

# Unintended Pregnancy in the United States

Kathryn Kost, Ph.D.  
Senior Research Associate



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# Unintended pregnancies

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- What are they?
- Who has them?
- Why should we care?
- What research do we need?

# *Pregnancies (are not just births)*

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Pregnancies =

births + abortions + miscarriages

# How do we know pregnancy intentions?

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- Right before you became pregnant with your (Nth) pregnancy which ended in (date), did you yourself want to have a, or another, baby at any time in the future?”
  - *Yes*
  - *No*
  - *Not sure, Don't know*
  - *Didn't care*

# Asking women: 2<sup>nd</sup> question

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- So would you say you became pregnant too soon, at about the right time, or later than you wanted?
  - *Too soon*
  - *Right time*
  - *Later*
  - *Didn't care*

# Conventional Measure of Intentions

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- Intended: a pregnancy that was wanted at the time (or sooner than) it occurred
- Unintended: The sum of...
  - “Mistimed”: a pregnancy that was wanted at some point, but occurred sooner than desired
  - “Unwanted”: a pregnancy that was not wanted when it occurred or ever

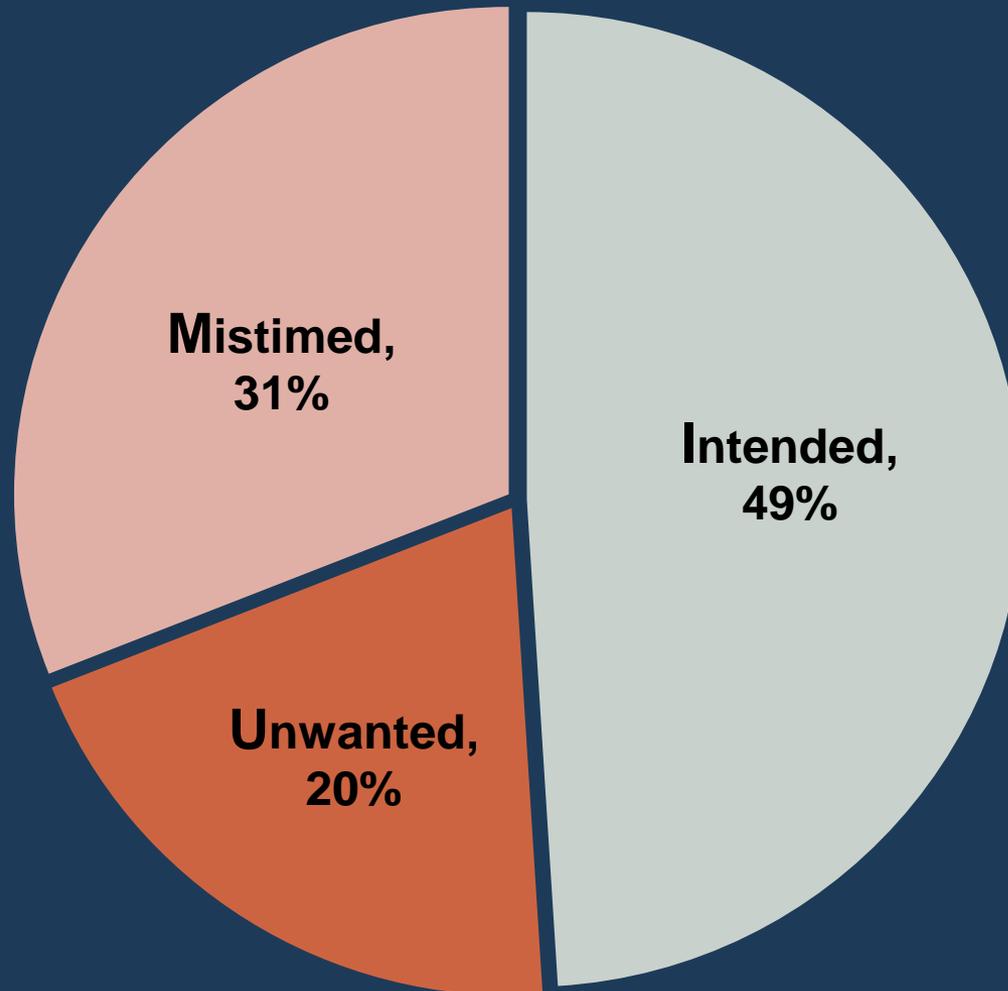
# The numbers, 2008

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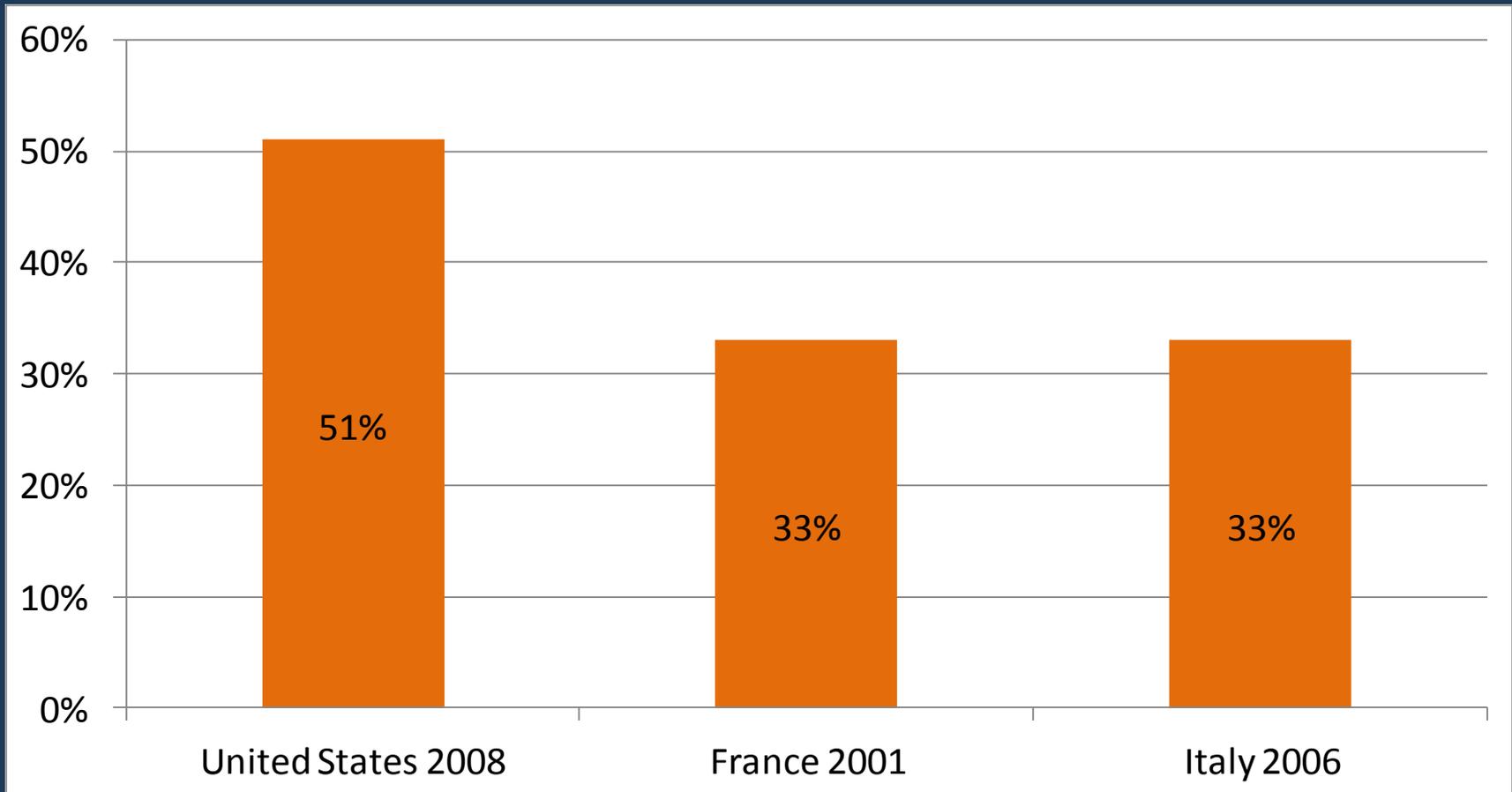
Total U.S. pregnancies: 6.5 Million

