



## The State of NC Youth...

NC's teen pregnancy rate has dropped 58% since 1991, declining faster than the national teen pregnancy rate.<sup>1</sup>

NC has the 14th highest pregnancy rate in the US, according to the most recent nationwide comparison.<sup>2</sup>

Significant racial/ethnic disparities exist in adolescent pregnancy rates (White: 30.8; African American: 61.6; Latina: 71.1). NC has the 3rd highest Latina teen pregnancy rate in the US.<sup>2</sup>

Teen childbearing costs NC taxpayers approximately \$392 million each year.<sup>3</sup>

## Ripple Effects for North Carolina...

Too few NC adolescents have access to medically accurate information, support systems, and health services needed to make responsible choices and act responsibly upon those choices. The lack of information and support can lead to adolescent pregnancies. These pregnancies affect teen parents' ability to attain an education and affect health outcomes, earning potential, and create generational cycles of harm, economic and otherwise. In addition to the quality-of-life costs to our communities, teen childbearing costs NC taxpayers approximately \$392 million each year.<sup>3</sup>

## How NC General Assembly Members Can Help...

### Public Policy Measures

#### Preserve North Carolina's Healthy Youth Act - GS 115C-81(e1)

- 91.8% of North Carolina public school parents favor schools providing sex education that meets the criteria of the Healthy Youth Act.<sup>4</sup>

#### Preserve Minor's Consent to Health Care Services

- Creates a medical environment where a dialogue about healthy behaviors is possible
- Allows young people to seek critical prenatal and contraceptive services
- Allows local health departments to integrate preventative efforts with community and school educational programs
- Allows victims of abuse or incest to seek care without needing the abuser's permission

### Budget Issues

#### Restore and safeguard funding for:

- Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program so the highest-risk teens have access to effective prevention programs
- Adolescent Parenting Program so parenting teens can graduate, start careers, develop parenting skills, and avoid subsequent pregnancies
- Prevention of Out-of-Wedlock\* Births, which saves approximately \$9.5 million in Medicaid expenses each year
- Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APPCNC) to provide training and technical support to the state's public health community

#### Restore federal TANF Block Grant funding appropriated for the prevention of out-of-wedlock births

- TANF funding used for pregnancy prevention was cut by \$450,000 in 2012 thus cutting four prevention programs and reducing TANF funds to local health departments for use in the prevention of out-of-wedlock births.

#### Ensure TANF Block Grant is allocated equitably according to federal goals for use of funds

- Although prevention of out-of-wedlock births is one of the four federal goals for use of the TANF block grant, funding for teen pregnancy prevention is less than one percent of the total block grant
- The majority of North Carolina's teen births are out-of-wedlock births

\* "Out-of-wedlock births" is the term used in the federal TANF funding language, and prevention of out-of-wedlock births is one of the four TANF goals. The majority of North Carolina's teen births are out-of-wedlock.

## Current NC Statutes Affecting Teen Pregnancy

### **GS 115C-81(e1) - Healthy Youth Act**

Enacted in 2009, the Healthy Youth Act (SL 2009-213H), requires schools to teach medically accurate information on abstinence, contraception, STD/HIV transmission and prevention, and healthy relationships. The law further mandates that materials be age-appropriate, peer-reviewed, objective, and accepted by experts in the field of sexual health education. The Healthy Youth Act provides increased control to Local Education Agencies and parents. In fact, 91.8% of parents of NC public school students want their child to receive the type of education provided under the Healthy Youth Act.<sup>4</sup>

### **GS 90-21.5 - Minor's Consent Sufficient for Certain Medical Health Services**

(a) Minors may give effective consent for the prevention, treatment, or diagnosis of STDs/HIV, pregnancy, substance abuse, and emotional disturbance. **This law, enacted in 1971, is especially important to prevent the spread of STDs, to ensure pregnant minors seek responsible prenatal care, and in cases of abuse or incest.** Under this section, minors may not consent to abortion, sterilization, or admission to a 24-hour facility. Minors may seek emergency care as authorized in GS 122C-223.

(b) Any emancipated minor may consent to medical treatment, dental treatment, or health services for himself or his child.

### **Funding for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs and Out-Of-Wedlock Birth Prevention**

Annually, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriates approximately \$4 million in federal and state funds to targeted teen pregnancy prevention efforts:

- **Adolescent Parenting Program (APP)** - The Adolescent Parenting Program works with first-time pregnant and parenting teens to ensure they graduate high school, become economically independent, avoid subsequent pregnancy, and teach them parenting skills to prevent them from becoming abusive or neglectful parents – commonly referred to as a secondary prevention program.
- **Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program (APPP)** - The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program, a primary prevention program, works with teens to prevent first-time pregnancies using proven, science-based programs and practices.
- **Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APPCNC)** - APPCNC is the only statewide pregnancy prevention nonprofit that works to develop, sustain, and support pregnancy prevention initiatives in local communities. In addition, APPCNC provides training, technical support, and professional development support to health care professionals, community leaders, churches, and educators working to prevent teen pregnancy.

The state also invests to ensure that low-income youth have access to the medical care needed to avoid pregnancy:

- **Women's Health Services Fund** - This fund provides long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) to low-income women and teens ineligible for Medicaid. The fund provides IUDs, Depo Provera injections and hormonal implants that are effective for up to 10 years for a one-time cost of \$40-\$700 each. Many women participating, along with their babies if they did become pregnant, would be eligible for Medicaid, costing the state more than \$13,000 in prenatal and pediatric care during the baby's first year of life. Of the \$1,038,730 provided for this program, 100% goes to local health departments.

### **Federal Funding for Teen Pregnancy Prevention**

North Carolina's teen pregnancy rate consistently ranks among the highest in the nation and is higher than the U.S. rate. In 2010, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services was awarded federal funding through the Affordable Care Act to continue its work addressing teen pregnancy in the state. This funding, known as the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP), is designed to educate adolescents on both abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS, and adulthood preparation subjects such as healthy relationships and parent-child communication. In North Carolina the PREP initiative is called PREPare for Success.

## References and Additional Resources

1. North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics
2. <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/USTPtrends.pdf>
3. <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/costs/pdf/counting-it-up/fact-sheet-north-carolina.pdf>
4. <http://www.appcnc.org/news-and-publications/research-and-publications/2009-parent-opinion-survey>