

THE 5% SOLUTION

Reversing the Rise in the Teen Birth Rate



Teen Pregnancy and Childbearing in the United States: Ten Headlines

1. The teen pregnancy rate has declined 38% between 1990 and 2004 and the teen birth rate has declined by about one-third between 1991 and 2007.
2. Since the early 1990s, the teen pregnancy and birth rates have declined in all 50 states and among all racial/ethnic groups.
3. Even so, three in ten girls in the United States become pregnant by age 20 and the teen birth rate is now on the rise after 14 straight years of decline.
4. At present, there are about 730,000 teen pregnancies and more than 400,000 teen births annually.
5. The teen pregnancy and birth rates in the United States are higher than in any other Western industrialized countries.
6. The declines in teen pregnancy and birth rates since the early 1990s have been driven by less sex and more contraception—that is, more teens are delaying sex and more sexually active teens are using contraception consistently and carefully. Most adults and teens say they wish young people were getting more information about abstinence and contraception rather than either/or, according to National Campaign surveys.
7. Teen childbearing in the United States costs taxpayers (federal, state, and local) at least \$9.1 billion, according to a National Campaign report. Most of the costs of teen childbearing are associated with negative consequences for the children of teen mothers, including increased costs for healthcare, foster care, and incarceration.
8. Less than half of young teen mothers (age 17 and younger) ever graduate from high school and fewer than 2% earn a college degree by age 30.
9. Children of teen mothers do worse in school than those born to older parents. They are 50% more likely to repeat a grade and are less likely to complete high school than the children of older mothers; they also have lower performance on standardized tests.
10. In National Campaign surveys over the years, teens consistently say that parents most influence their decisions about sex.

“Teen pregnancy is 100% preventable.”