Unintended pregnancies: 3.4 Million

# Half of U.S. pregnancies are unintended

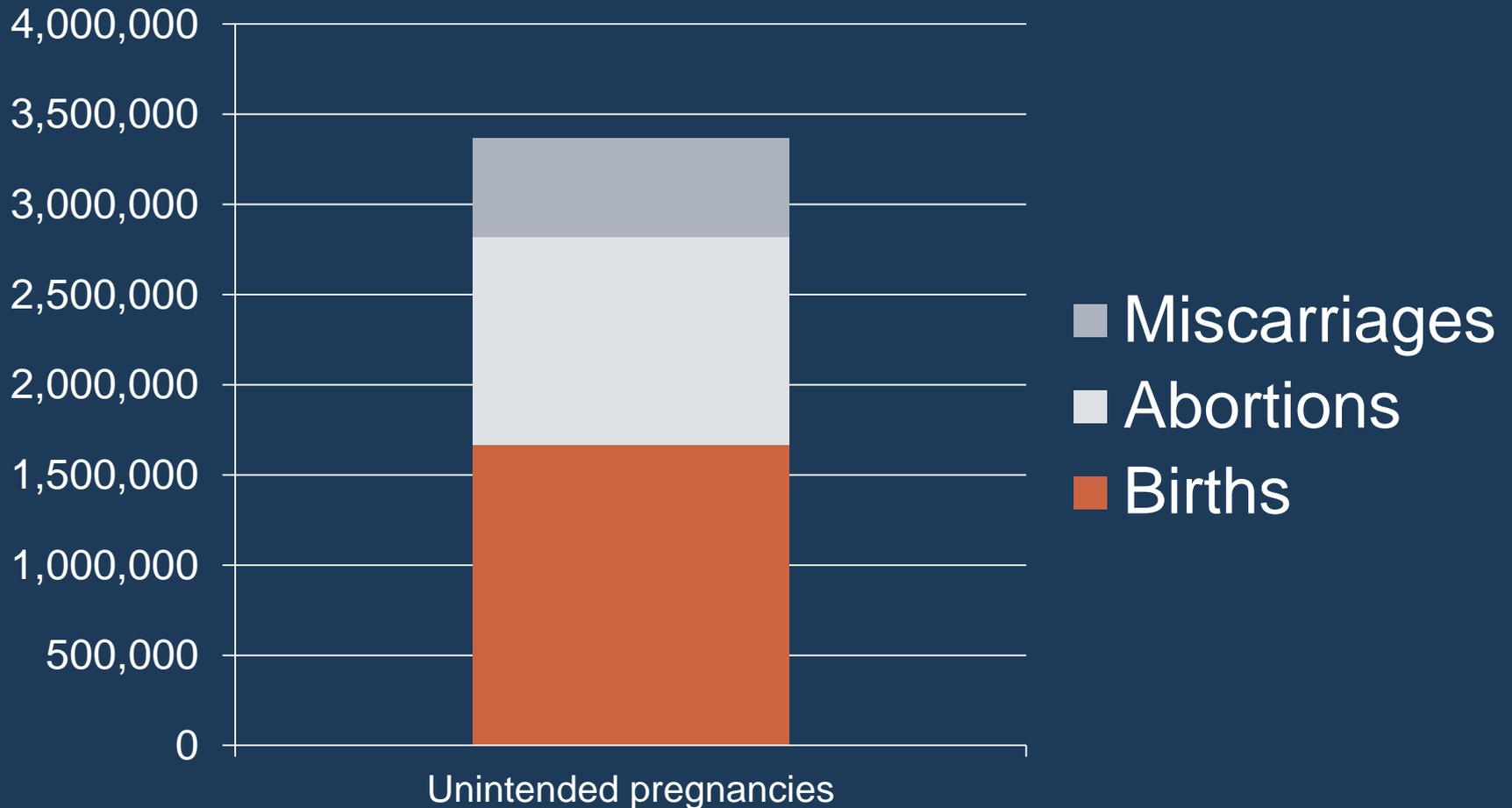


# U.S. percent of pregnancies unintended is high



Finer and Zolna 2011; Bajos 2003; Carbone 2009

# Unintended pregnancies by outcome

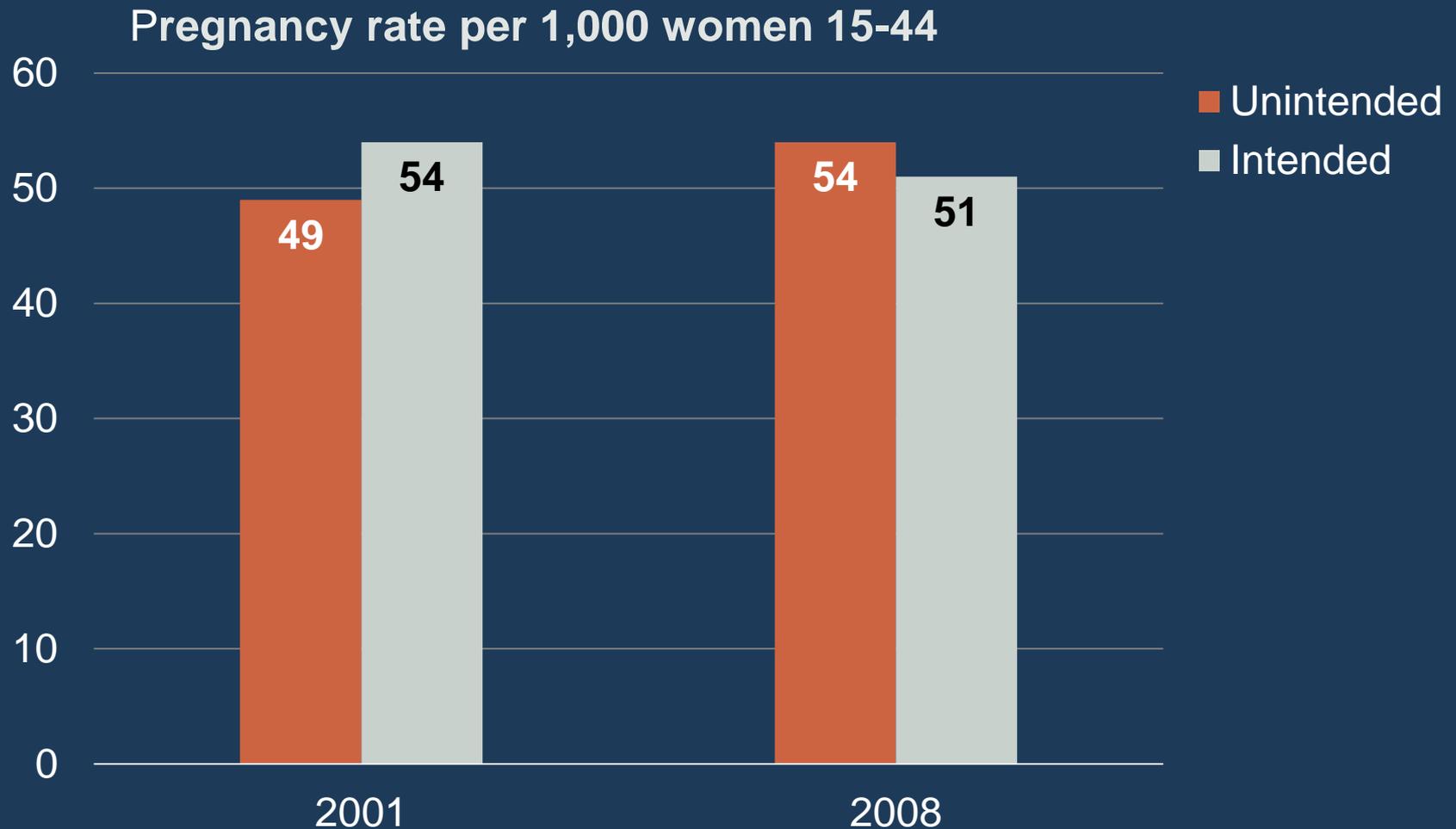


# Unintended Pregnancy Rate

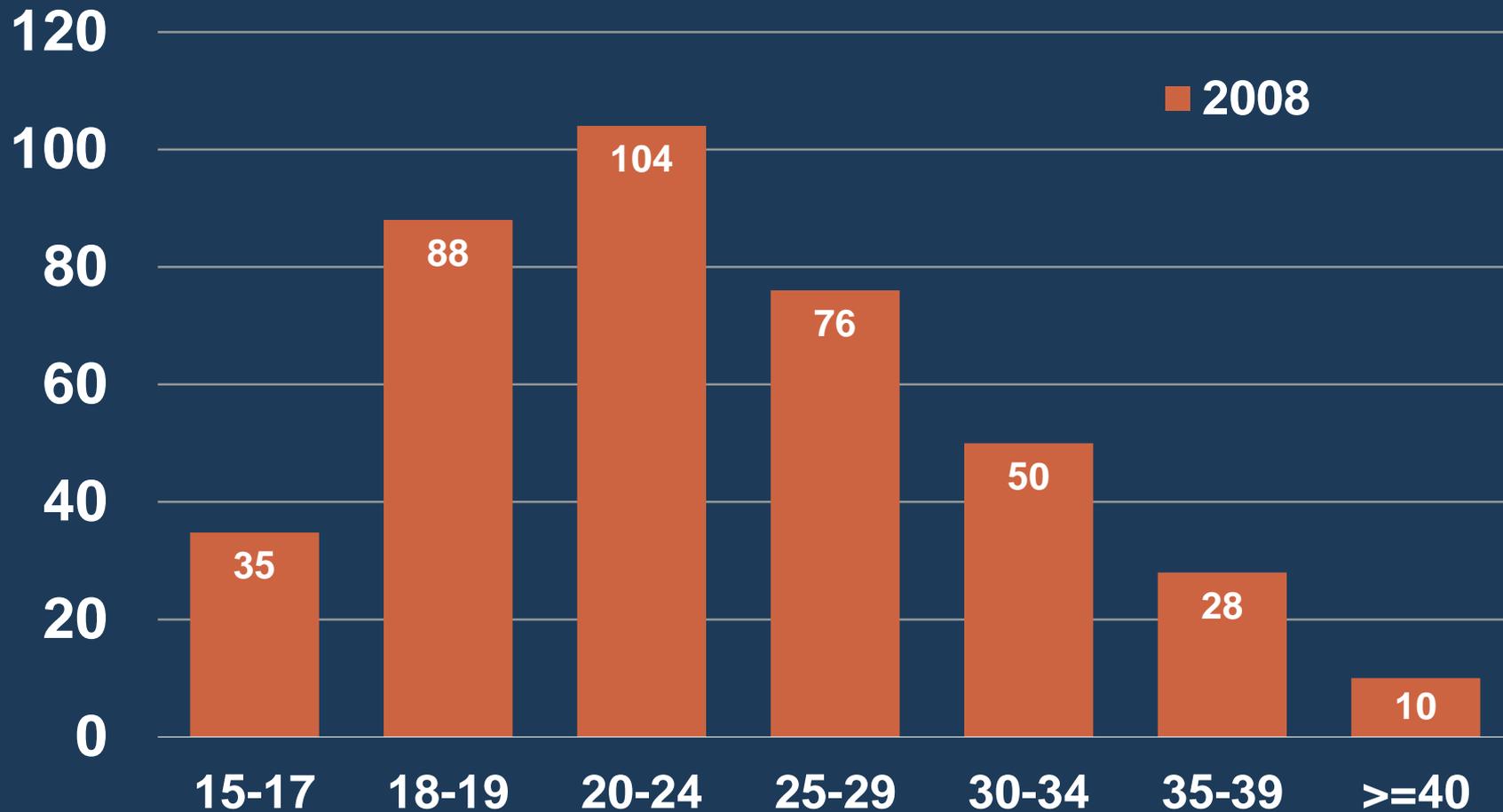
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$$\frac{\text{Unintended births} + \text{Unintended abortions} + \text{Unintended miscarriages}}{\text{Population}}$$

