**Virus Could Lower Already Low US Birth Rates**

**病毒下美国出生率或将更低**

From VOA Learning English, this is the Health & Lifestyle report.

美国之音英语学习网，这里是《健康与生活方式报告》栏目。

The number of births in the United States continued to fall last year. This led to the fewest U.S. newborns in 35 years, the Associated Press notes.

去年美国的出生人数持续走低。美联社指出，这已达到35年来美国新生儿之最低数。

The number of newborns has been falling for more than 10 years. And some experts say the coronavirus pandemic and its effect on the economy will result in even fewer births.

10多年来，新生儿数量一直在下降。一些专家表示，冠状病毒的流行及其对经济的影响将导致出生人数变得更少。

“This unpredictable environment, and concerns about the future, are going to make women think twice before having children,” said Denise Jamieson. She is a doctor and head of the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

丹尼斯·贾米森说：“当下不可预测的环境，以及对未来的担忧，会让女性在考虑生子问题前三思而后行。”她是乔治亚州亚特兰大市埃默里大学妇产科的一名主任医生。

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the latest birth numbers on May 20. The report is based on a study of more than 99% of birth records from 2019. The findings are considered preliminary.

美国疾病预防控制中心5月20日公布了最新的新生儿数量。这份报告数据来源于对2019年99%以上的出生档案的研究，报告结果仅为初步结果。

The CDC found the number of births fell to about 3.7 million last year. This is about one percent less than the number in 2018.

疾控中心发现，去年的出生人数下降到约370万，与2018年相比下降约1%。

Birth rates continued to fall for teenagers and women in their 20s. However, for women in their early 40s, the report noted an increase in births.

青少年和20多岁妇女的生育率持续下降，然而报告指出40出头的妇女生育率则有所上升。

Experts say there are many reasons for falling birth rates. Among them are changing ideas about motherhood and family planning. Many women and couples now delay having children. Also, once they decide to start a family, they have fewer children.

专家们表示，生育率下降有很多因素，比如孕产和家庭观念的改变。当下很多妇女和夫妻选择推迟生育。而且，一旦他们决定成家，他们打算生育的孩子数量也会减少。

Experts also say there is good reason to think a weak economy will result in even lower birth rates. Aside from a one-year increase in 2014, U.S. births have been falling every year since 2007. That year a recession hit the United States. The drop in births continued even after the economy recovered.

专家们还表示，有充分的理由认为疲软的经济将导致更低的出生率。除了2014年的单一年增长外，自2007年以来，美国的出生率每年都在下降。2007年美国遭遇了经济衰退。即使在经济复苏之后，出生率也仍在下降。

John Santelli is a professor of population and family health at Columbia University in New York. He says there are many reasons why economic conditions affect birth rates.

约翰·桑特利是纽约哥伦比亚大学人口与家庭健康学教授。他说，经济状况影响出生率的原因有很多。

Santelli noted that many jobs are low-paying and unpredictable. When you combine those kinds of jobs with the high cost of housing and other living expenses, people think carefully before having children.

桑特利指出，许多工作报酬低，而且不稳定。当把这些工作与高昂的住房和其他生活费用联系起来时，人们生育前会三思而后行。

Brady Hamilton was the lead author of the CDC report. The effect of the pandemic, Hamilton said, will not become clear in hospital maternity wards until late this year or early next year.

布雷迪·汉密尔顿是疾控中心报告的首席作者。汉密尔顿表示，当前的流行病对医院产科病房的影响要到今年年底或明年初才能明了。

Santelli notes it is possible births will increase among some groups. Getting access to birth control and operations for ending pregnancies has become more difficult, he said. He added that couples stuck at home together may have more time for sex.

桑特利指出，在某些群体中出生率可能会增加。他说，实现计划生育措施和终止妊娠的手术变得更加困难，并补充道被迫滞留家中的夫妻或许有更多的时间造人。

However, other experts say it is more likely that birth rates will fall. Hans-Peter Kohler is a fertility researcher at the University of Pennsylvania. He said the idea that there will be a lot of “coronababies” is “widely perceived as a myth.”

不过，其他专家表示出生率下降的可能性更大。汉斯·彼得·科勒是宾夕法尼亚大学的一位生育研究人员。他说，大家普遍认为会有很多“冠状潮婴儿”的想法很虚幻。

Kohler said that the debate most experts are having is not about whether there will be a decrease in births, but whether it will be lasting.

科勒表示，大多数专家争论的不是出生率是否会下降，而是它是否会持续下去。

And that’s the Health & Lifestyle report. I’m Anna Matteo.

这里是《健康与生活方式报告》。我是安娜·马特奥。

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And that’s the Health & Lifestyle report. I’m Anna Matteo.