

Essential Facts about Midwives

Midwives & Birth in the US

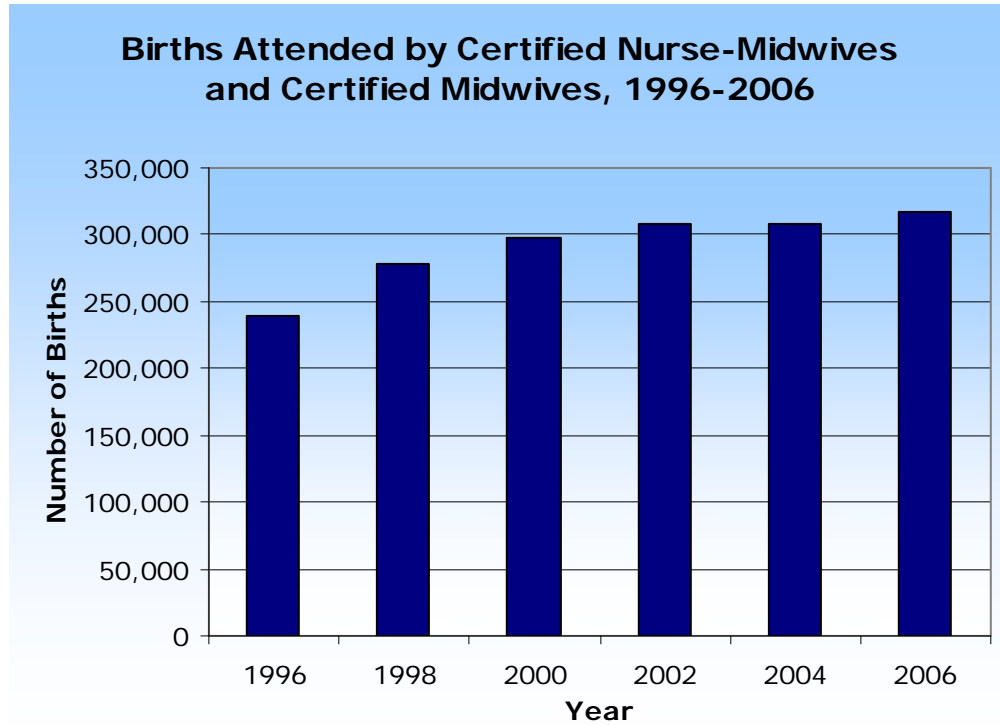
- ACNM is the professional organization representing certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs).
- According to the American Midwifery Certification Board, there are 11,546 CNMs/CMs. (1) The vast majority of midwives in the US are CNMs/CMs.
- The number of CNM/CM-attended births has increased by 33% since 1996, reaching a record high of 317,168 in 2006. This represents 94.3% of all midwife-attended births, 10.8% of all vaginal births, and 7.4% of all US births. (2)

Midwifery Practice

- Certified nurse-midwifery practice is legal in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico; CMs can practice in New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island (5)
- In 2006, 97% of CNM/CM-attended births occurred in hospitals, 2% occurred in freestanding birth centers, and 1% occurred in homes. (1) More than 60% of CNMs/CMs list physician practices or hospitals/medical centers as their principal employers. (4)
- CNMs have prescription-writing authority in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, and Guam. CMs have prescription-writing authority in New York and Rhode Island. (5)
- Midwives do more than deliver babies. 90% of visits to CNMs/CMs are for primary, preventive care. Examples of this kind of care include annual exams and reproductive health visits. (6)
- Medicaid reimbursement for CNM/CM care is mandatory in all states. (5) Thirty-three states—roughly two thirds of the nation—also mandate private insurance reimbursement for nurse-midwifery services.

Midwifery Education

- Approximately 80% of CNMs have a master's degree, and 5% hold a doctoral degree. (4)
- Standards for education and certification in midwifery are identical for CNMs and CMs. (2)
- The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME, formerly the ACNM Division of Accreditation) is the official accrediting body of ACNM. There are 38 ACME-accredited midwifery education programs in the US and Puerto Rico. (3)
- In 2004, 1,158 students were enrolled in ACME-accredited midwifery education programs. (3)



Births: Final Data for 2006. National Vital Statistics Reports: Vol 57, No 7. 2009.

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- (1) American Midwifery Certification Board
 - (2) Martin JA, Hamilton BE, Sutton PD, Ventura SJ, Menacker F, Kirmeyer S, Matthews TJ. *Births: Final Data for 2006*. National Vital Statistics Reports; Vol 57, No 7. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2009.
 - (3) ACNM Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education
 - (4) ACNM Compensation and Benefits Survey 2007
 - (5) "A Handbook of State Legislation," ACNM, 2002
 - (6) ACNM Membership Survey, 1999

**Updated April 2009*