

TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA BRIEF



PATERNAL STATUS AMONG TARRANT COUNTY BIRTHS

- **Paternity Acknowledgment** is recorded on the birth certificate for mothers who are unmarried at the time of birth
 - When Paternity Acknowledgement was unavailable, the **presence of father data** (such as age) were used as a **proxy** for Paternity Acknowledgement among births to unmarried mothers
- In 2020, the **majority** of live births in Tarrant County were to **married parents** (59%), 29% of live births were to non-married parents with paternity acknowledgement, and **12%** of live births **had NO paternity acknowledgement**
- Live births with **no recorded paternity acknowledgement** had **significantly higher** rates of:
 - Pregnancy spacing <18 months
 - Preterm birth
 - Medicaid as payment source
 - NICU admission
 - Enrolled in WIC during pregnancy
 - Infant mortality
 - Maternal infections
- Live births with **no recorded paternity acknowledgement** had **significantly lower** rates of:
 - Starting prenatal care on time
 - Breastfeeding at discharge from place of birth

Figure 1. Paternity status among live births, Tarrant County, Texas, United States, 2020

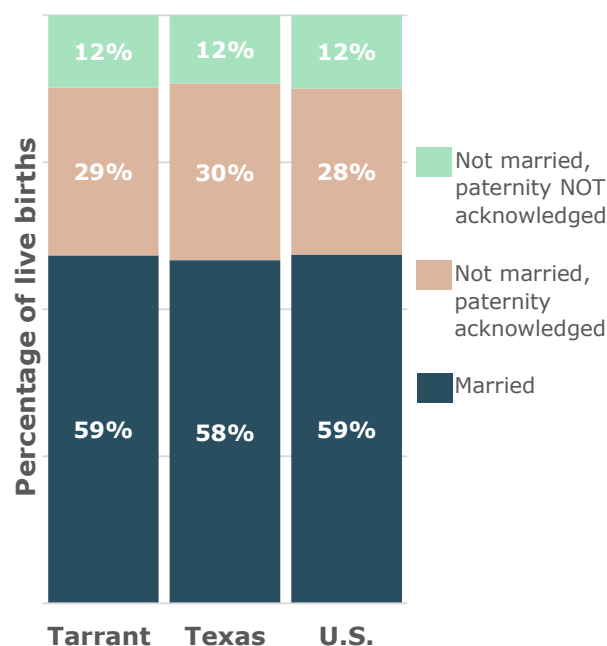
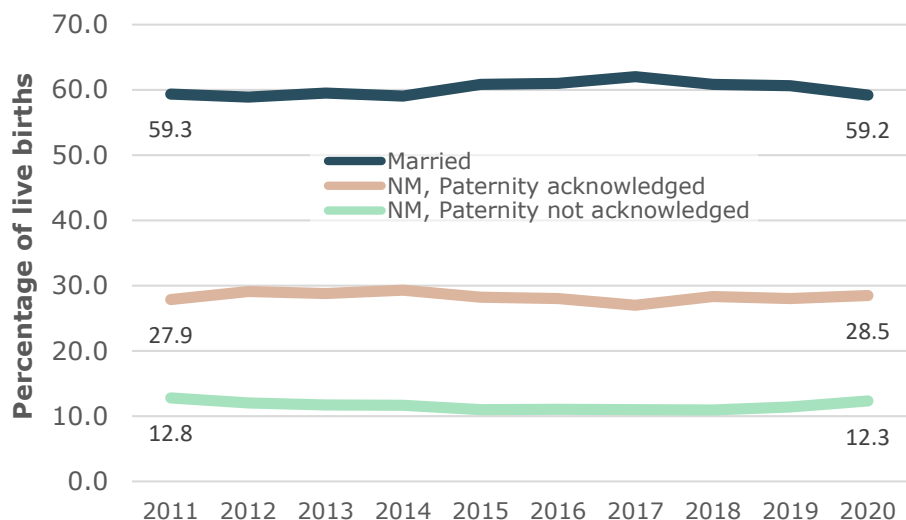


