

Teen Pregnancy Among Youth in Foster Care

Given the high rates of teen pregnancy among youth in foster care, the National Campaign has welcomed the opportunity to offer new research and guidance in this area:

- New research examining teen pregnancy and related issues among foster care youth has just been released.
- A full report presenting quantitative and qualitative research on foster care youth and those that work with foster care youth was released earlier this year.
- New tips for teens in foster care and for foster parents will be released in the upcoming months.

This focus on foster care youth has already helped spark new attention at the national, state, and local level to a population at very high risk of teen pregnancy, which we expect will lead to changes in policy and practice, as well as stronger partnerships between those working in the child welfare and teen pregnancy fields. The National Campaign expresses deep appreciation to Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) for his work over several years to support this innovative project, done in partnership with UCAN (Uhlich Children's Advantage Network in Chicago). Senator Durbin serves on the National Campaign's Senate Advisory Panel and without his support, this project on preventing teen pregnancy among youth in foster care would not have been possible.

New Research Brief

By age 19, nearly half of young women in foster care have been pregnant compared to about

one fifth of their peers not in foster care, according to research developed by Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago and released by the National Campaign. The new research—written by Lucy A. Bilaver and Mark E. Courtney of the widely-respected and influential Chapin Hall Center for Children—is contained in *Science Says #27, Foster Care Youth*.

The new research also indicates that:

- Nearly half of teen girls in foster care who have been pregnant have had a subsequent pregnancy, compared to 29% of their peers outside the system.
- Nineteen year olds in foster care are more than twice as likely as 19-year-olds more generally to have had at least one child (31.6% and 12.2% respectively).
- Even though 19-year-old girls in foster care are equally as likely as their 19-year-old peers more generally to have used some method of contraception the last time they had sex—and more likely to have used a condom—they are more than twice as likely to have a sexual partner with a sexually transmitted disease (18% and 6% respectively).

Science Says #27 presents detailed data on sexual behavior, contraception, pregnancy and birth rates, and the use of reproductive health services among youth in foster care. The brief also explores how foster care youth compare to youth more generally on these measures as well as how older adolescents who remain in foster care fare compared with those

who "age out" of the foster care system.

Advice for those working directly with foster care youth and those focused primarily on preventing teen pregnancy is also included in the research brief.

This new research brief on foster care youth was developed with partial support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

Fostering Hope

A reminder to those interested in foster youth. Earlier this year the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and UCAN collaborated on a report, *Fostering Hope: Preventing Teen Pregnancy Among Youth in Foster Care*.



The 28-page report provides (1) quantitative research on the high rates of teen pregnancy among foster care youth, (2) important new qualitative research presenting findings from Chicago-area focus groups in which foster care youth (some who are already teen parents) and foster parents were asked about their perspective on teen pregnancy, and (3) results of an online survey of Chicago-area child welfare service providers. The report also provides a list of 11 recommendations for both the teen pregnancy and child welfare fields to consider. ✨

