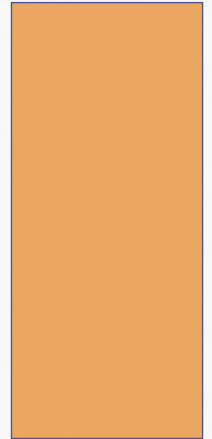




PARENTING TRENDS

FERTILITY . DECISIONS. INFERTILITY.
CHILDFREE. ADOPTION



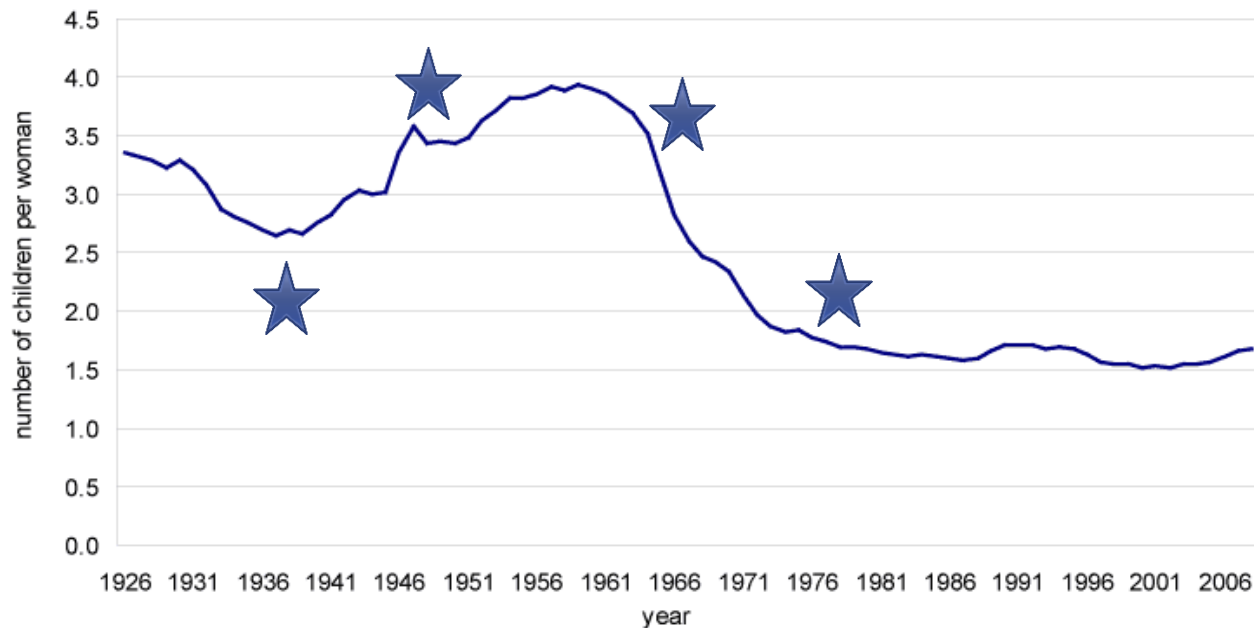
CHILDREN

- 90% of Canadians say they plan on having children
- It is a major stage in the family life cycle framework
 - A lifetime commitment that should not be taken lightly
- In Canada, we value children for emotional and social reasons (not directly economic)
 - According to the social exchange theory, people have children to fulfill psychological and emotional needs
 - Couples expect to receive something back from their children in exchange for time, energy, and money put into raising them



