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Washington, DC -- Today, the National Center for Health Statistics released preliminary 2006 birth data, and highlighted the fact that for the first time in 15 years, the teen birth rate has increased. The rate rose from 40.5 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 in 2005 to 41.9 births per 1,000 in 2006--a 3 percent increase.

In response, Sarah Brown (CEO of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy) said, "A one year up-tick does not necessarily mean the progress has ceased, but at the same time, the increase is significant enough to warrant concern. For years, the National Campaign has celebrated the yearly decline in the teen rates but has also warned that good news can lead to complacency. Each year, a new group of young people turns 13, and the need to retain a steady, intense focus on preventing teen pregnancy remains. We have also noted many times that even with the wonderful declines of the last 15 years, the United States still has the highest rate of teen pregnancy and birth in the developed world. Perhaps today's numbers will encourage a greater, more intense concentration nationwide on teens.

Over the next several months, our group and others will be trying to tease out what might account for today's news. An important aspect of this work will be to recognize that birth rates went up last year not only for teens but also for women in their 20s, 30s and 40s. It will also be important to learn more about how these broad changes in the US birth rate might have been affected by the abortion rate, public investments in education and services, behavioral changes, state variations, and more as well."

For more information on the NCHS report, please visit [the National Campaign website](#).

The National Campaign, founded in February 1996 as The National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan initiative supported almost entirely by private donations. Our mission is to promote values, behavior and policies that reduce both teen pregnancy and unplanned pregnancy among young adults. By increasing the proportion of children born into welcoming, intact families who are prepared to take on the demanding task of raising the next generation, our efforts will improve the well-being of children and strengthen the nation.

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