A Demographic Exploration of Frederick County Birth Statistics

Welcome to the April, 2006 edition of "A Demographic Exploration of Frederick County." This month, in the spirit of spring, the focus will be on birth statistics. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has just released its "Maryland Vital Statistics Annual Report 2004." The birth statistics focused on this month will be directly from this and previous years reports. For further information on the demographics and other statistics of Frederick County, please visit http://www.co.frederick.md.us/planning/Demographics/Demographics.htm

Vital Statistics can be defined as the enumeration of data that concerns important events in human life. This month's article will focus on the human event of birth. In 2004, Frederick County residents experienced 2,954 births. In 2004, Frederick County dropped to the 8th highest county in Maryland in regards to the number of births. In 2003, Frederick County had the highest number of births since 1960. However, in 2004 the number of births was lower than 2003 and the 2002 totals (Figure 1). The 10-year average annual number of births, from 1995 to 2004, was 2,812. Hence, in 2004, Frederick County experienced only 142 more births then the 10-year average.

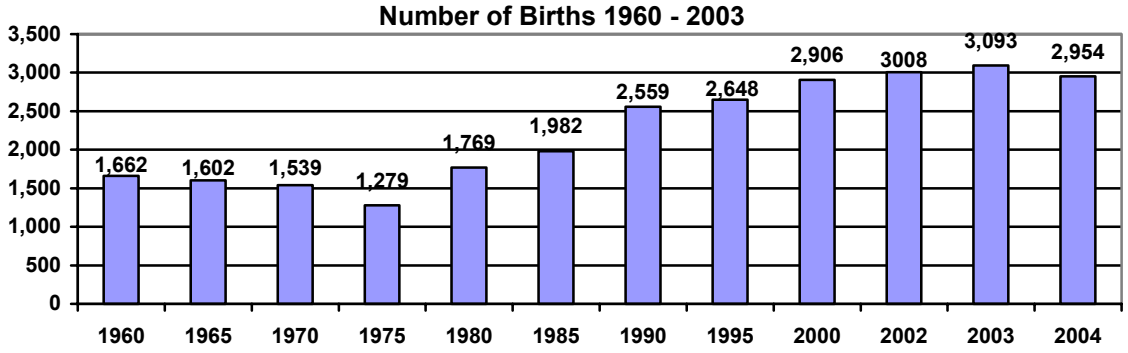

Figure 1.

Even though the County has experienced an increase in the number of births, the birth rate has been steadily declining since 1960. The birth rate is a statistic that measures the number of live births per 1,000 population. In 1960, the birth rate for Frederick County was 23.0; in 2003, the birth rate was only 13.6. This means that in 1960, for every 1,000 people there were 23 births, in 2003, there were 13.6 births for every 1,000 people. The 2004 birth rate ties 1999 with having the lowest birth rate since 1960.

From 2000 to 2004, Frederick County residents experienced 14,858 births. 1 in every 13 births during this period were to Black mothers, 1 in every 18 births were to Hispanic mothers, and 1 in every 28 births were to Asian or American Indian mothers. The White Non-Hispanic population accounted for 12,265 births in the County. Since 2000, the percentage of the total number of births has been declining in the White Non-Hispanic population. While the percentage of births in the minority sectors of the population have been increasing. The greatest jump in the number of births is in the Hispanic population. In 2000, only 4% of the total births were to Hispanic mothers, in 2004, 8% of the births were to Hispanic mothers (Figure 2).

Number and Percentage of Births by Race 2000 - 2004					
	2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**
All Races	2,906 (100%)	2,897 (100%)	3,008 (100%)	3,093 (100%)	2,954 (100%)
White Total	2,610 (90%)	2,574 (89%)	2,641 (88%)	2,690 (87%)	2,535 (86%)
White Non-Hispanic	2,499 (86%)	2,471 (85%)	2,474 (82%)	2,503 (81%)	2,318 (78%)
Black	209 (7%)	231 (8%)	250 (8%)	247 (8%)	251 (8%)
American Indian and Asian or Pacific Islander	73 (3%)	66 (2%)	94 (3%)	139 (4%)	158 (5%)
Hispanic	115 (4%)	106 (4%)	171 (6%)	199 (6%)	229 (8%)

Figure 2.

The average birth rate for all races, from 2000 to 2004, was 14.3. The Hispanic population's birth rate was almost double this average at 27.1. The Hispanic and Black population have consistently had higher birth rates in Frederick County than the White population. In 2004, the Hispanic population had the highest birth rate at 27.1 births per 1,000 people. The Black population came in second with 15.0 births per 1,000 people. The White population experienced the lowest birth rate at only 13.1, in 2004.