# Unintended pregnancies became more prevalent than intended ones in 2008

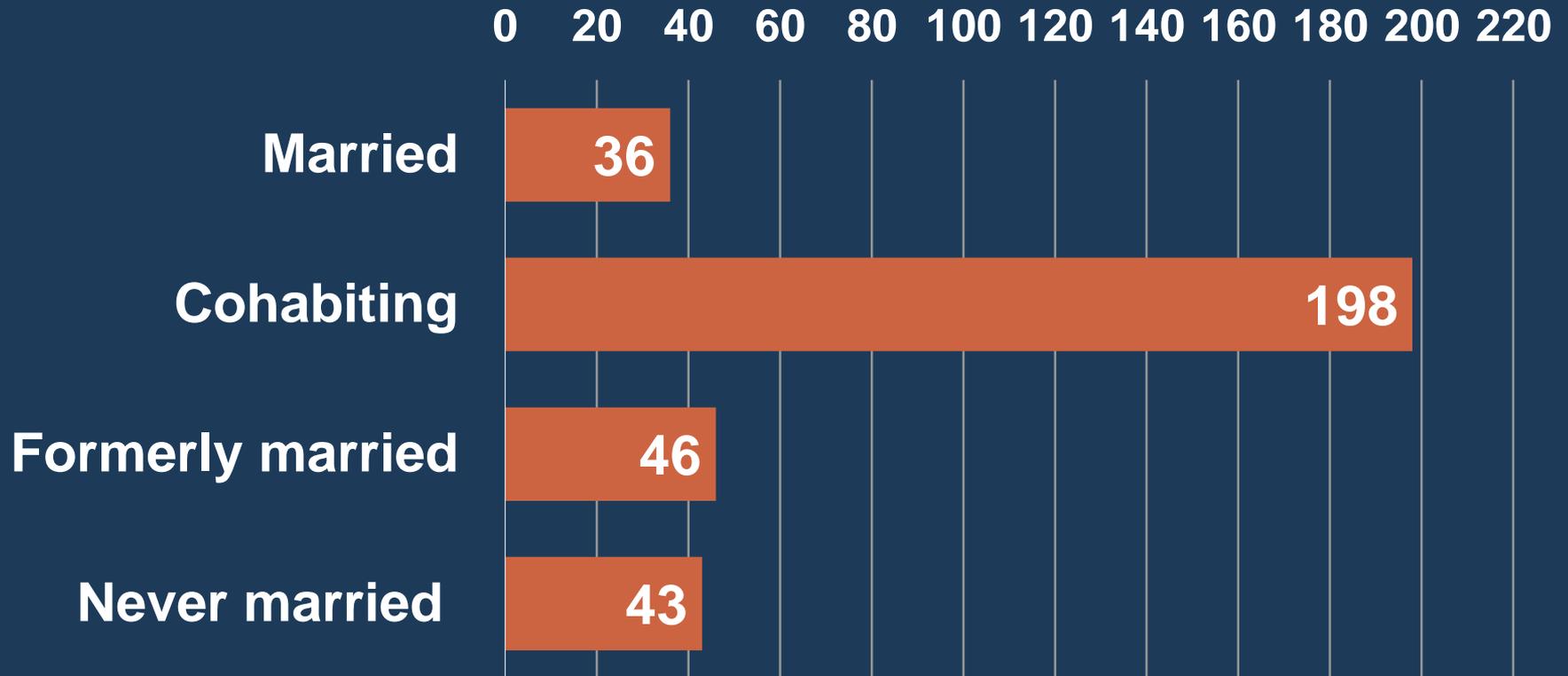


# Unintended pregnancy rates vary by age



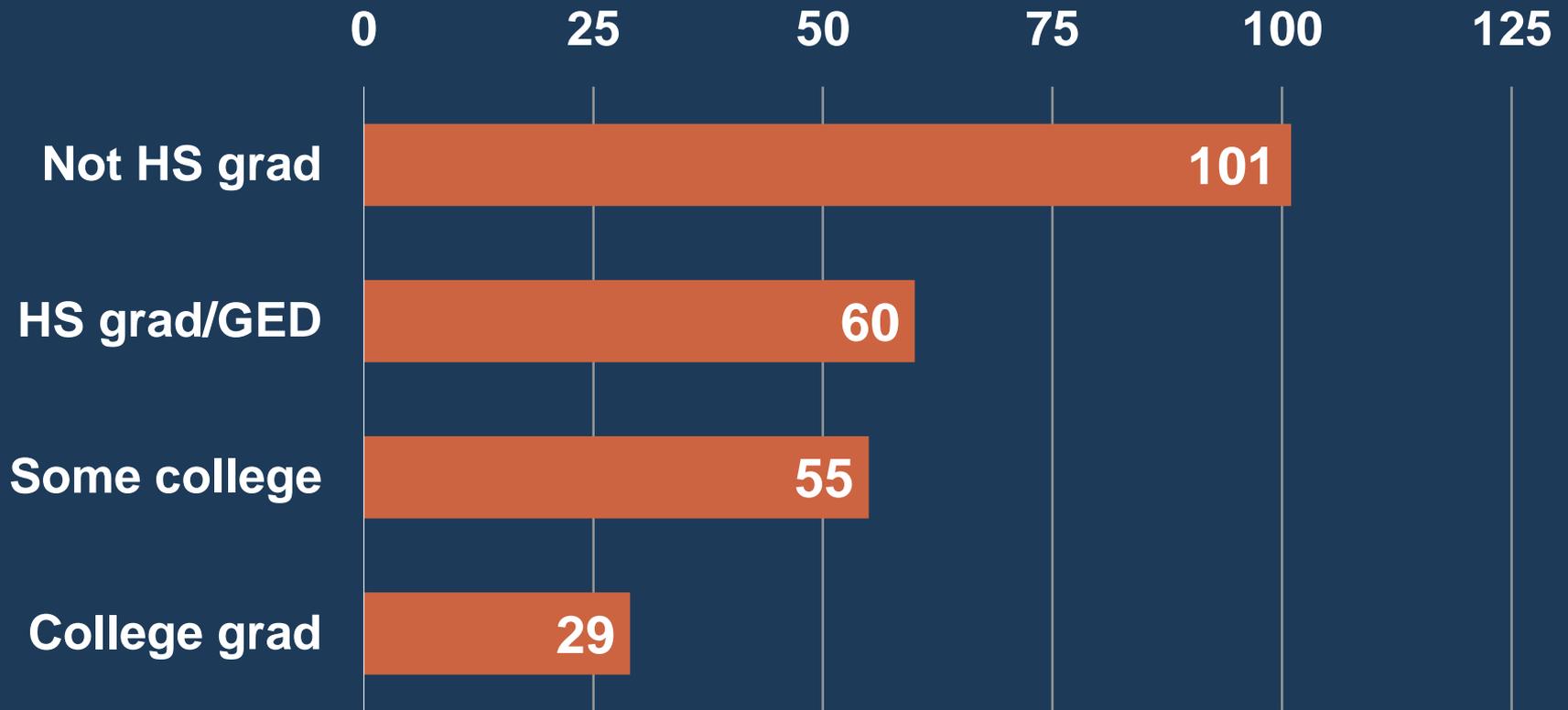
# Significant disparities by relationship status

