



WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT

A publication of the Epidemiology Unit
Ministry of Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine

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Adolescence pregnancy Part I

This is the first article of series of two articles.

Adolescence pregnancy is defined as “the occurrence of pregnancy among girls aged between 10 and 19”. This can be seen in every part of the world although the adolescent fertility rates could vary across the regions



Statistics of adolescent pregnancies

Approximately 12 million girls between 15-19 years and 777000 girls between 10-15 years deliver babies each year in developing regions. At least 10 million pregnancies in the 10-15 years age group are unintended. The estimated number of abortions among the same age group is 5.6 million and 3.5million abortions among them are unsafe leading to increased maternal morbidity and mortality. Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death among the 15-19 age group globally.

The adolescent fertility rate has declined over time. But disparities are there in regions. For example, the adolescent fertility rate in east-Asia is 7.1 while it is 129.5 in Central Africa. Even

within the same region, there could be disparities in fertility rates. For instance, it is 33 in South East Asia. But ranged from 0.3 in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to 83 in Bangladesh.

Further, the real reason to reduce the global adolescent fertility rate is not due to the reduced number of adolescent pregnancies, but due to the increased number of populations in girls at age of 10-15.

Adolescent pregnancy data in Sri Lanka

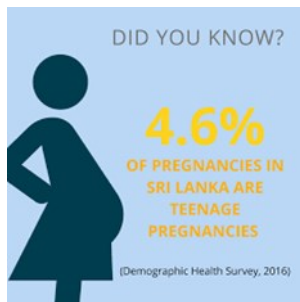
The adolescent fertility rate in Sri Lanka varied between 14 and 21 per 1000 adolescents in 10 years from 2009 to 2019. It was 20.45 in 2019 and 15.56 in 2015. So, it has gone up. In 2019, the adolescent pregnancy rate among all pregnancies was 4.4%. The percentage of adolescent pregnancies was highest in Trincomalee district (9%) followed by Batticaloa district at 8.4% in 2019.

Can anyone below legally marry in Sri Lanka?

No, the age of marriage in Sri Lanka is 18. But girls in some ethnic groups marry after the age of 12 according to their traditional law

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WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT SRI LANKA 2022



Context

Adolescent pregnancies are a global health challenge that should be controlled by the public health sector of states. They are more prominent among marginalized communities, commonly driven by poverty, poor education, and lack of employment opportunities.

Factors contributing to adolescent pregnancies and births

- ◆ Early marriage – in some countries, especially in underdeveloped one’s girls have fewer opportunities to study and work. Therefore marriage, childbearing, and family responsibilities are the only choice they have. According to World Bank data, at least 39% of girls marry before they are 18 years of age and 12% before the age of 15 in such countries. And also, motherhood is more valued in that society than other roles.
- ◆ Knowledge gap and misconceptions – even though some girls need to avoid pregnancies they lack the knowledge about contraception methods and their availability. Further, restrictive laws and policies regarding the provision of them based on age and marital status have limited their tendency to use them. Some have not enough knowledge of sexual health including fertility, contraception, menstrual cycle, and STDs. Therefore, unexpectedly they get pregnant. According to the research done on “the hidden burden of adolescent pregnancies in rural Sri Lanka; findings of the Rajarata Pregnancy Cohort”, the education level of adolescent pregnant mothers was significantly low compared to mothers in other age groups.
- ◆ Sexual violence – in some countries one in a third of adolescents faced sexual violence.
- ◆ Health inequality
- ◆ Poor income and social status

- ◆ Other barriers- healthcare bias/lack of willingness to educate adolescents regarding sexual health, other issues in transportation, and financial aspects

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Table 1: Selected notifiable diseases reported by Medical Officers of Health 29th-04th Nov 2022 (44th Week)

