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For Immediate release

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U.S. Teen Birth Rate Decreases for the First Time in Three Years
Statement from The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

(Washington, DC) – The nation’s teen birth rate declined 2% in 2008, according to data released today by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics. After declining every year between 1991 and 2005, the teen birth rate increased 5% between 2005 and 2007 and is now on the decline again. The teen birth rate in the United States now stands at 41.5 births per 1,000 girls age 15-19. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy released the following statement in response to the new data:

“Declines in the nation’s teen birth rate are, of course, welcome news,” said Sarah Brown, CEO of The National Campaign. “Lower rates of teen childbearing mean more high school graduates, lower rates of child poverty, and a lighter burden on taxpayers.”

Declines were seen in all groups of teens except those 10-14 years old, where the birth rate held steady. The biggest decline, 4%, was among the oldest teens – those 18 and 19 – where the increases in 2005-2007 had been concentrated. In addition, the teen birth rate fell for all racial/ ethnic groups, with the largest declines being seen among Hispanics and Asian/ Pacific Islanders. In fact, the rate for Hispanic teens dropped by 5%, reaching the lowest rate on record.

Still, the nation’s progress in preventing too-early childbearing should not obscure the real challenge at hand: At present three in ten girls in the U.S. get pregnant by age 20, there are more than 400,000 teen births annually, and this nation is in the unenviable position of having the highest rates of teen pregnancy and childbearing in the industrialized world.

The Obama Administration and Congress have made \$185 million available this year for proven efforts to prevent too-early pregnancy and childbearing. This timely and much-needed investment reflects the seriousness of the task ahead.

In addition to this important effort, there is much else that needs to be done: Parents need to be more parental and recognize that their influence has not been lost to peers and popular culture; more teens need to recognize the value of delaying sexual activity; more sexually active teens need to understand the critical importance of using contraception

consistently and carefully every time; and all of us concerned about too-early pregnancy and parenthood must press hard for engaging and innovative approaches to preventing teen pregnancy.

Teen birth data by the numbers:

- The U.S. teen birth rate decreased 34% between its peak in 1991 and 2005.
- Between 2005 and 2007, the teen birth rate increased 5%.
- Overall, the teen birth rate has declined 33% between 1991 and 2008.
- The birth rate for girls aged 10-14 remained unchanged at .6 births per 1,000 women between 2007 and 2008.
- The birth rate for girls 15-17 decreased 2% between 2007 and 2008.
- The birth rate for girls 18-19 decreased 4% between 2007 and 2008.
- The birth rate for those 15-19 decreased 2% for teens overall between 2007 and 2008.

Visit The National Campaign's website—TheNationalCampaign.org—for more information:

- [Teen birth rate portal](#)
- [National Data](#)
- [State Data](#)

[Read the full report from the National Center for Health Statistics.](#)

About The National Campaign. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy seeks to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families. Our specific strategy is to prevent teen pregnancy and unplanned pregnancy among single, young adults. We support a combination of responsible values and behavior by both men and women and responsible policies in both the public and private sectors. If we are successful, child and family well-being will improve. There will be less poverty, more opportunities for young men and women to complete their education or achieve other life goals, fewer abortions, and a stronger nation.

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