## Unintended pregnancy rate, 2008



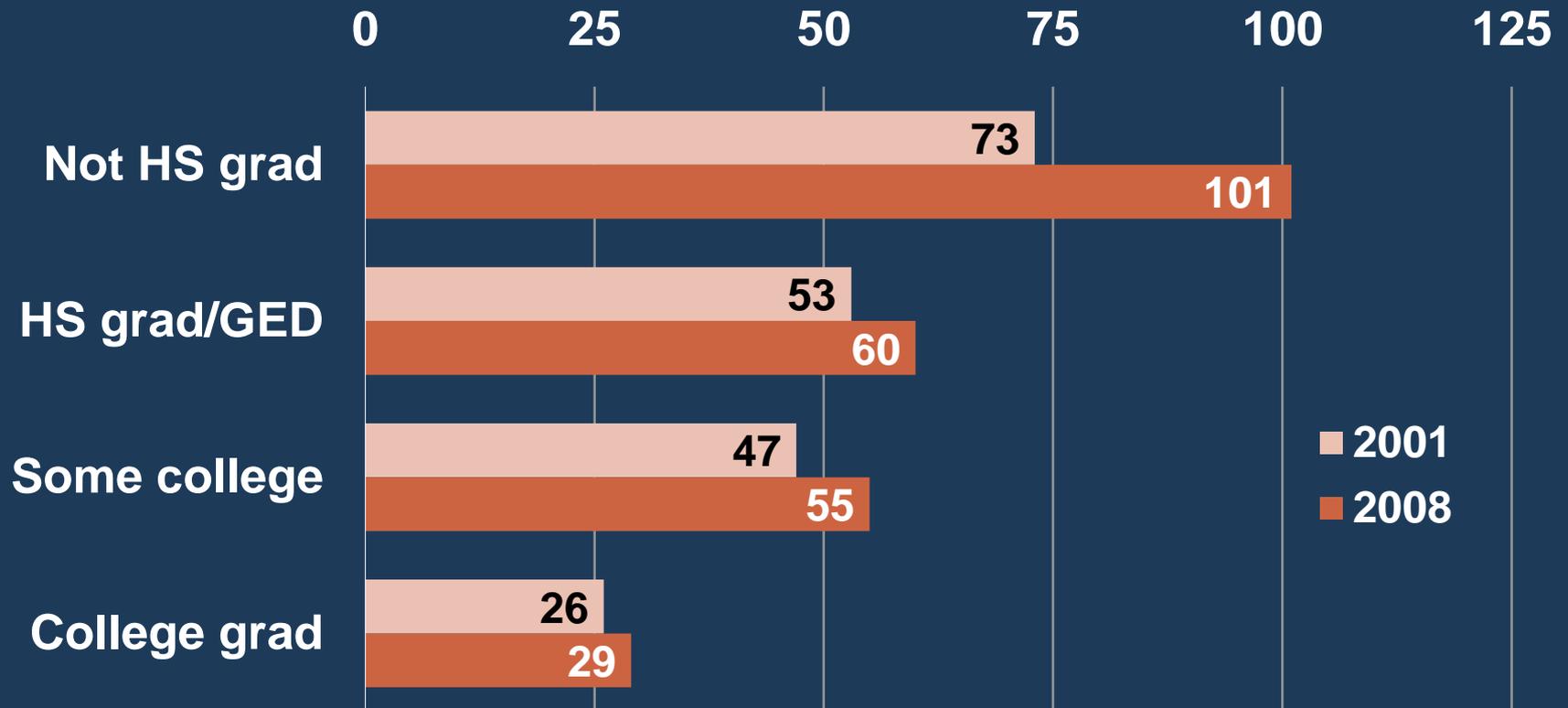
# Large disparities by education

Unintended pregnancy rate, 2008

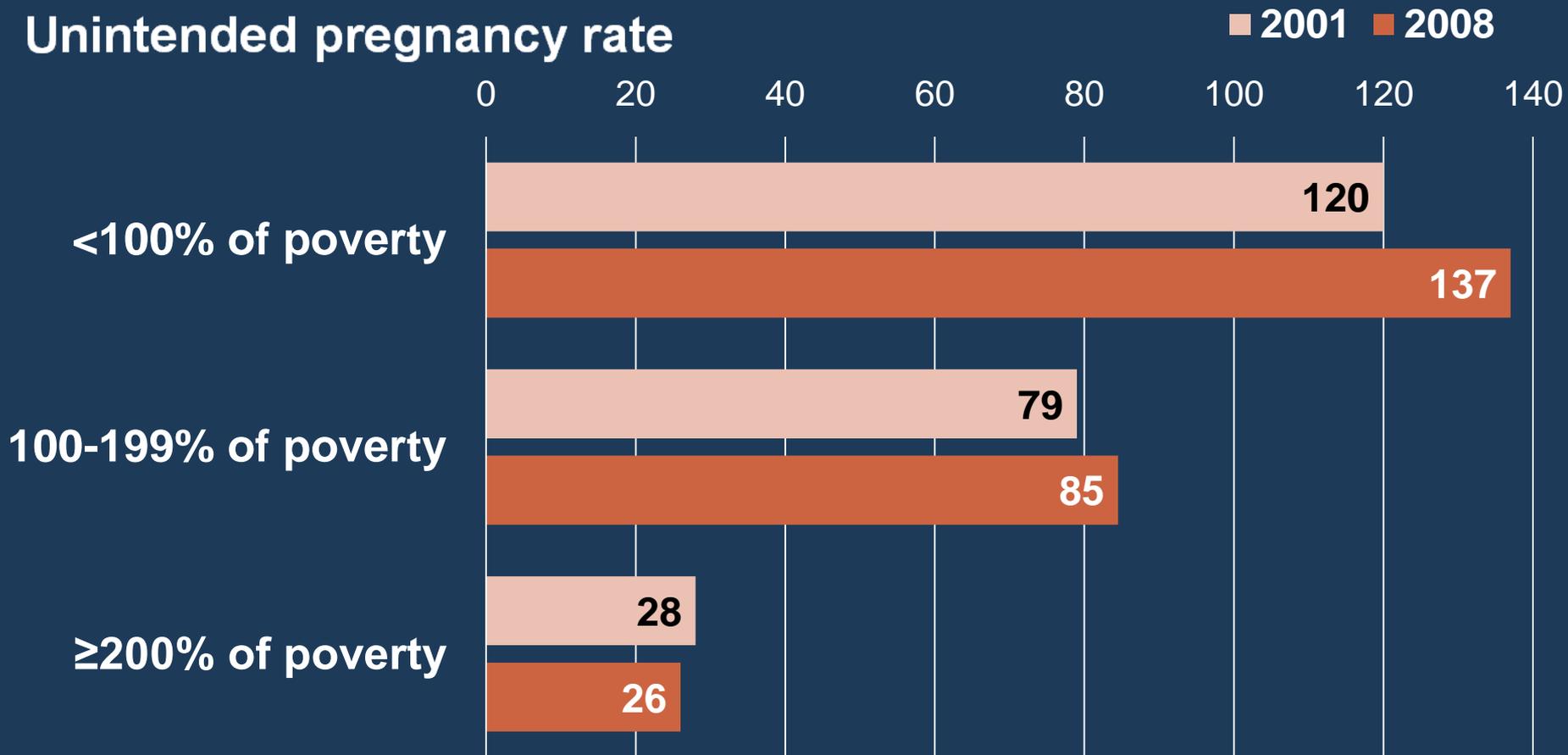


# Disparities by education are growing

## Unintended pregnancy rate

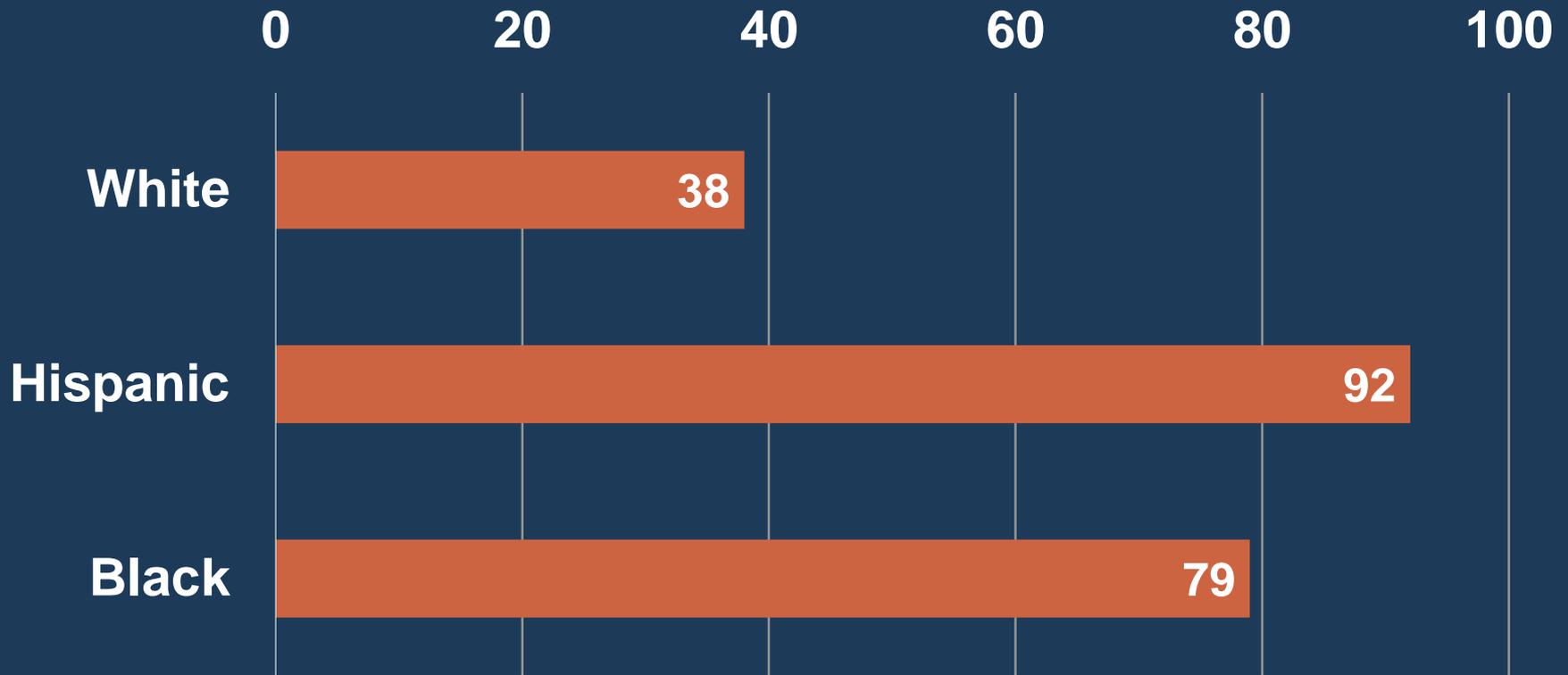


# Large disparities by income have grown

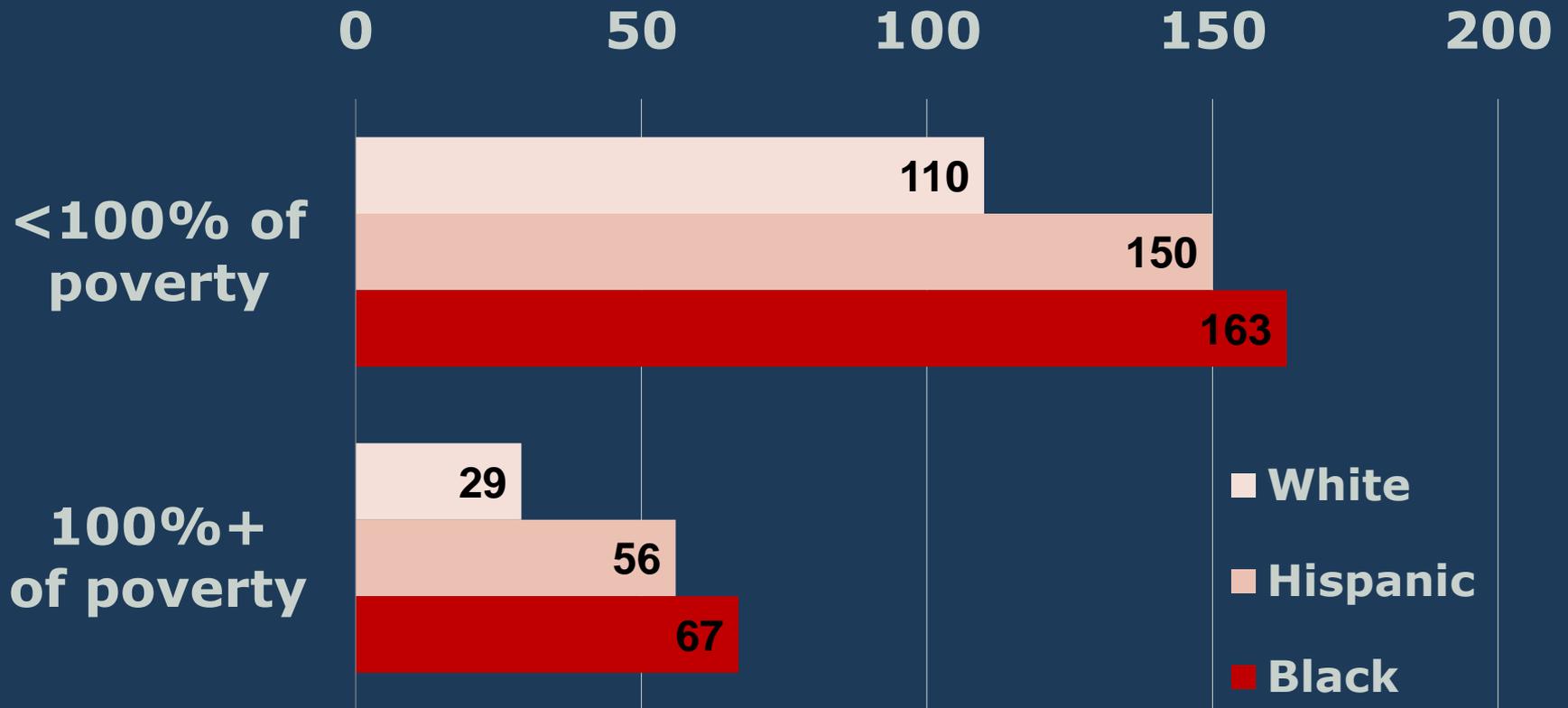


# Significant disparities by race/ethnicity

Unintended pregnancy rate, 2008