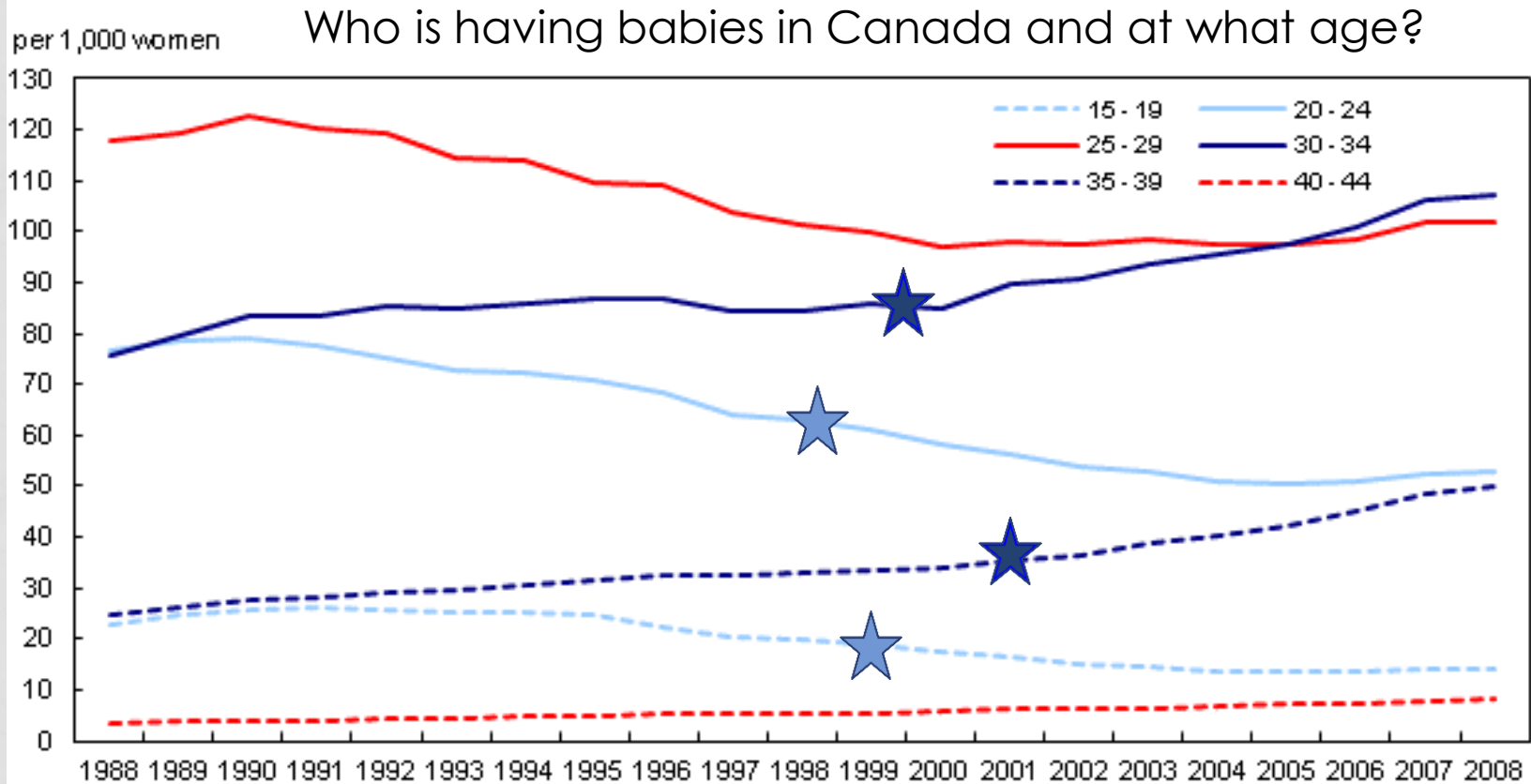
FERTILITY TRENDS

- Currently in Canada the fertility rate [1.6] is below replacement levels, we are not having enough children to replace ourselves [2.1]



When did the rates change in major ways? Why?

TRENDS BY AGE GROUPS



Decreases _____ Increases _____ Why? _____

DELAYED PARENTHOOD

- There has been a shift since 1971,
 - an overall decrease in women having children in their 20s, and
 - an increase of women having children in their 30s.



- **Delayed parenthood** – having children later than the established time has affected our fertility rate, because when women start later they have a shorter reproductive period
 - Fertility declines with age, it is harder to get pregnant when you start later – this has led to higher levels of infertility and couples using assisted reproduction methods
 - Eventually grandparents and parents will outnumber children

DECISIONS DECISIONS

SHOULD WE OR SHOULDN'T WE?