Figure 2. Paternity status among Tarrant County live births, 2011-2020



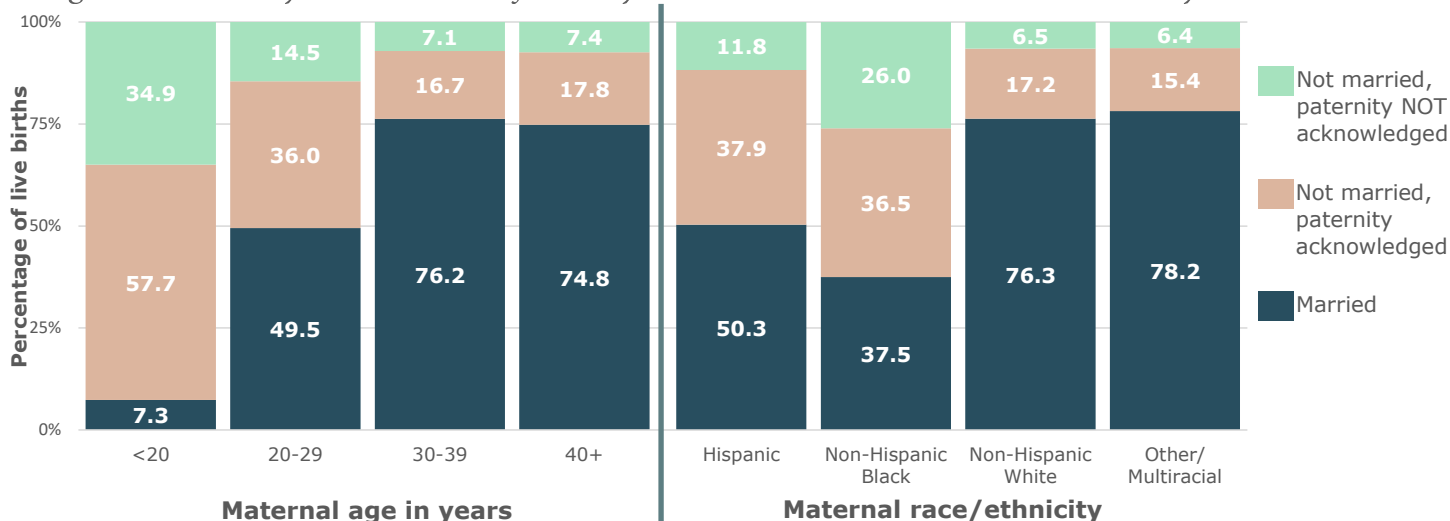
Paternity status among live births has remained similar over the past ten years and is comparable to the state and national level

NM = not married

Data sources: Texas Department of State Health Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Data Brief provided by: Division of Epidemiology and Health Information

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Figure 3. Paternity status at time of birth by maternal characteristics, Tarrant County, 2020



The percentage of live births with no paternity acknowledgement was highest among mothers under the age of 20 and non-Hispanic black mothers

Figure 4. Infant and maternal characteristics among Tarrant County live births by paternity status, 2020

Infant characteristics	Married		NM, paternity acknowledged		NM, paternity NOT acknowledged
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	9.4%	↑	10.3%	↑	13.1%
NICU admission	8.8%	—	9.4%	↑	13.2%
Infant mortality rate (2017-2019)	5.16	—	5.18	↑	9.10
Maternal characteristics					
Started prenatal care on time	68.3%	↓	52.6%	↓	44.5%
<18 months between pregnancies	8.0%	↑	12.6%	↑	15.0%
Medicaid	25.0%	↑	60.0%	↑	68.1%
Enrolled in WIC during pregnancy	13.9%	↑	34.5%	↑	38.9%
Maternal infection [†]	0.9%	↑	3.2%	↑	6.3%
Cesarean delivery	35.0%	↓	31.8%	—	32.3%
Breastfeeding at discharge	92.8%	↓	88.4%	↓	79.3%

NM = not married; Infant mortality rate = number of deaths among infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births
[†]Maternal infections of Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Chlamydia, Hepatitis B, or Hepatitis C present and/or treated during pregnancy
 Note: Any up or down arrows denote statistically significant difference between the two values (p<0.05)
 Comparisons are between 1. Married and Not married with paternity acknowledged and 2. Not married with paternity acknowledged and Not married with paternity not acknowledged

Fatherhood resources:

ANTHEM Strong Families [<http://anthemstrongfamilies.org/>]
Arlington ISD Dads Engaged for Excellence [<http://www.aisd.net>]
Parenting and Paternity Awareness (P.A.P.A.) [<http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov>]
National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse [<http://www.fatherhood.gov/for-dads>]