# Disparities by race & ethnicity persist across income groups

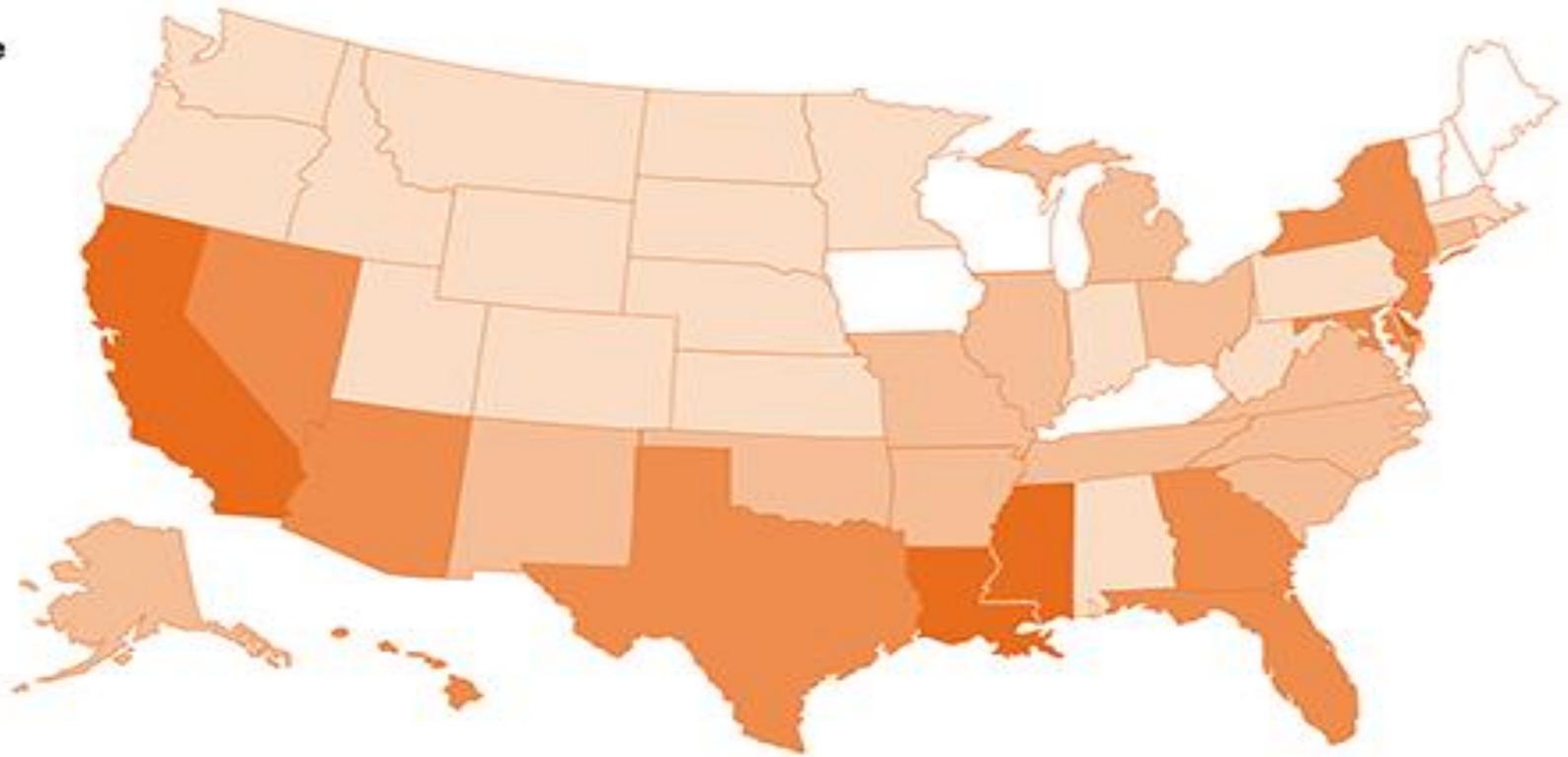
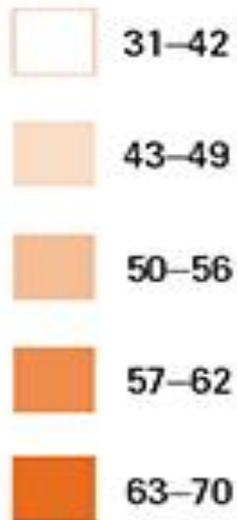


Unintended pregnancy rate, 2008

# Variation by state

## Unintended Pregnancy Rates, by State, in 2008

Unintended pregnancy rate



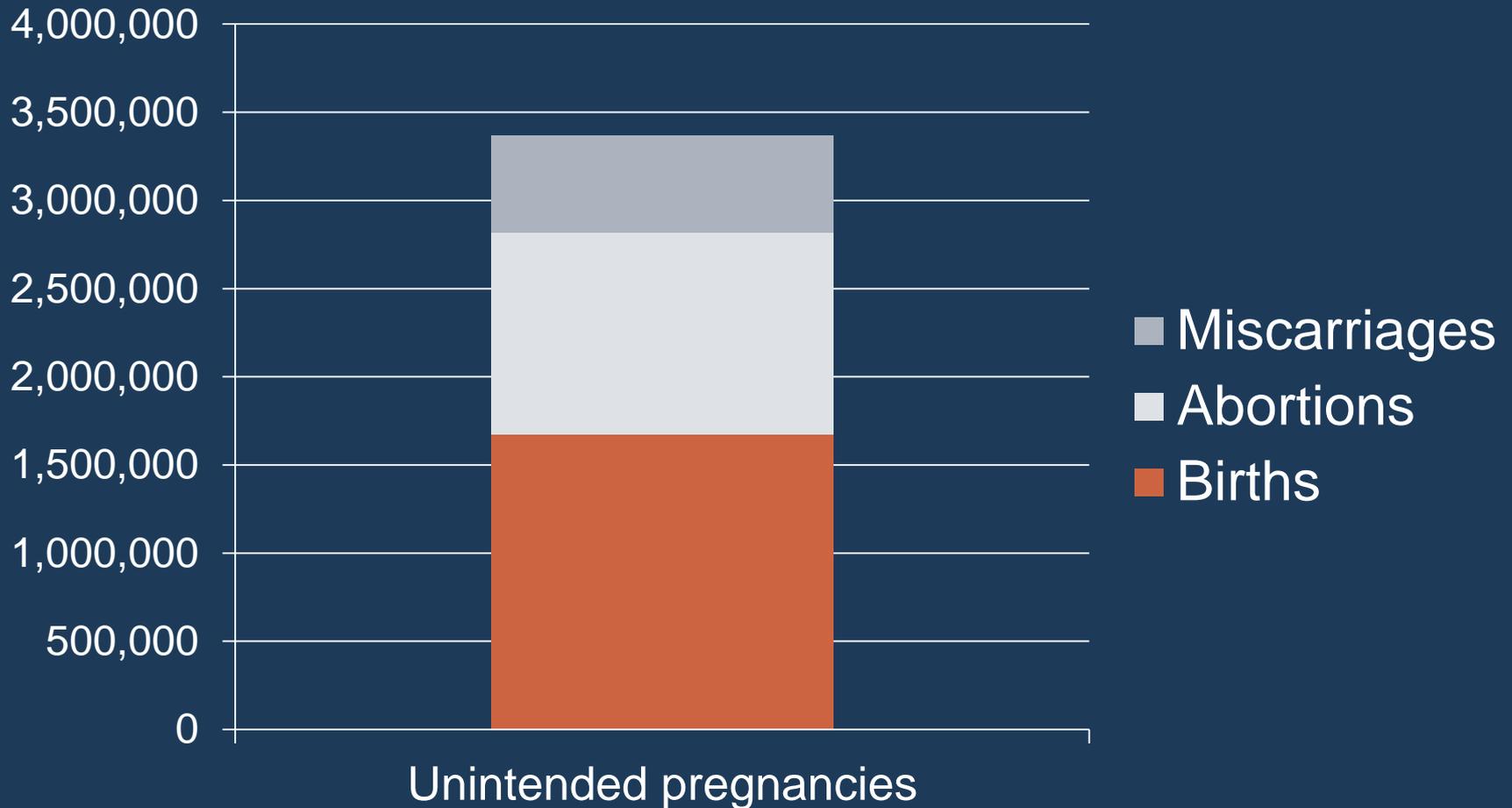
\*Rates for Arizona, Indiana, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota and South Dakota estimated by multiple regression.

