness
- Full medical and dental care
- Mental health services

Bush Administration Marriage Initiatives

- Marriage education included in several existing programs (child protection, Head Start, refugee)
- Separate initiatives for Hispanic and Black marriage
- Research and Demonstration:
 - Building Strong Families
 - Supporting Healthy Marriage
 - Community-Wide Initiatives
- Grant Program to Promote Healthy Marriage



A program that strengthens couple relationships and prepares both parents for the transition to parenthood

Who Participates in FE?

- **Both Unmarried and Married couples, where the mom is currently pregnant or the baby is 3 months of age or younger (at enrollment)**
- **Both mom and dad separately consent to participate in the program and they have to assert that they intend to stay together, and are available, to participate in a year-long program**



Who Participates in FE?

- **Financially Vulnerable Families:** the majority of FE parents are funding their birth with Medicaid, so their income is 200% of poverty or less
- **Couples where Mom does not disclose domestic violence issues** that would result in the couple being screened out of the program



What Does It Mean For Couples To Participate In FE?

They attend workshops!

- **Learn Skills to Strengthen Their Relationships**
- **Get Information About The Baby's First Months of Life**
- **Connect with Other Couples**
- **30 Hours of Core Curriculum**
- **Additional Workshops To Build Their Family Tool Box (parenting, finances, early childhood education)**



What Does It Mean For Couples To Participate In FE?

They Have A Family Support Coordinator!

- Participate in Regular 1 on 2 Meetings
- Receive Resources To Meet Family Needs
- Receive Referrals To Other Community Resources
- Set, Work Toward and Achieve Family Goals
- Practice Skills Learned In Workshops



What Does It Mean For Couples To Participate In FE?

They Spend Time Together and With Peers!

- **Date Nights**
- **Community Outings**
- **Holiday Events**
- **Moms' and Dads' Groups**



FE By The Numbers

- 2,452 couples have participated since 2005, currently about 670 couples currently enrolled
- 1,800 parents and children attended the 2009 FE holiday party
- 745 workshops and/or extended activities since Aug 2005
- In 2009, over 29,000 hours of direct service hours with couples
- 2,000 couples enrolled in two national random assignment studies – researchers will be evaluating the effect of the program on parents and children over the next five years

A Final Word From FE Participants

“My family has been involved in countless programs over the years, and this is the first time I’ve been treated like I’m a part of my family.” – FE Dad

“We look back on the first couple of years of our relationship and just laugh and say, ‘What exactly was the problem?’ It’s so strange because all we needed were the tools to communicate, which we got through Family Expectations.” – FE Mom

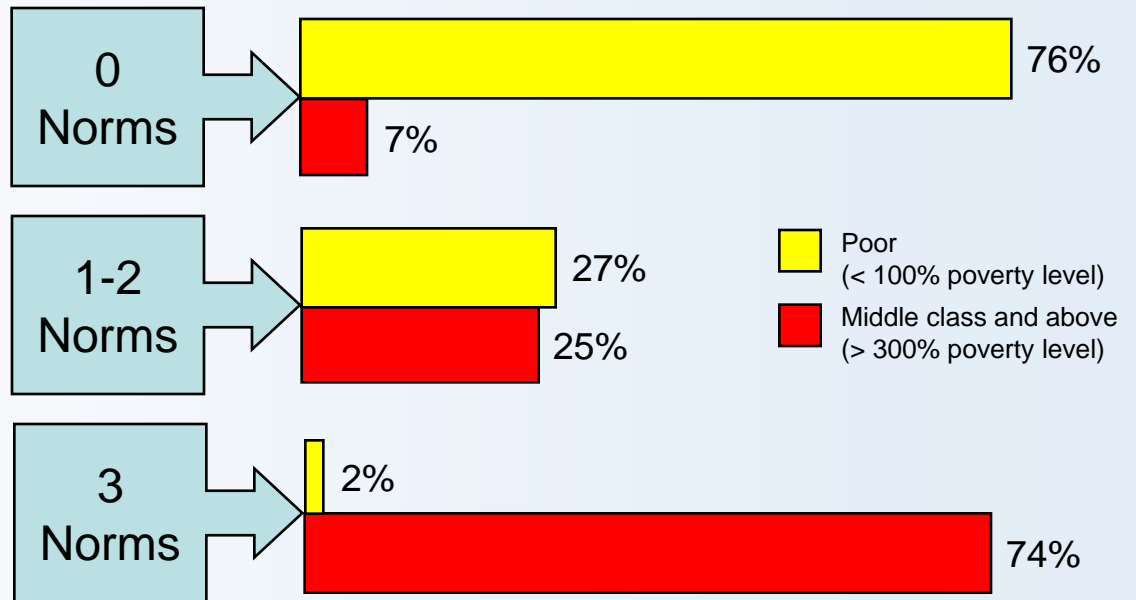
“We love the atmosphere and the cool setting for workshops and office visits. We always feel like everyone is glad that we are here. We don’t feel judged when we walk through the door. We just love to come...and the information we are learning through Family Expectations is helping equip us to be good partners and parents.” – FE Dad

What Accounts for Success?

The Three Norms

- Complete high school
- Work full time
- Wait until age 21 and marry before children

Income Class, by Adherence to Social Norms, 2007



Source: Authors' calculations based on the U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey.