



THE
NATIONAL
CAMPAIGN TO
PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY

CELEBRATING A DECADE OF PROGRESS
IN IMPROVING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN,
YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Setting Teen Pregnancy Rate Reduction Goals Conference Call Summary

November 1, 2005

I. Welcome

Sarah Brown

Director, National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

- Sarah welcomed participants to the “Setting Teen Pregnancy Rates Reduction Goals” national conference call. More than 60 participants from state health departments, governors’ policy staff, state teen pregnancy prevention coalitions, and other organizations registered for the call.
- When the Campaign was founded, the national teen pregnancy rate was 95.6/1000 girls 15-19 years old. The National Campaign set a goal to reduce the teen pregnancy rate in the United States by 1/3 between 1996 and 2005. This was an ambitious goal and the Campaign was not confident the nation would meet it.
- As it turns out, it looks like the nation will meet this goal. The National Campaign often uses teen birth rates as a proxy to track its progress—teen birth data is more recent than teen pregnancy data and teen birth rates have closely tracked with teen pregnancy rates in recent years. The teen birth rate declined by 34 percent between 1991 and 2004. The teen pregnancy rate declined by 28 percent between 1990-2000, which is the most recent year for national data.
- The National Campaign recently celebrated its 10th anniversary and has set a new national goal for the next 10 years: *another* 1/3 reduction in the teen pregnancy rate over the coming decade. If this goal is achieved, the teen pregnancy rate for 2015 will be 43 per 1000 girls aged 15-19.
- The National Campaign found that setting a visible and measurable goal to reduce teen pregnancy provides an opportunity to shine a light on current progress and to focus attention on this important health and social issue. It also provides a rallying point for states, a clear measure of success, and an opportunity to celebrate progress.
- The National Campaign wants to join forces with states as it goes forward with its new goal for the coming decade. We challenged states to set their own 10 year goals. Letters were sent to all governors to encourage this goal setting process and were signed by the National Campaign’s Board Chair, former New Jersey Gov. Tom Kean; Governor Granholm of Michigan, former chair of the Health and Human Services Committee at the National Governors Association; and Governor Barbour of Mississippi, the current chair of the NGA’s Health and Human Services Committee. They included a back of the envelope cost of teen childbearing in every state. The

Campaign is working with researchers to develop a formal state-by-state analysis later this spring and will also update the national cost of teen childbearing to taxpayers (\$7 billion in 1995).

- The hope is for states with goals to update or revisit the goal and for states without goals to set one. Some states set goals for teen pregnancy and others for teen births. Other states look only at 15-17 year olds, while others include 15-19 year olds in their goal statements. It would be ideal for state's to set goal similar to the National Campaign's—specifically teen pregnancy and targeting 15-19 year olds. However, each state is different and the National Campaign welcomes these other goals as well. Please keep in mind this is a goal, not a promise.
- The National Campaign has already received formal responses from some governor's offices and state health departments. For example, California, Florida, Illinois, and Virginia have updated their goals. Iowa, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania have indicated they plan to update their goals.

II. Lessons learned from states that have set goals (Note: this summarizes both the state presentations and responses to questions)

Sylvia Ruiz

Executive Director
New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition

Susan Lovett

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coordinator
Family Planning Program, New Mexico Department of Health

Wanicha Coggins

Medical Director
Family Planning Program, New Mexico Department of Health

- Through Challenge 2005, the New Mexico Department of Health and the New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition challenged each county to reduce the teen birth rate by 20 percent between 2000-2005 (Please note that New Mexico does not have accurate data on pregnancy). Fourteen out of 33 counties were successful. They are currently evaluating those successful counties to see what strategies they implemented.
- New Mexico plans to set a new goal for 2006 and will consult with statisticians and look at the trends from 1995-2003. They will take population reductions and demographic trends into account. For example, only five counties account for half of the teen births in the whole state and certain ethnicities have high teen birth rates. They will look at related indicators such as chlamydia rates and see how sexual activity rates from the YRBS relate to teen birth rates. In addition, the denominator (population at risk) is small in some counties and there are limitations to using teen births as an indicator.
- New Mexico will also identify key players in each county and provide technical assistance to programs and facilitate securing funding to meet the goal.

Suzan Boyd

Executive Director

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

- The South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy set a goal similar to the National Campaign's back in 1994 to reduce the teen pregnancy rate by 30 percent for 10-19 year olds. They thought it was important to include 10 – 14 year olds as well. In 2003, the teen pregnancy rate had decreased by 26 percent to 33/1000. The birth rate decreased by 23 percent.
- The goal was set by the Campaign. They work closely with two state agencies (South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) and the University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health.
- The Campaign is waiting for 2004 pregnancy data to set the new goal. Their initial plan is target either a 20-25 percent reduction over the next ten years based on the 2004 data. To set the goal, they will identify county trends to see where there is a potential for additional decline, where there is more work to be done, and where there is a steady state. They will also create an annual teen pregnancy reduction report card to keep the issue in front of the public and media. In Year Five, they will conduct a one day statewide conference to focus state leaders in South Carolina to look at the progress to date.
- South Carolina uses data to guide strategy. However, they believe in setting a bold goal. It can motivate the public and policymakers and serve as an advocacy tool.

Susann Steinberg

Chief, Maternal Child Adolescent Health/Office of Family Planning Branch

California Department of Health Services

Laurie Weaver

Chief, Office of Family Planning

Maternal Child Adolescent Health/Office of Family Planning Branch

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Shabbir Ahmad

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California Department of Health Services

- California's teen birth rate for 15-19 year old females declined by 39 percent between 1995 and 2004 (from 62.9/1000 to 38.1/1000). California computes rates for all of its 58 county health departments, compares those rates to the state rate, and asks each county to set their own goal.
- This dramatic decline in teen births was due in part to the Medicaid Waiver Project, which serves 1.5 million low income clients. Community Challenge Grants fund community-based teen pregnancy prevention programs, male involvement programs, information/education programs, and Teen Smart Outreach.
- It is difficult to predict trends. California conducted statistical tests on observed values from previous years and used the values for the first three years of the predicted trend to set their goals.

Goals for subsequent years were then tempered based on qualitative judgment, including the consideration of funding cuts and demographic changes. For example, the Adolescent Family Life Program, which funds teen parenting programs, received a \$1.2 million cut. The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program also lost additional general funds and had to stop their media campaign. It is important to look at population changes as well, as California is experiencing a rise in the number of adolescents, particularly among Latinas, who have very high teen birth rates. Thus, California's goal for 2015 is a 14 percent decline in the teen birth rate for 15-19 year old females.

The National Campaign gratefully acknowledges its many foundation and individual supporters. Special thanks to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for making this conference call possible.