RDHS	Dengue Fever		Dysentery		Encephaliti		Enteric Fever		Food Poi-		Leptospirosis		Typhus		Viral Hepa-		Human		Chickenpox		Meningitis		Leishmania-		WRCD	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	T*	C**
Colombo	11	11502	0	7	0	4	0	1	0	7	6	206	0	1	0	5	0	2	2	49	0	11	0	4	16	99
Gampaha	86	7781	0	6	0	1	0	1	0	13	3	244	0	1	0	12	0	4	0	61	0	36	0	33	5	88
Kalutara	18	3350	2	29	0	1	0	2	0	6	17	415	0	4	2	9	0	4	4	97	1	27	0	2	40	100
Kandy	96	4842	2	22	0	1	0	4	0	13	7	171	2	35	0	8	0	0	4	81	0	13	3	41	13	99
Matale	30	1131	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	100	0	6	0	6	0	1	2	47	0	1	5	306	20	100
NuwareEliya	4	210	0	27	1	3	1	4	0	5	0	87	1	22	0	7	0	0	3	44	0	6	0	1	29	93
Galle	28	3260	0	12	0	1	0	1	0	1	26	478	1	35	0	6	0	0	2	79	0	25	0	0	15	100
Hambantota	18	1465	1	33	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	231	3	54	0	6	0	0	5	47	0	17	9	476	19	100
Matara	24	1572	0	14	0	2	0	1	7	8	15	271	2	17	0	3	0	0	1	53	0	8	0	230	32	100
Jaffna	72	3004	2	115	0	3	1	71	2	72	1	25	6	509	0	8	0	4	1	106	0	15	0	1	67	93
Kilinochchi	0	118	0	8	0	0	0	3	0	24	0	11	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	5	0	2	23	100
Mannar	5	203	1	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	27	0	6	0	2	0	0	1	7	1	18	0	0	18	80
Vavuniya	1	84	0	4	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	18	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	0	0	4	2	100
Mullaitivu	0	62	0	5	0	0	0	2	0	6	0	27	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	0	2	21	94
Batticaloa	12	1127	5	84	1	10	0	0	0	22	2	43	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	39	1	32	0	2	40	98
Ampara	0	161	0	13	0	2	0	0	4	21	2	98	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	52	2	41	0	13	10	99
Trincomalee	8	1098	0	26	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	34	0	3	0	4	0	0	1	43	0	10	0	7	14	99
Kurunegala	37	2452	1	25	0	2	0	0	0	4	18	167	0	34	0	4	0	3	5	107	1	44	11	445	11	100
Puttalam	28	2106	1	6	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	45	0	9	0	1	0	0	0	23	0	31	0	6	17	92
Anuradhapur	6	428	0	13	1	3	0	1	0	7	4	173	0	28	0	4	0	2	1	67	0	48	0	367	9	97
Polonnaruwa	1	141	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	108	0	1	0	5	0	0	1	21	0	5	5	453	17	96
Badulla	63	1063	1	26	0	3	0	1	0	14	2	246	0	61	2	146	0	0	2	63	1	20	1	28	21	100
Monaragala	13	475	0	10	0	2	0	4	0	22	17	275	1	34	0	61	0	0	0	66	6	64	1	147	13	100
Ratnapura	26	2686	1	46	0	6	0	3	0	34	19	941	0	22	0	26	0	1	3	73	3	64	0	189	15	95
Kegalle	43	2737	0	15	0	8	1	2	0	8	32	539	3	22	0	10	0	0	7	108	0	48	0	23	10	99
Kalmune	13	1123	0	31	0	1	0	3	0	6	1	29	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	74	0	35	0	0	30	100
SRI LANKA	74	54181	17	599	3	56	3	109	13	301	18	5009	19	925	4	337	0	22	49	1452	16	626	35	2782	19	97

Source: Weekly Returns of Communicable Diseases (esurveillance.epid.gov.lk). T=Timeliness refers to returns received on or before 04th Nov, 2022 Total number of reporting units 357 Number of reporting units data provided for the current week 285 C**=Completeness

Table 2: Vaccine-Preventable Diseases & AFP

29th– 04th Nov 2022 (44th Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2022	Number of cases during same week in 2021	Total number of cases to date in 2022	Total number of cases to date in 2021	Difference between the number of cases to date in 2022 & 2021
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
AFP*	00	01	00	00	01	00	00	00	00	02	00	69	54	21.7 %
Diphtheria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
Mumps	00	00	01	00	00	00	01	00	00	02	00	77	63	22.2 %
Measles	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	20	11	81.8 %
Rubella	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
CRS**	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
Tetanus	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	05	03	66.6 %
Neonatal Tetanus	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
Japanese Encephalitis	00	01	00	00	00	01	00	00	00	02	00	09	04	125 %
Whooping Cough	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	0 %
Tuberculosis	00	06	05	05	13	44	00	09	25	107	118	5618	4307	30.4 %

Key to Table 1 & 2

Provinces: W: Western, C: Central, S: Southern, N: North, E: East, NC: North Central, NW: North Western, U: Uva, Sab: Sabaragamuwa.
RDHS Divisions: CB: Colombo, GM: Gampaha, KL: Kalutara, KD: Kandy, ML: Matale, NE: Nuwara Eliya, GL: Galle, HB: Hambantota, MT: Matara, JF: Jaffna, KN: Killinochchi, MN: Mannar, VA: Vavuniya, MU: Mullaitivu, BT: Batticaloa, AM: Ampara, TR: Trincomalee, KM: Kalmunai, KR: Kurunegala, PU: Puttalam, AP: Anuradhapura, PO: Polonnaruwa, BD: Badulla, MO: Moneragala, RP: Ratnapura, KG: Kegalle.

Data Sources:

Weekly Return of Communicable Diseases: Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Neonatal Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Chickenpox, Meningitis, Mumps., Rubella, CRS,

Special Surveillance: AFP* (Acute Flaccid Paralysis), Japanese Encephalitis

CRS** =Congenital Rubella Syndrome

NA = Not Available

Covid-19 Prevention & Control

For everyone's health & safety, maintain physical distance, often wash hands, wear a face mask and stay home.

Comments and contributions for publication in the WER Sri Lanka are welcome. However, the editor reserves the right to accept or reject items for publication. All correspondence should be mailed to The Editor, WER Sri Lanka, Epidemiological Unit, P.O. Box 1567, Colombo or sent by E-mail to chepid@slt.net.lk. **Prior approval should be obtained from the Epidemiology Unit before publishing data in this publication**

ON STATE SERVICE

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