

consistently had the highest fertility, with one out of two bearing a child each year on the average, while almost four out of every 10 married women in their early 20's had a child every year as compared with about one in four for women in their late 20's.

During and since World War II, up to 1960, the fertility rates for young mothers—particularly those under 25—have increased, those for women in their late 20's and in their 30's have remained relatively stable, and those for women over 40 have declined. Although the fertility rate for the teenage group is highest, over half of the total infants born each year are born to mothers in their 20's (see Table 9).

Age of Parents.—Age of parents is an important variable in any analysis of birth statistics. The distribution of legitimate and illegitimate live births by age of the parents is given in Table 9, as well as the average age of parents.

Over 7 p.c. of the legitimate children born in 1961 were born to mothers under 20 years of age, in over one third of the births the mother was under 25 years, and in almost two thirds, under 30 years; in one out of six births the father was under 25 years of age, and in almost 48 p.c. of all births the father was under 30 years. On the other hand, over one third (38.1 p.c.) of the illegitimate infants born were born to mothers under 20 years of age and an additional one third to mothers under 25 years. The average age of all the married mothers to whom a child was born in 1961 was slightly over 28, and of the fathers 31.4 years; ten years ago the average ages of the parents were 28.4 and 32.1, and thirty years ago 29.2 and 33.6, respectively.

9.—Live Births, by Age of Parents, 1961

(Exclusive of Newfoundland)

Age Group	Legitimate				Illegitimate	
	Fathers		Mothers		Mothers	
	No.	p.c.	No.	p.c.	No.	p.c.
Under 20 years.....	4,804	1.1	31,884	7.3	7,744	38.1
Under 15 years.....	..	..	34	--	196	1.0
15 years.....	..	..	312	0.1	477	2.3
16 ".....	..	..	1,578	0.4	1,074	5.3
17 ".....	..	..	4,720	1.1	1,663	8.2
18 ".....	..	..	9,765	2.2	2,176	10.7
19 ".....	..	..	15,475	3.5	2,158	10.6
20—24 ".....	75,100	17.2	128,859	29.3	6,841	33.6
25—29 ".....	130,274	29.8	124,681	28.4	2,889	14.2
30—34 ".....	108,981	24.9	87,396	19.9	1,645	8.1
35—39 ".....	67,569	15.4	49,942	11.4	909	4.5
40—44 ".....	32,700	7.5	15,296	3.5	286	1.4
45—49 ".....	12,920	3.0	1,128	0.3	18	0.1
50 years or over.....	5,320	1.2	17	--	—	—
Totals, Stated Ages.....	437,668	100.0	439,203	100.0	20,332	100.0
Ages not stated.....	1,617	...	82	...	492	...
Totals, All Ages.....	439,285	100.0	439,285	100.0	20,824	100.0
Average ages.....	31.4		28.1		23.6	

Order of Birth.—Table 10 shows the order of birth of all live-born infants in 1961 according to the age of the mother. As would be expected, 29,105 or three out of every four of the 39,628 infants born to mothers under 20 years of age were first children, whereas almost six out of every ten of the children born to mothers of 20-24 years were second or later children. This is a reflection of the earlier marriages and heavy fertility of recent years. In 1961, 230 infants were born to mothers who had not yet reached their 15th birthday.