

MISSISSIPPI: TEEN PREGNANCY

January 2015



JUST THE FACTS

Teen pregnancy and childbearing are closely linked to various economic and social issues, such as education, income and poverty, child wellbeing and health. Adolescent childbearing also carries considerable public costs. Teen mothers are less likely to finish high school than women who delay pregnancy and parenthood. Close to half of teen mothers ages 15 through 19 have incomes below the poverty line and nearly two thirds depend on public assistance within the first year of their child's life. Children of teen mothers are more likely to suffer health and cognitive disadvantages, come in contact with the child welfare and correctional systems, live in poverty, drop out of high school and become teen parents themselves. While states have experienced significant declines in recent years, teen pregnancy and birth rates in the United States remain among the highest in the industrialized world. Nationwide, roughly one in four teens will become pregnant at least once by age 20. One in five births to girls ages 15 to 19 is not the teen's first. Teen pregnancy and birth rates in Mississippi are declining, but remain among the highest in the nation and disparities exist in the state.

Disparities Exist

A closer look at births to teenagers in Mississippi finds that the majority—70 percent—are to older teens (18- and 19-year-olds). The rate among

these young women was 3.6 times higher than that of younger teens— about 80 per 1,000 girls, compared to 22 among 15 to 17-year-olds in 2012. The rates have also not declined as sharply over time for this older age group. Birth rates among teens ages 18-19 have only decreased 33 percent between 1991 and 2012, compared to a 63 percent decline in teens ages 15-17. In addition, older teens are more likely to have more than one birth. Twenty-three percent of births to girls ages 18-19 were subsequent births in 2012, compared to 8 percent in their younger peers.

Birth rates vary by race and ethnicity as well. The birth rate among non-Hispanic black teens in Mississippi was 1.4 times higher than that of non-Hispanic white teens in 2012—almost 55 per 1,000 girls, compared to about 39. However, Mississippi has made significant progress in reducing disparities. Teen birth rates among black girls declined 53 percent between 1991 and 2012.

For More Information

State and local agencies and others are working to reduce teen pregnancy in Mississippi, and federal funding is also available for teen pregnancy prevention activities. See NCSL's other fact sheets for additional information on how teen pregnancy relates to various issues, as well as policy options for the state to consider, available at www.ncsl.org/Default.aspx?tabid=28872

- Teen Pregnancy in Mississippi: Impact on Education and the Economy
- Teen Pregnancy in Mississippi: Connection to Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice
- Teen Pregnancy in Mississippi: State Policy Options

The 159,653 children born to teens in Mississippi between 1991 and 2010 **cost taxpayers approximately \$4 billion** over that period. During the same period, the state teen birth rate **declined 36 percent, saving taxpayers an estimated \$118 million** in 2010 alone.

Source: Counting it Up: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Mississippi in 2010. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, April 2014.

Resources

Teen Pregnancy Prevention, National Conference of State Legislatures; <http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=23141>

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
www.thenationalcampaign.org

\$137 million

The public cost of teen childbearing in Mississippi in 2010.

Teen childbearing costs at least \$9.4 billion each year nationally. Between 1991 and 2010, teen childbearing in Mississippi cost \$4.0 billion. With the declines in teen birth rates—36 percent from 1991 to 2010—it is estimated that the savings was \$118 million in 2010. Despite the drop, teen childbearing in Mississippi cost at least \$137 million the same year.

The majority of costs are related to the children of teenage parents who are more likely to experience poor health, difficulties in educational attainment and lower socioeconomic status over their lifetimes. The costs reflect consequences for public health care and the child welfare and criminal justice systems. These children, as well as their teen parents, also typically achieve lower levels of education, which can result in lost tax revenue for states due to lower earnings and spending. Teen childbearing also has significant implications and human costs for parents and children that are more challenging to quantify

Source: *Counting it Up: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Mississippi in 2010*. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, April 2014

Teen Pregnancy

- In Mississippi, there were **8,390 pregnancies**, or approximately 76 pregnancies for every 1,000 girls aged 15 through 19, in 2010, the most recent year for which data are available.
- Although the state's teen pregnancy rate **declined 28 percent** between 1988 and 2010, Mississippi still had the **second highest** teen pregnancy rate in the nation in 2010.

Teen Birth

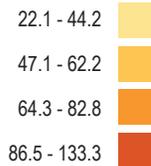
- Mississippi had the **third highest** teen birth rate in the United States in 2012.
- In 2012, Mississippi saw **4,781** births among girls aged 15 through 19—that's approximately 13 births every day.
- In 2012, 18 percent of teen births were not the teen's first.
- Among girls ages 18-19, **23 percent** of births in 2012 were not their first.
- Between 2011 and 2012, the state's teen birth rate **declined by 8 percent**.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

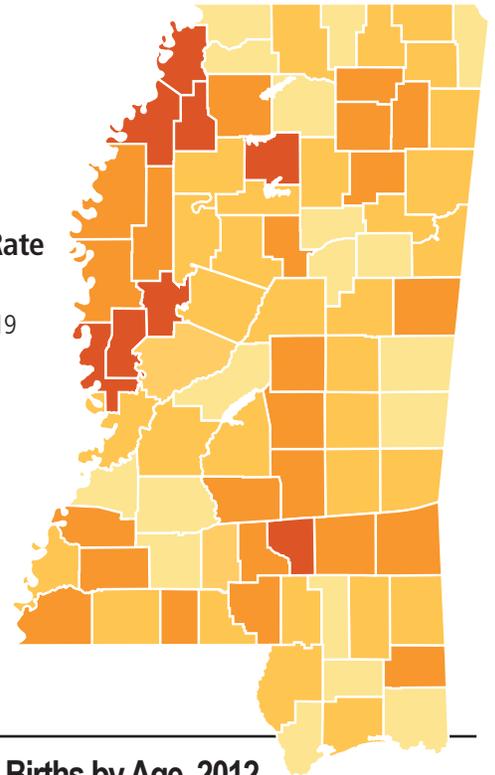
- According to the 2013 YRBS, **more than 54 percent** of high school students in Mississippi have had sexual intercourse. This ranges from almost **42 percent of freshmen**, to **69 percent of high school seniors**.

Teen Pregnancy Rate by County, 2012

Per 1,000 girls ages 15-19

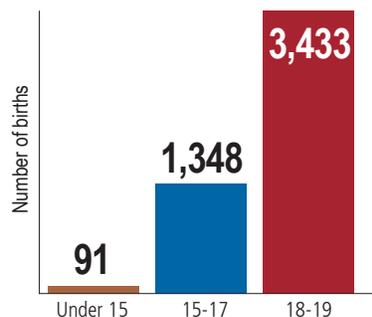


Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org



Mississippi Teen Births by Age, 2012

Source: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics



Mississippi Teen Births by Race/Ethnicity, 2012

Source: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

