



AS IT IS

US Births Rose Last Year, Still Less than Before Pandemic

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Births in the United States increased by one percent last year. However, the number of babies born in 2021 was still lower than before the coronavirus pandemic.

In 2020, the U.S. had its largest one year drop in births in nearly 50 years.

But a recent government report states there were still about 86,000 fewer births last year than in 2019.

Dr. Denise Jamieson is head of gynecology and obstetrics at Emory University School of Medicine. She said, “We’re still not returning to pre-pandemic levels.”

U.S. births had been decreasing for more than 10 years before COVID-19 hit, and “I would expect that we would continue to see small decreases,” she added.

Deliveries were lower in January 2021 but improved as the year went on, said Brady Hamilton. He is with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the lead writer of the new report. He noted that much of the increase was seen in older mothers.

The report is based on an examination of almost all birth **certificates** issued last year.

Almost 3.7 million births were reported last year. That is up from the nearly 3.6 million births recorded in 2020.

Births among 13- to 25-year-olds were down in 2021. But births increased three percent among women in their early 30s and early 40s. The year also saw a five percent increase in babies born to women in their late 30s.

The U.S. was once one of only a few developed countries with a birth rate that guaranteed each generation had enough children to replace itself. That rate was about 2.1 children for each woman. But that number has been decreasing in recent years. In 2020, it dropped to about 1.6, the lowest rate on record. It rose slightly last year to nearly 1.7.

I'm Jonathan Evans.

Mike Stobbe reported on this story for the Associated Press. Jonathan Evans adapted this story for Learning English.

Words in This Story

certificate – n. a written or printed statement that is proof of some fact