The general fertility rate in Frederick County during 2004 was 61.7. The general fertility rate is a statistic that measures the number of births per 1,000 to mothers between the ages of 15 and 44 years old. The highest general fertility rate is found amongst the Hispanic population, where there are 107.6 births per 1,000 people between the ages of 15 and 44. This is significantly higher then the White population's general fertility rate of only 60.2.

The majority of births in Frederick County occur to mothers between the ages of 30 to 34. From 2000 to 2004, mothers between the ages of 30 to 34 averaged 942 births every year. The second age cohorts for number of births are mothers between the ages of 25 to 29. On average, 1 in every 4 births in Frederick County is to women between the ages of 25 to 29. Mothers between the ages of 20-24 and 35-39 flip flop between third place throughout 2000 to 2004. In 2004, Frederick County ranked 6th highest in number of births to mothers under 18 years old. In the past 5 years, 2000 to 2004, there were only 9 births to mothers under the age of 15. Mothers between the ages of 15 to17 averaged 52 births every year between 2000 and 2004 (Figure 3).

Number of Births by Age of Mother 2000 - 2004					
	2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**
All Ages	2,906	2,897	3,008	3,093	2,954
Under 15	2	3	1	1	2
15 to 17	51	44	58	52	55
18 to 19	131	127	127	137	126
20-24	450	518	514	504	519

25-29	789	717	786	795	761
30-34	937	919	958	977	919
35-39	450	473	460	512	475
Over 40	96	96	102	115	97

Figure 3.

The Black population of Frederick County had the highest percentage, 18%, of teenage mothers in 2004. The second highest percentage of teenage births was recorded in the Hispanic community, where 11% of the births were to teenage mothers. In 2004, Black teenage mothers had the highest recorded percentage of teenage births since 2000. In 2000, 17% of the births in the Black community were to teenage mothers. After 2000, the percentage of teenage Black mothers started to decline until 2004; in 2001, 13.4% were teenagers, 2002 13.2% were teenagers, and 2003 only 12.6% were teenagers. The Hispanic community was witnessed a significant jump in the births to teenage mothers since 2000. In 2000, only 4.3% (1 in every 23) of the Hispanic births were to teenage mothers, in 2001 10.4% were teenagers, in 2002 13.5% were teenage mothers, in 2003 10.1% were teenagers, and in 2004 11.4% or 1 in every 9 were teenagers (Figure 4).

Number and Percentage* of Births to Teenage Mothers by Race/Origin 2000 - 2004					
	2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**
All Races	184 (6.3%)	174 (6.0%)	186 (6.2%)	190 (6.1%)	183 (6.2%)
White Total	144 (5.5%)	142 (5.5%)	143 (5.4%)	157 (5.8%)	137 (5.4%)
White Non-Hispanic	140 (5.6%)	131 (5.3%)	121 (4.9%)	138 (5.5%)	114 (4.9%)
Black	35 (16.7%)	31 (13.4%)	33 (13.2%)	31 (12.6%)	45 (17.9%)
Hispanic	5 (4.3%)	11 (10.4%)	23 (13.5%)	20 (10.1%)	26 (11.4%)
* Percentage is based on total births in the specified racial or origin group.					

Figure 4.

In 2004, Frederick County saw the greatest percentage, 24%, of unmarried mothers giving birth within the past 5 years. Since 2000, on average 1 in every 4 births is to an unmarried women. Black unmarried women have the highest rate of births than any other race/origin category in Frederick County. On average, 1 in every 5 of unmarried mothers giving birth are Black. The second highest unmarried mother group is Hispanics. They have continued to increase their percentage to 29.6% in 2000 to 45.9% in 2004 (Figure 5).

Number and Percentage* of Births to Unmarried Mothers by Race/Origin 2000 - 2003					
	2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**
All Races	615 (621.2%)	666 (23.0%)	698 (23.2%)	687 (22.2%)	694 (23.5%)
White Total	483 (18.5%)	518 (20.1%)	530 (20.1%)	538 (20.0%)	547 (21.6%)
White Non-	451	484	462	462	450

Hispanic	(18.0%)	(19.6%)	(18.7%)	(18.5%)	(19.4%)
Black	120 (57.4%)	135 (58.4%)	143 (57.2%)	132 (53.4%)	131 (52.2%)
Hispanic	34 (29.6%)	34 (32.1%)	70 (40.9%)	81 (40.7%)	105 (45.9%)
* Percentage is based on total births in the specified racial or origin group.					

Figure 5.

In essence, Frederick County has been experiencing more births; however the birth rate of the County has been decreasing. This is due to the balance of population increase and birth. Most of the births in Frederick County occur to mothers that are between the ages of 30-34. The highest concentration of unmarried and teenage mothers is found in the Black communities of Frederick County. Even though the trends are declining the numbers are very significant. The Hispanic population is also raising its trend toward more teenage and unmarried mothers. These high minority trends may be due to less White Non-Hispanic births and more minority births taking place in the County.