# Unintended pregnancies

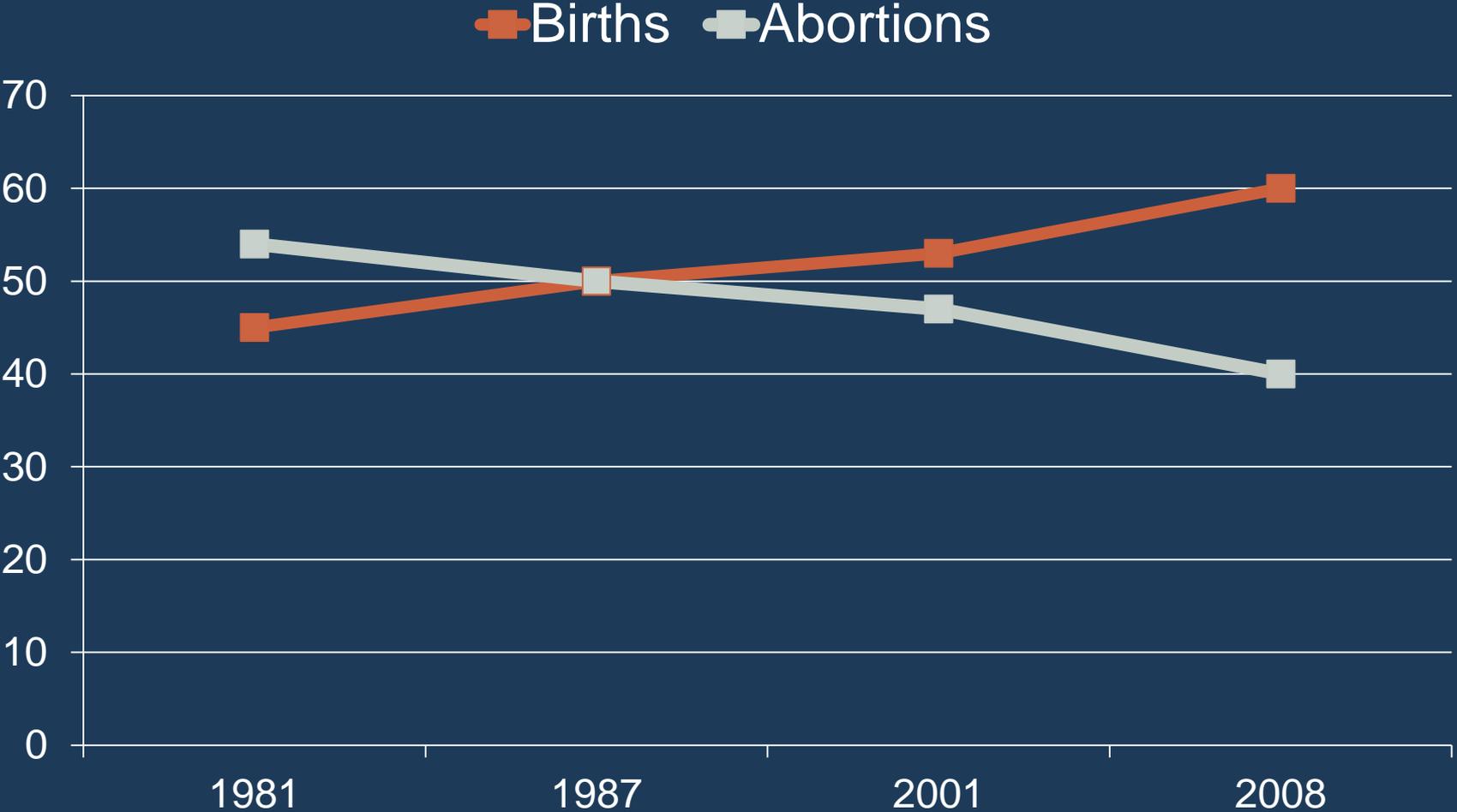
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- What are they?
- Who has them?
- Why should we care?

