

# Teen Pregnancy

## Prevention:

Putting Research into Practice -  
Using What Works!



Adolescence is the pivotal period between childhood and adulthood when young people need to acquire the attitudes, competencies, values and social skills that will carry them forward to successful adulthood.

### The research is very clear that teen pregnancy...

- **Creates problems** for the teen parents and their children
- **Influences other issues** - health, education, employment, family stability
- **Alters the lives** of the teen parents in profound and long-term ways
- **Decreases early learning** success for the child
- **Impacts a whole family** - three generations at once
- **Hurts our state** by increasing school dropouts, health care costs, poverty

### The research is also very clear...

**teen pregnancy is preventable!**

The number of teen girls giving birth in Oklahoma in 2005 was **more than double** the number of incoming female freshmen students entering the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University that fall semester!

University of Oklahoma and  
Oklahoma State University  
enrollment data

### Looking at the numbers

In 2005, Oklahoma reported 6,795 births to females under the age of 20. Nearly one-third of all teen births (30%, or 2,020) were to teens, ages 17 and younger. Over two-thirds of all teen births (70%, or 4,662) were to older teens, ages 18 and 19. Over 100 births were to girls aged 14 and younger, with many of the births to younger teens being non-consensual - a result of sexual abuse. One in five births (21%) to teens was a repeat birth.

#### Number of births by birth order

1st birth	5,380
2nd birth	1,161
3rd birth	207
4th birth	23
5th birth	3
Unknown	21

#### Number of births by race/ethnicity

White	4,718
Black	933
American Indian	1,093
Asian	51
Hispanic*	1,042

#### Oklahoma teen birth rates by age

15-19	56.6
15-17	28.3
18-19	101.4

#### Teen birth rate by race \*\*

White	50.1
Black	67.7
American Indian	71.6
Asian	23.4
Hispanic*	105.6

\*Hispanic may be of any race

\*\*Number of births per 1,000 females of the same age range

*All data is 2005, unless otherwise noted.*

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Though teen birth rates have been steadily decreasing since the early 1990's in our state and nation, Oklahoma continues to rank far above the national average.



Compared to all other states and the District of Columbia, Oklahoma ranked among the top ten states with the highest (worst) birth rates to teens in all of the following categories in 2002:

- **8th highest** for births to females, ages 15-19
- **10th highest** for births to young teens, ages 15-17
- **7th highest** for the birth rate to older teens, ages 18-19
- **3rd highest** in the percentage of births to teens, as a percentage of all births
- **10th highest** in the percentage of births that are repeat births to teens

National Vital Statistics

## Priorities for community and state action

- Where the teen birth **rates** are the highest
- Where the teen birth **numbers** are the largest
- Youth growing up in **poverty**

## Specific groups where the rates and the numbers remain high

**Hispanics** – highest birth rates among all racial and ethnic groups

**Older teens** – represent two-thirds of all teen births each year

**Youth in, or formerly in, foster care** – teen birth rates are higher than the state average

**Victims of sexual abuse** - in national studies, two-thirds of teen mothers indicate their first sexual intercourse was non-consensual and occurred between ages 9-12

**Teen parents** – one in every five teen births each year is a repeat birth, which increases negative outcomes

**Siblings of teen parents** – at high risk to become a teen parent

**Disconnected youth** – the population not connected to school or work, which has the greatest potential for risk-taking behaviors

## What Oklahoma can do to reduce teen birth numbers and rates

- **Apply research findings on risk and protective factors to new and existing prevention efforts**, including findings from the Youth Asset Study, designed and conducted by the College of Public Health at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in partnership with the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy.
- **Promote programs that are proven to be effective in reducing risk behaviors**, understanding that all programs need to use the most current and accurate information and that strategies and programs need to match the specific adolescent ages, developmental stages, populations and program settings.
- **Incorporate positive youth development principles into prevention programs**, using the “big picture” Ready by 21 framework created by the Forum for Youth Investment that focuses on *prevention*, *preparation* and *participation*.
- **Highlight successful “best practice” program models in Oklahoma**, both primary prevention programs, such as Postponing Sexual Involvement (PSI) for Young Teens and the Teen Outreach Program (TOP), as well as programs serving pregnant and parenting teens at Emerson School (OKC) and the Margaret Hudson Program (Tulsa) that work to reduce rapid repeat teen births.

For a copy of the full report: <http://www.healthyteensok.org/PDF/Teen%20Pregnancy%20Prevention.pdf>