



# Fast Facts



## UNIQUE NEEDS OF CHILDREN BORN TO TEEN PARENTS

Although teenage pregnancy and birth rates are at a record low in the United States, there is still a significant number of teen families whose unique needs are not being addressed. Without access to adequate services, teen mothers may not receive prenatal care, placing the baby at increased risks of premature birth and low birth weight and resultant health risks. With appropriate and timely interventions, many of the negative outcomes associated with teen pregnancy can be prevented<sup>1</sup>.

### FAST FACTS

- Each year in the U.S., approximately 750,000 to 850,000 teenage women, ages 15 through 19, become pregnant<sup>2</sup>.
- Children of teen parents are 50% more likely to repeat a grade and are less likely to graduate from high school than children of older parents<sup>3</sup>.
- Only 77% of children born to teen parents will receive a high school diploma compared to 89% of children born to older parents<sup>4</sup>.
- Children of teen mothers are more likely than those born to older mothers to experience adolescent childbearing, homelessness, juvenile delinquency, and incarceration<sup>4, 5</sup>.
- Children born to unmarried, high school drop-out teen mothers are 10 times more likely to live in poverty than those born to married women over the age of 20<sup>9</sup>.
- At age 24, 30% of children of teen parents are not in school or working, or actively looking for a job<sup>8</sup>.

***The more training and encouragement allotted to teen parents, the more promising their children's futures will be.***

- Consistent contraceptive use is less likely among children of teen parents, who are more likely to be sexually active by age 14. As a result, these children are at higher risk of becoming teen parents themselves<sup>6</sup>.
- Though children of teen parents have more health problems than children born to older parents, they receive only half the level of care and treatment<sup>4</sup>.
- Fathers are less likely to be in the same home as children of teen parents than homes of older parents<sup>4</sup>.
- As maternal age increases, the likelihood that the child lives with both biological parents also increases.
- Children born to teen mothers are more likely to be abused, abandoned or neglected<sup>7</sup>.
- 23,600 or 5% of children born to teen mothers will end up in foster care, partly due to higher rates of abuse<sup>7</sup>.
- Teenage sons of teen mothers are 2.7 times more likely to be incarcerated than sons of older mothers<sup>4</sup>.
- Children of teen parents are 2 to 3 times more likely to run away from home than children of older childbearing mothers. Between the ages of 12 and 16, 5% of children born to teen mothers will run away<sup>4</sup>.

### RESOURCES

Healthy Teen Network: [www.healthyteennetwork.org](http://www.healthyteennetwork.org)

The Parenting Project: [www.parentingproject.org](http://www.parentingproject.org)

National Network for Childcare: [www.nncc.org](http://www.nncc.org)

### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup>National Research Council Institute of Medicine. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods*. Washington DC: National Academy Press.
- <sup>2</sup> The Guttmacher Institute. (2006) *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*. New York: The Guttmacher Institute.
- <sup>3</sup>National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. *What Docs Should Know About... The Impact of Teen Pregnancy on Young Children*. Retrieved October 13, 2006, from <http://www.teenpregnancy.org/resources/reading/pdf/tots.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup>Maynard, R.A., (Ed.). (1996). *Kids Having Kids: A Robin Hood Foundation Special Report on the Costs of Adolescent Childbearing*, New York: Robin Hood Foundation.
- <sup>5</sup>Furstenberg, F. F. Jr., Levine, J. A., Brooks-Gunn, J. (1990). The children of teenage mothers: Patterns of early childbearing in two generations. *Family Planning Perspectives* 22:54-61.
- <sup>6</sup>Pasarell, Shelby. (1995) *Adolescent Childbearing and Educational and Economic Attainment*. Advocates for Youth: Retrieved October 13, 2006, from <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/PUBLICATIONS/factsheet/fsadlchd.htm>
- <sup>7</sup>George, R.M., & Lee, B.J. (1997). Abuse and Neglect of Children. In R.A. Maynard (Ed.), *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy* (pp. 205-230). Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.
- <sup>8</sup>Haveman, R.H., Wolfe, B., & Peterson, E. (1997). Children of Early Childbearers as Young Adults. In R.A. Maynard (Ed.), *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy* (pp. 257-284). Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.
- <sup>9</sup>Wertheimer, R., et al. (2002). *The right start for America's newborns: A decade of city and state trends (1990-1999)*. Retrieved May 18, 2005 from [www.aecf.org/kidscount/rightstart2003](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/rightstart2003).