

Teen Pregnancy and Welfare Reform: Solutions to the Puzzle of Poverty

September 16, 2002, Washington, DC - When the Welfare Reform Act was passed in 1996, two of the goals were the reduction of out-of-wedlock births and the formation of two-parent families. While teen pregnancy rates have been declining over the past decade, the United States still has the highest teen pregnancy rates among comparable nations. Research indicates that 65% of families started by a teen mother live in poverty. Overall, eight out of ten young unwed mothers end up on welfare. And, once a woman has had a child outside of marriage, her chances of marrying are 40% lower than a woman who has not.

Welcome:



Kevin Moriarty, Director of the Washington, DC Office, Population Resource Center

Introduction:

Douglas Steiger, Professional Staff Member, United States Senate Committee on Finance

Speakers:

Topic: Ten Reasons to Still Be Worried about Teen

Childbearing

Jennifer Manlove, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Child Trends

[Click here to view Dr. Manlove's presentation](#)

Topic: A Statewide Perspective

Linda Riggsbee, President, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina

Topic: An Urban Perspective

Brenda Rhodes Miller, Director, DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Factoids:

"The U.S. teen birth rate has declined by more than 10 percentage points in the past decade; it is now at about the same level as in the mid-1980s."

Jennifer Manlove, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Child Trends



"Only 22 percent of teen pregnancies are intended. Thirty-five percent result in abortions and 43 percent lead to unintended births."

Jennifer Manlove, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Child Trends



"In 2000, 79 percent of teen births occurred outside of marriage. This percentage has been steadily rising over time; in 1980 only 48 percent of births were outside of marriage."

Jennifer Manlove, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Child Trends

"Teen birth rates are highest in the south of the country and lowest in the north."

Jennifer Manlove, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Child Trends

"The DC government spends at least \$747 million each year in direct costs associated with teen pregnancy."

Brenda Rhodes Miller, Director, DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

"Every year in the District of Columbia almost one out of every eight girls becomes pregnant."

Brenda Rhodes Miller, Director, DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

In Attendance:

Offices of Senators:

Mark Dayton (DFL-MN)

Zell Miller (D-GA)

Offices of Representatives:

Robert A. Brady (D-PA)

Diana DeGette (D-CO)

Jim Greenwood (R-PA)

John W. Olver (D-MA)

The Administration for Children and Families, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services

American Bar Association

American Educational Research Association

Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs

Campaign for Our Children

Center for Law and Social Policy

Child Welfare League of America

DC Action for Children

DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Institute for Women's Policy Research

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

National Conference of State Legislatures

National League of Cities

Population Connection

The Population Institute

The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S.