



**FACT SHEET SERIES**  
**Status of Latina Women & Girls in Minnesota**  
**FALL 2009**

**Latinas in Minnesota**

In Minnesota, according to 2008 Census estimates, the Latino population accounts for 216,574 residents (4% of the total population) of which 99,719 are women (46% of the Latino population).

The Latino population is projected to rise rapidly, growing from an estimated 196,300 in 2005 to 324,400 in 2015 and 551,600 in 2035.<sup>1</sup> About two-thirds of the total Latino population are projected to live in the seven-county Twin Cities area by 2035. The percent of Minnesota's population that is nonwhite or Latino is projected to grow from 14 percent in 2005 to 25 percent in 2035.<sup>2</sup>

**7 out of 10 Latinas Employed**

Estimates for 2007 show that in the state, 68.5% of Latinas are employed, compared to 65.3% of white women. However, the rate of unemployment for Latinas is bigger than that of Latino men: 9 and 6 percent respectively.<sup>3</sup>

**Challenges**

The Women's Policy Research/Women's Foundation of Minnesota (2008) reports that based on 2005 Census data, African American girls and boys have the highest

poverty rates (43.4 and 41.4 percent, respectively) among children in Minnesota, followed by American Indian girls and boys (41.5 and 28.8 percent, respectively). Latina girls are next with 27 percent vs. 23 percent for Latino boys. For women above 18 years old, women also fair worse than men in each ethnic group. For Latinas, their poverty rate is 23.5 percent vs. 15.4 percent for men.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding teen birth rates and pregnancy, according to data by the Minnesota Department of Health (2004-2007), while white girls aged 15 to 19 in Minnesota had 23.8 live births per 1,000 females between 1997 and 2001 and 19.7 per 1,000 between 2001 and 2005, Hispanic girls had 92.2 live births between 1997 and 2001 and 111.1 between 2001 and 2005.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, pregnancy rates range from 28 per 1,000 females for white girls ages 15 to 19, to 133 per 1,000 for Hispanic girls ages 15 to 19. The study indicates that factors like poverty, lack of access to health insurance, limited educational expectations and opportunities, and lower career opportunities and aspirations increase likelihood of unintended adolescent pregnancy.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> McMurry, M. (2009). **Minnesota Population Projections by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2005 to 2035**. St. Paul: Minnesota State Demographic Center.

<sup>2</sup> idem

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. **Employment status of the civilian non-institutional population by sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and detailed age**. 2007 annual averages for Minnesota from the Current Population Survey.

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<sup>4</sup> Women's Policy Research/Women's Foundation of Minnesota (2008) **Status of Girls in Minnesota. Research Overview**. Minneapolis: Women's Foundation of Minnesota

<sup>5</sup> idem

<sup>6</sup> idem



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**Assets**

According to the report by the Women's Foundation of Minnesota, girls of every racial and ethnic group are more likely to spend a substantial amount of time (six or more hours per week) studying than their male counterparts. For instance, 16 percent of Latina girls spend this amount of time studying compared to 14% of Latino boys.<sup>7</sup>

The same study indicates that girls have higher aspirations than boys. White, American Indian, and Hispanic girls are all more likely than their male counterparts to want to attend college and/or graduate school. In a 2004 survey, 50% of Latina girls indicated having college plans vs. 31% for boys; and 48.5% of girls showed interest in college and graduate school compared to 23% of Latino boys.<sup>8</sup>

According to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, there are more women students enrolled in college than men. In fall 2008, 59 percent of enrolled students (242,307) were women. At the undergraduate level, there are more women than men enrolled across all race/ethnicity backgrounds.<sup>9</sup>

**National Trends for Latinas**

At the national level, Latinas who work full time earn less than non-Latina women who work full time. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (2008), Latinas earn a median of \$460 per week, compared with \$615 per week for non-Latina women.

Native-born Latina women earn a median of \$540 per week, while immigrant women earn \$400. Similarly, Latina women are twice as likely as non-Latina women to live in poverty; 20% of Hispanic women are poor compared with 11% of non-Hispanic women.<sup>10</sup>

The same survey indicates that most common occupations of Hispanic women are office and administrative support positions; 21% Hispanic women work in those types of occupations. This share is similar to that of non-Hispanic women, 22% of whom work in those occupations.<sup>11</sup>

The report by the Pew Hispanic Center also states that Hispanic women are more likely than non-Hispanic women to be employed in blue-collar occupations such as building, grounds cleaning and maintenance (10% versus 2%); food preparation and serving related jobs (9% versus 6%); production (8% versus 4%); and personal care and service occupations (7% versus 5%).<sup>12</sup>

**Prepared by: Rosa Tock, CLAC. Questions & Comments: 651-284-3034**

<sup>7</sup> idem

<sup>8</sup> idem

<sup>9</sup> Minnesota Office of Higher Education  
<http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=752>

<sup>10</sup> Gonzales, F. (2008). **Hispanic Women in the U.S., 2007.**  
Washington: Pew Hispanic Center

<sup>11</sup> idem

<sup>12</sup> idem