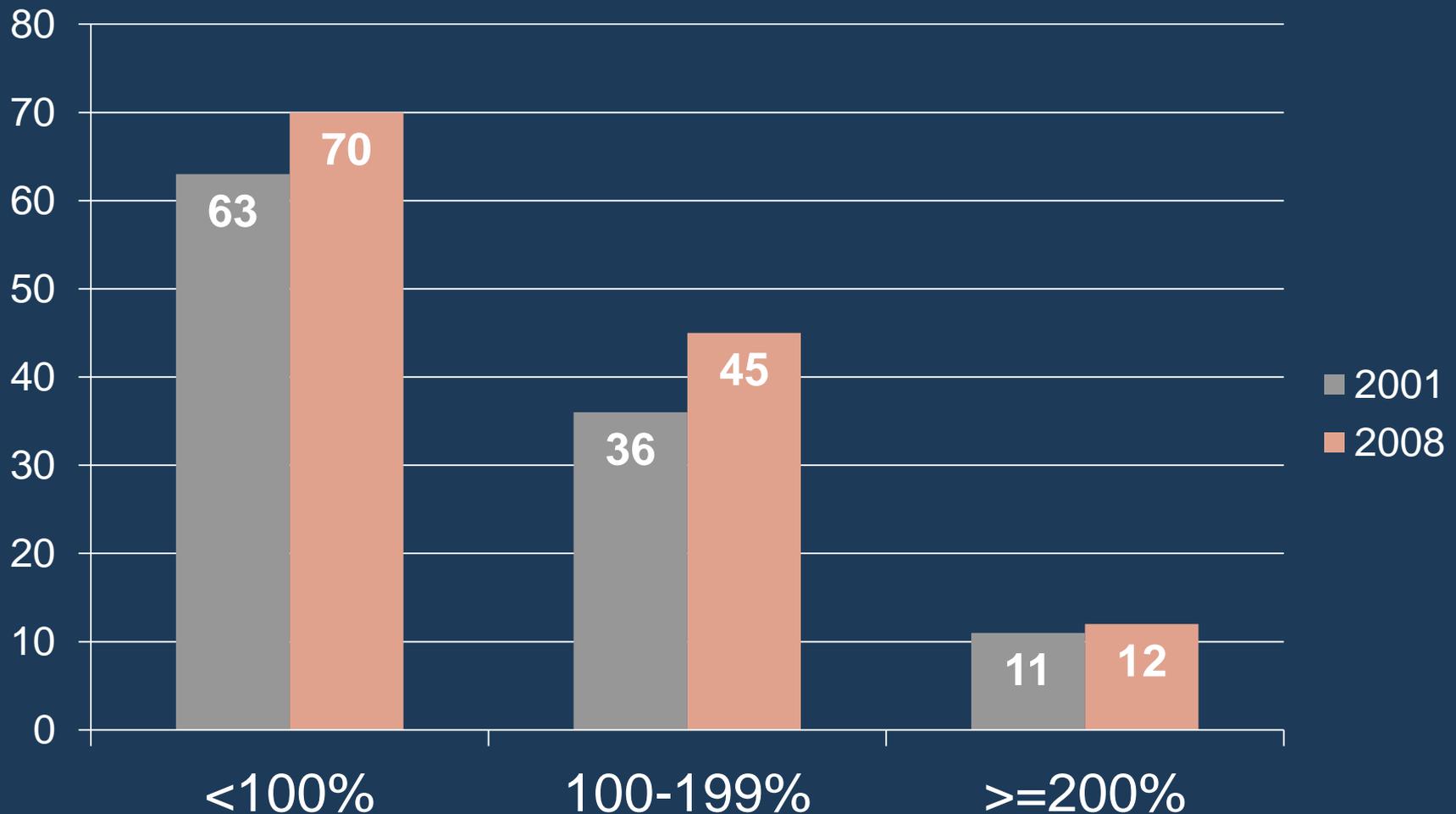
# Unintended pregnancies by outcome



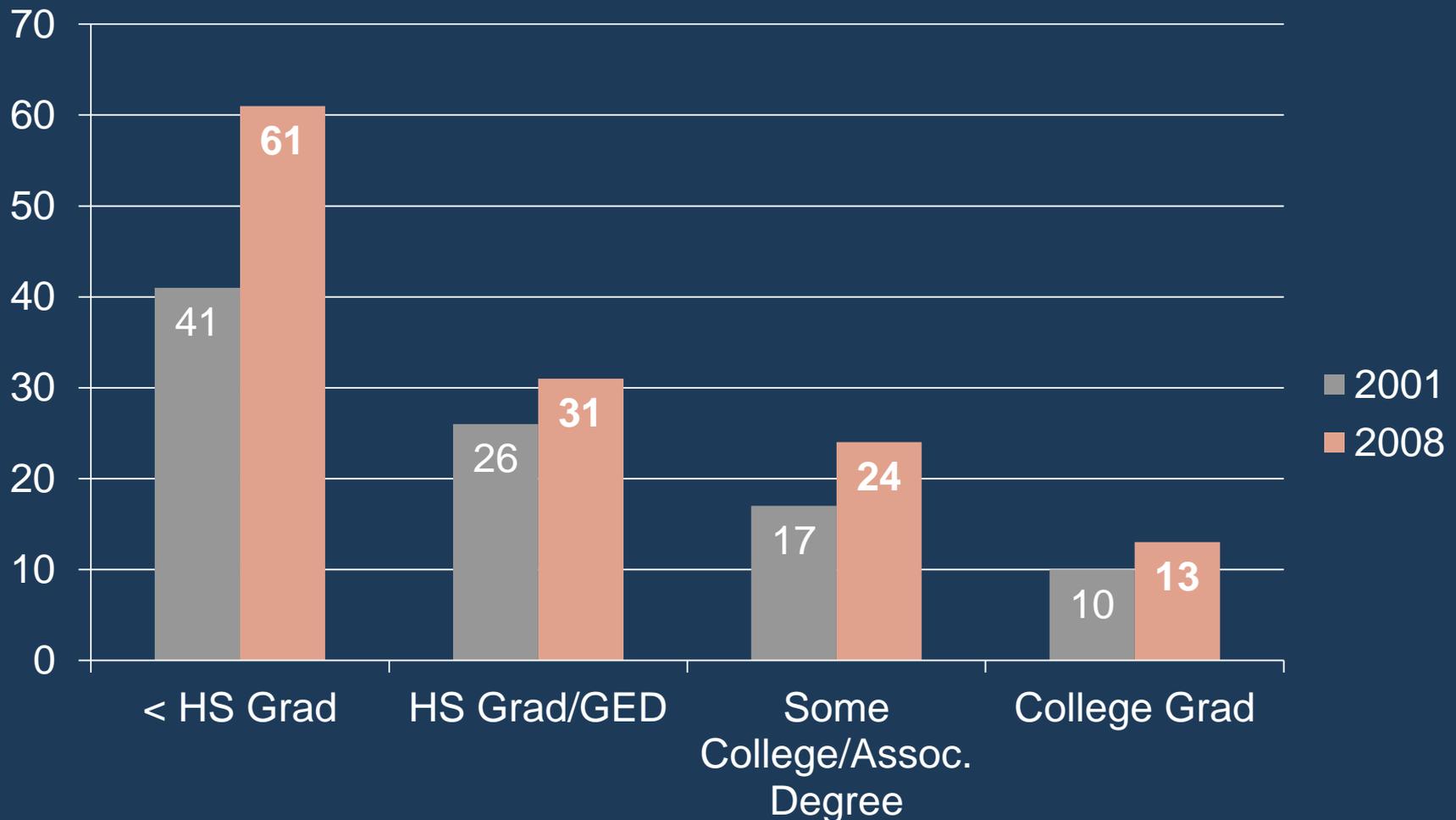
# Increasing proportion of unintended pregnancies end in births



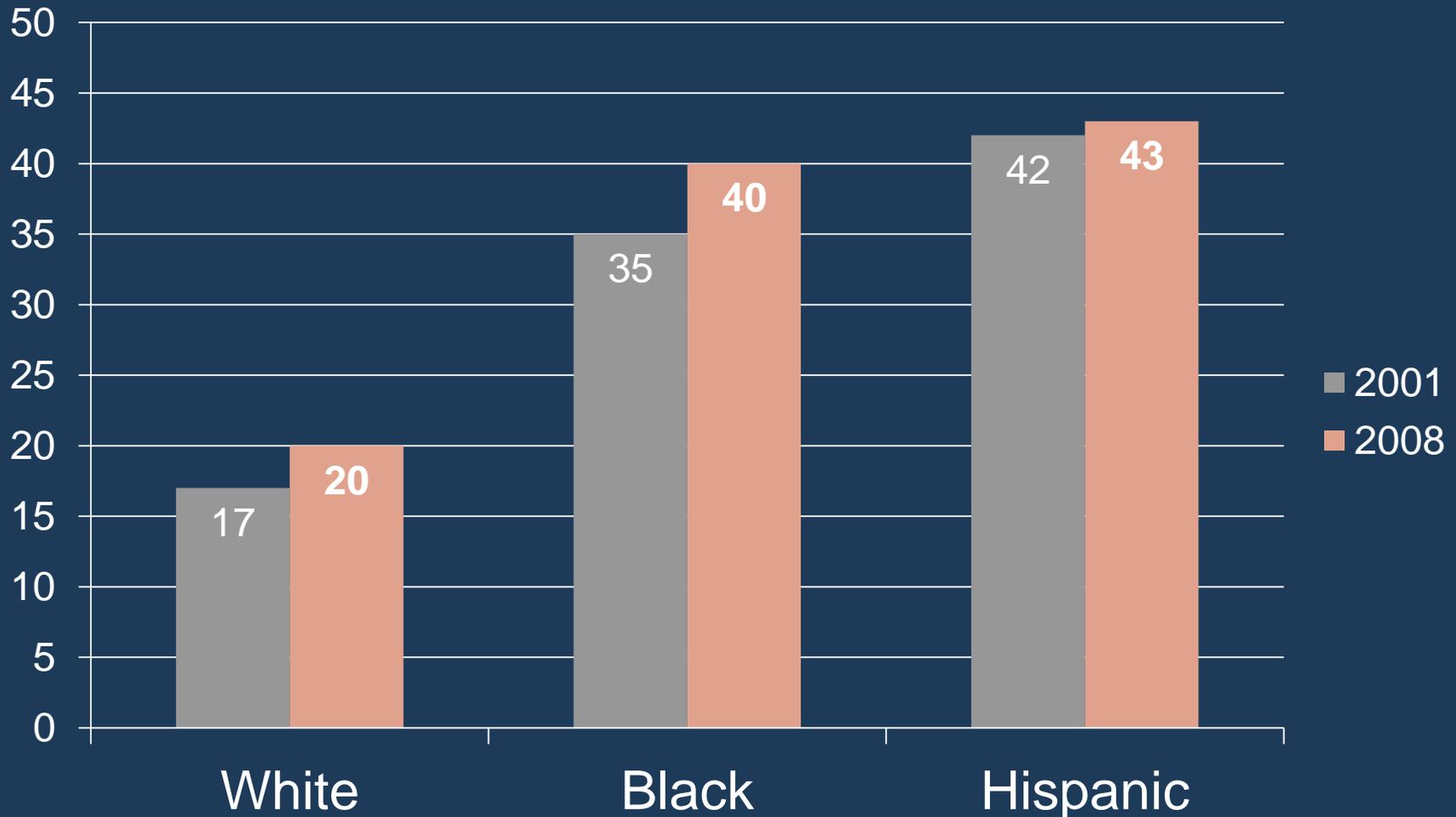
# Poor women are more likely to have a birth from unintended pregnancy



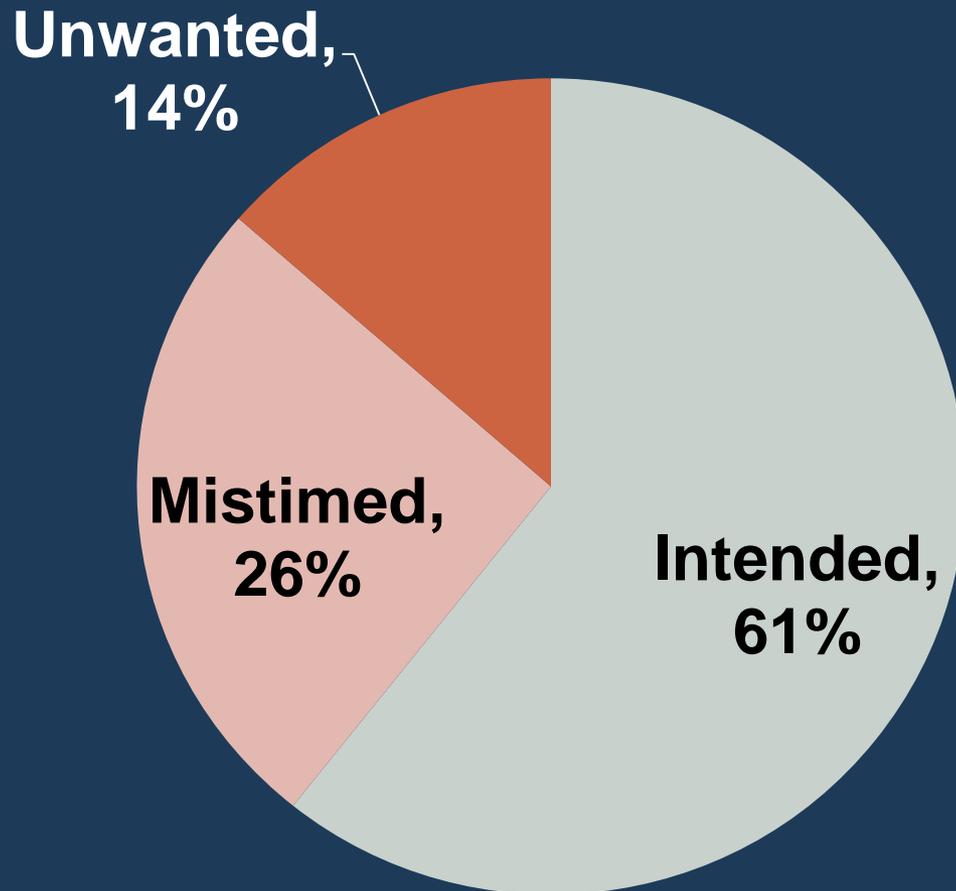
# The least educated women have the highest rates of birth from unintended pregnancies



