

THE PUBLIC COSTS OF TEEN CHILDBEARING KEY DATA

Teen pregnancy and birth rates in the United States have declined by about one-third since the early 1990s. Even so, early pregnancy and childbearing remain pressing concerns. About one-third of teen girls get pregnant by age 20 and there were about 420,000 births to teens in 2004.

By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing presents the first analysis since 1996 of the cost to taxpayers of teen childbearing. The new analysis by Saul Hoffman, Ph.D., published by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, also provides the first-ever estimates of the cost of teen childbearing in each state and Washington, DC.

Key data from *By the Numbers* include:

PUBLIC COSTS OF TEEN CHILDBEARING:

- **\$9.1 billion:** The cost to taxpayers (federal, state, and local) of teen childbearing in the United States in 2004 alone (for teens 19 and younger).
- **\$161 billion:** The estimated cumulative public costs of teen childbearing between 1991 and 2004 (for teens 19 and younger).

PUBLIC COSTS OF TEEN CHILDBEARING BY AGE:

- **\$1,430:** The average annual cost to taxpayers associated with a child born to a teen mother aged 19 and younger.
- **\$4,080:** The average annual cost to taxpayers associated with a child born to a teen mother aged 17 and younger.
- **\$8.6 billion:** The public costs of childbearing to teens aged 17 and younger.

PUBLIC COSTS OF TEEN CHILDBEARING BY STATE:

- State-by-state analysis of the costs of teen childbearing in 2004 ranged from a **high of \$1 billion in Texas to a low of \$12 million in Vermont.**
- Visit www.teenpregnancy.org/costs for fact sheets on the costs of teen childbearing in all 50 states and Washington, DC, along with tables with data for all states and Washington, DC.

PUBLIC COST SAVINGS DUE TO DECLINE IN TEEN BIRTH RATE:

- **\$6.7 billion:** Estimated national costs saved by taxpayers in 2004 alone due to the one-third decline in the teen birth rate between 1991 and 2004.
- States have realized substantial cost savings due to declines in the teen birth rate between 1991 and 2004, ranging from a **high of over \$1 billion in California to a low of \$5 million in Wyoming.**

PUBLIC COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHILDREN OF TEEN MOTHERS BY COST CATEGORY:

- Most of the public sector costs of teen childbearing are associated with negative consequences for the children of teen mothers. Specific costs in 2004 include:
 - **\$1.9 billion** in increased public sector health care costs.
 - **\$2.3 billion** in increased child welfare costs.
 - **\$2.1 billion** in increased costs of incarceration.
 - **\$2.9 billion** in lost revenue due to lower taxes paid by the children of teen mothers over their own adult lifetimes as a result of lower education and earnings.