COUPLE FACTOR

- Today couples choose when and if to have children
 - Most children in Canada today were / are planned
 - Most couples have fewer children than they would like
- Couples surveyed unanimously agreed that there are three essential factors to consider when planning to have children
 1. Having enough time for them
 2. Recognizing the responsibilities involved
 3. Strength of the relationship



More than ever before, today couples are asking themselves, will having a child make me / us happier and if the answer is yes, then they have children



Having said that, young adults today want to spare their children the experience of having divorced parents, so the quality of the couples' relationship is a very serious determinant

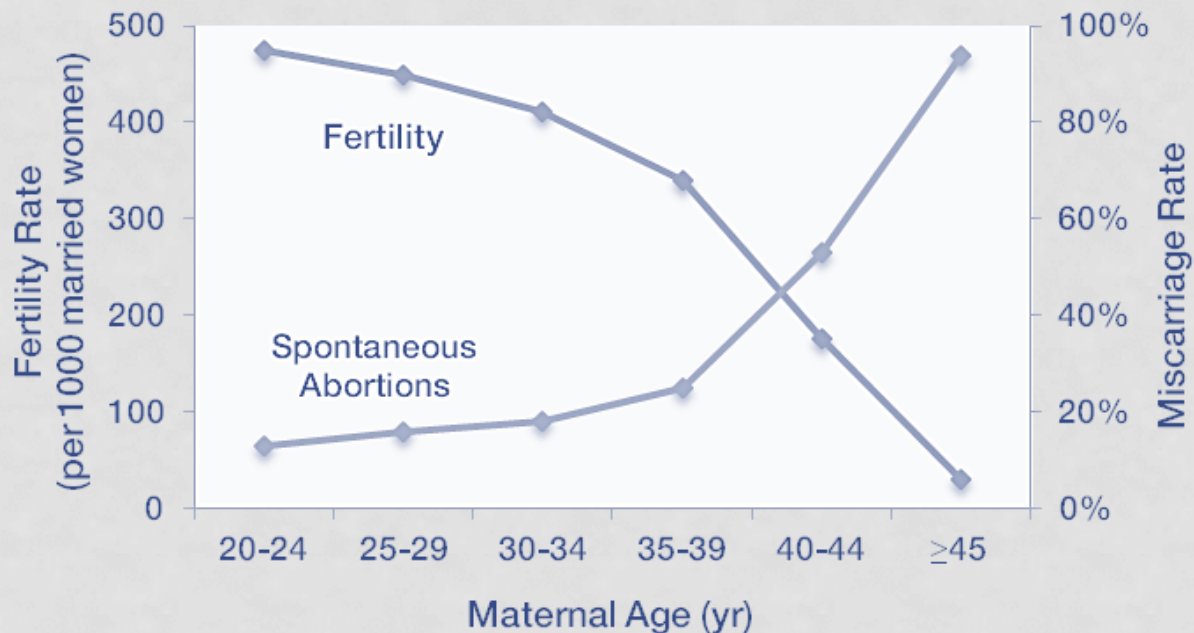
ECONOMICS FACTOR

- Finances were identified by 80% of young adults surveyed – it is more important though to those who do not have children
- However, even though it is estimated to cost about 10 000 dollars a year to raise a child, people with lower income are having more children than those with higher incomes
- Dual income couples have more money but feel they can't afford to take the time off needed to have several babies, or to pay for daycare
- Paternity benefits are 55% of your salary
- Many couples weigh the social and financial costs and benefits of becoming a parent when making this decision



INFERTILITY

- Some couples find out when they are ready to have a baby that it isn't as easy as they thought it might be
- 7% of young couples are likely infertile
- At age 30 - 91% of women can conceive
- At age 40 this drops to 53%



SAME SEX COUPLES

- Same sex couples are considering parenthood more today than in the past
- Some have children from former heterosexual relationships
- As of 2006 – 9% of same sex couples have children under 24 living with them
- There is a struggle for equal rights, for example
 - prior to 2009 a non biological mom did not have the same legal rights as the biological mom
- Similar factors that heterosexual couples consider when deciding to parent influence same sex couples, except that it can be more difficult for same sex couples to become parents
 - Lesbians can use sperm donors but gay men need to adopt or use surrogates
- Stigma and prejudice can also deter same sex couples

CHILDFREE OR CHILDLESS

- Some (minority) decide to intentionally remain childfree
- 7% of adults under 25 years of age state they do not intend to have children
- 15% of those under 44 don't have children
- By choice prefer the term childfree
- Not by choice prefer the term childless
- Some couples decide early on while others make the decision gradually
- Using the exchange theory, the benefits probably don't outweigh the perceived costs



ADOPTION

- Number of Canadian children placed for adoption has decreased the past 2 decades
- Currently about 1700 adoptions take place per year
 - There are few infants available
 - Most children placed are older
- International adoptions count for 1500 to 2000 adoptions in Canada since 1997
 - In 2008 1908 international adoptions happened
 - 47% of these were girls from China