# Birth rates from unintended pregnancy by race/ethnicity, 2001 and 2008



# About two-fifths of U.S. births are from unintended pregnancies

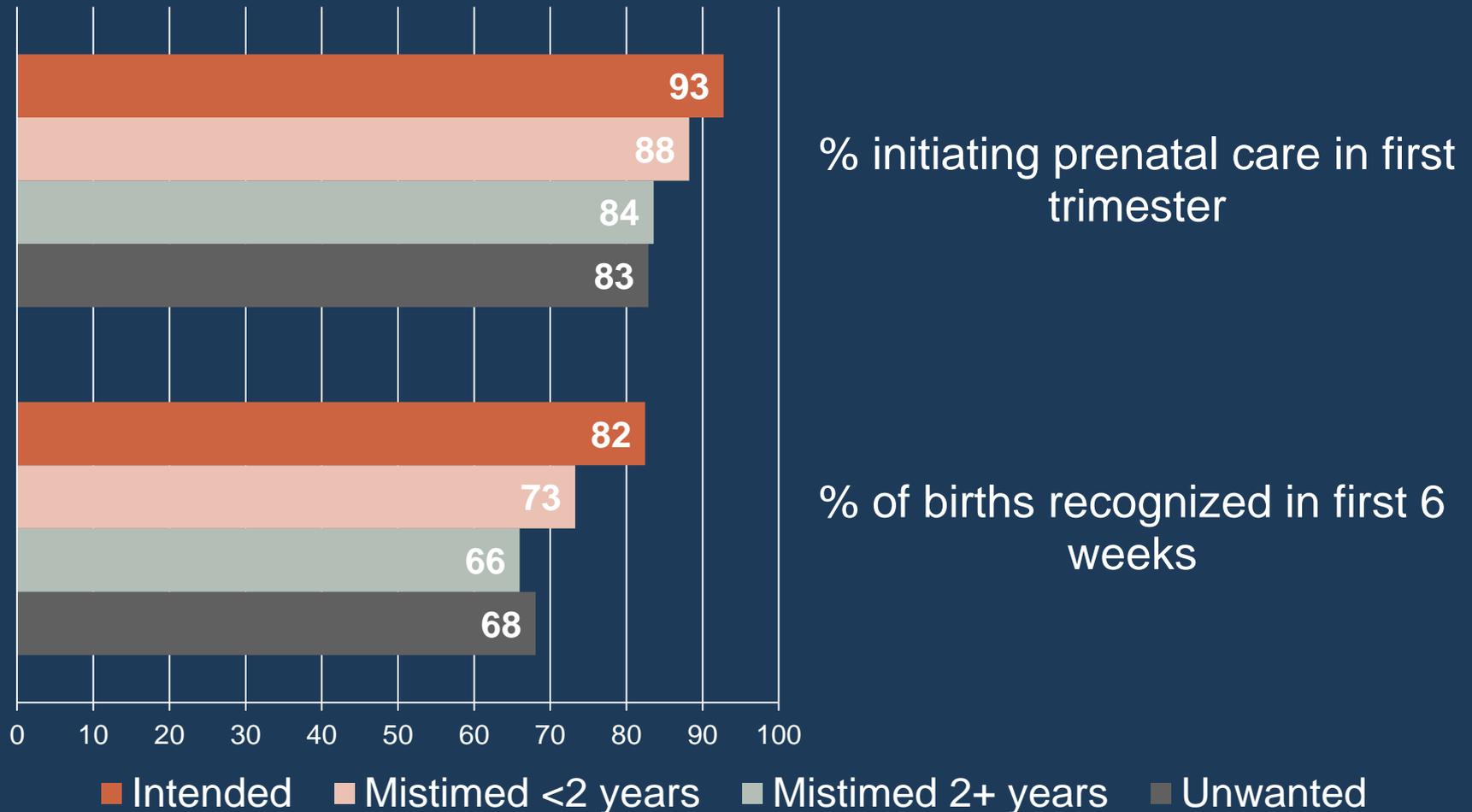


# Implications for Births

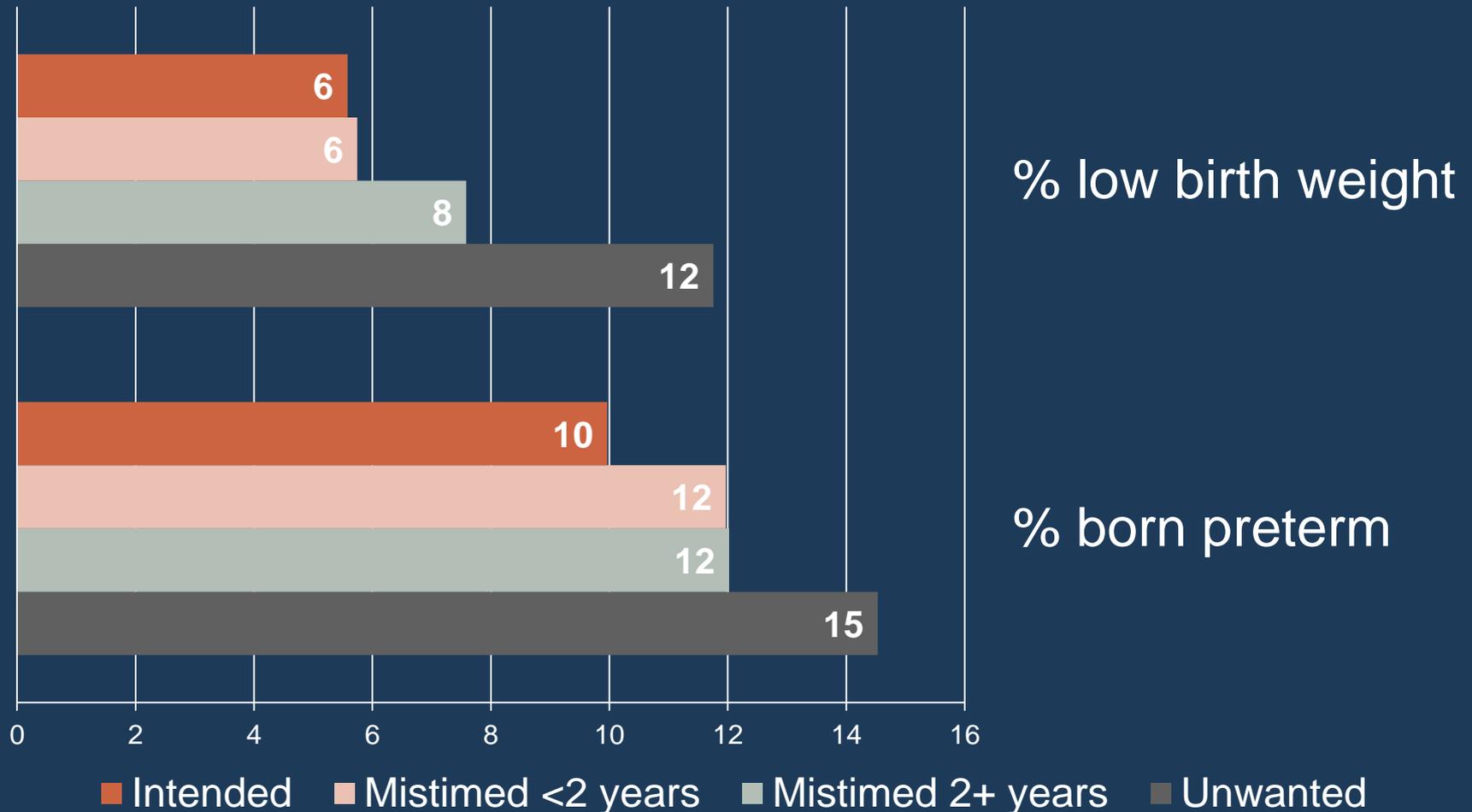
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- About half of unintended pregnancies end in a birth (51%)
- 40% of all births are from unintended pregnancies
- Birth rates from unintended pregnancies are high among disadvantaged groups
- Birth rates from unintended pregnancies are increasing

# Health Consequences: Maternal behavior during pregnancy



# Health Consequences: Birth outcomes



# Health Consequences

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- Other maternal behaviors during & after pregnancy
  - Diet, prenatal vitamins
  - Smoking, alcohol, drug use
  - Breastfeeding
    - Any, Duration, Exclusivity
  - Well Baby visits

# Other Consequences

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- Parent relationships
  - Increased conflict
  - Lower satisfaction
- Psychosocial effects
  - Depression, anxiety, stress

# Less is know about still other consequences

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- Effects on other children
- Effects on maternal and paternal employment
- Education trajectories
- Financial stress
- Food insecurity

# Negative Consequences for Births from Unintended Pregnancy

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- Brown SS and Eisenberg L, *The Best Intentions: Unintended Pregnancy and Well-Being of Children and Families*, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1995.
- Logan C, Holcombe E, Manlove J and Ryan S. *The Consequences of Unintended Childbearing*, Washington, DC: Child Trends, Inc., 2007.
- Gipson JD, Koenig MA and Hindin MJ. *The effects of unintended pregnancy on infant child and parental health: A review of the literature. Studies on Family Planning*, 2008, 39(1):18-38.

# Why study unintended pregnancy?

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- Fundamental measure of a population's reproductive health
- Also a measure of individual women's autonomy/self determination
- Identify those in need of improved services

# Moving forward

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- How preferences are formed
  - New models
  - Mixed methods research (quant & qual)
- Measurement of unintended pregnancy
  - Disparities carry over to abortion
- Men's fertility behaviors
- Teens: patterns of behavior set the stage for future fertility at the individual and population level

# Moving forward

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- How does unintended pregnancy impact social and economic trajectories, life course:
  - Relationships
  - Family formation
  - Educational goals
  - Career goals
  - Family health and well-being

# Findings are from research with support provided by NIH

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- NICHD, R01HD068433, “Advancing Research on the Consequences of Unintended Childbearing”
- NICHD, R01HD059896 “Measuring and Explaining Unintended Pregnancy in the United States, 1987-2009”
- NICHD, R24 HD074034, Guttmacher Center for Population Research Innovation and Dissemination.

# Thank You!

[www.guttmacher.org](http://www.guttmacher.org)

