



The National Campaign

to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

August 6, 2009

The Honorable Evan Bayh
131 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bayh:

On behalf of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, I commend your efforts to strengthen families by introducing S. 1309, *The Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2009*. This bill, along with the companion House bill introduced by Rep. Danny Davis, *The Julia Carson Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2009*, offers important solutions to support fathers in the demanding task of raising the next generation and we appreciate your leadership on this endeavor.

The National Campaign's goal is to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families. Our specific strategy for reaching this goal is to prevent teen pregnancy as well as unplanned pregnancy among single, young adults. In this context, we have long asserted that more must be done to involve teen boys and men in a meaningful way in these efforts—in both primary prevention and prevention of subsequent pregnancies. Unmarried men in their 20s report that more than half of their partner's pregnancies are unplanned, and similar to teen pregnancy, unplanned pregnancy among young adults is at the root of a number of important social problems including poverty, father absence, and poor educational outcomes. *The Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2009* takes an important first step in breaking this cycle.

We are particularly pleased that S. 1309 includes an important provision that explicitly states that “educating youth who are not yet parents about the economic, social and family consequences of early parenting, and helping participants in fatherhood programs work with their own children to break the cycle of early parenthood” is an allowable use of the responsible fatherhood grants. This sends the important message that part of responsible fatherhood is waiting to become a father until you are ready emotionally, financially, and otherwise, such as being in a stable, low-conflict relationship, including marriage

We look forward to working with you on this effort, and also hope to find ways to help men who are already fathers think about how future unplanned pregnancies may affect their goals, their relationships, and their ability to honor their responsibilities to the children they already have. If all of us are successful, we will promote personal and parental responsibility, improve child well-being and strengthen families.

Thank you again for your leadership on these critical social issues. Please do not hesitate to contact Andrea Kane, Senior Director of Policy and Partnerships, at (202) 478-8554 or at akane@thenc.org if we can be of further assistance to you or your staff.

With deep respect and admiration,

Sarah S. Brown

Responsible behavior. Responsible policies.