

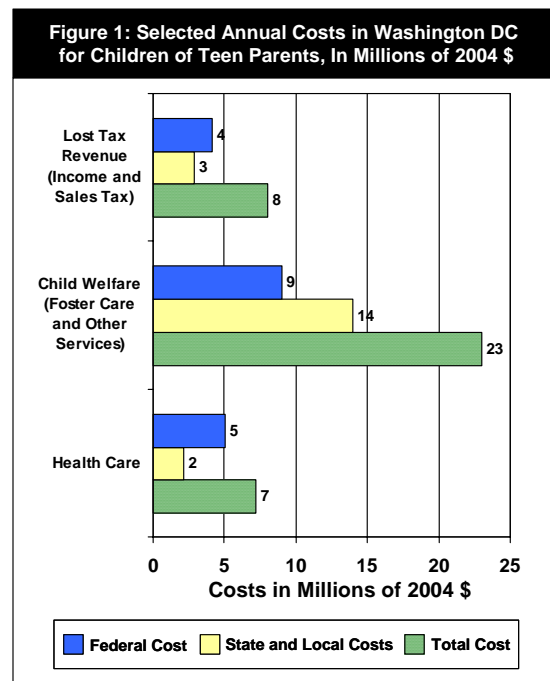
## By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Washington DC November 2006

### Highlights

- A new analysis from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy shows that teen childbearing (teens 19 and younger) in Washington DC cost taxpayers (federal, state, and local) at least \$26 million in 2004.
- Of the total 2004 teen childbearing costs in Washington DC, 43% were federal costs and 57% were local costs.
- Most of the costs of teen childbearing are associated with negative consequences for the *children* of teen mothers. In Washington DC, in 2004, annual taxpayer costs associated with children born to teen mothers included: \$7 million for public health care (Medicaid and SCHIP); \$23 million for child welfare; and \$8 million in lost tax revenue, due to decreased earnings and spending.\*
- The costs of childbearing are greatest for younger teens. In Washington DC, the average annual cost associated with a child born to a mother 17 and younger is \$5,791.
- Between 1991 and 2004 there have been more than 18,500 teen births in Washington DC, costing taxpayers a total of \$0.6 billion over that period.
- The teen birth rate in Washington DC declined 39 percent between 1991 and

2004. The progress Washington DC has made in reducing teen childbearing saved taxpayers an estimated \$42 million in 2004 alone.

- Nationally teen childbearing costs taxpayers at least \$9.1 billion a year.
- For more information, including a national report and state-by-state comparisons, please visit [www.teenpregnancy.org/costs](http://www.teenpregnancy.org/costs).



\* Careful readers will note that the cost breakdown for the *children* of teen mothers does not match the total costs. This is because the total costs include costs associated with both teen *parents* and their *children*. Also note that because we cannot measure and include all outcomes and all costs, the analysis should be considered conservative; that is, it is likely that the full costs of a teen birth are greater than the figures presented here. Because most prisoners in DC are under the jurisdiction of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, comparable information was not available to calculate the incarceration costs associated with the sons of teen mothers. Excluding these significant costs means that the total costs of teen childbearing in DC are understated. Due to rounding, federal and state and local costs may not add to the totals presented in Figure 1 and throughout.