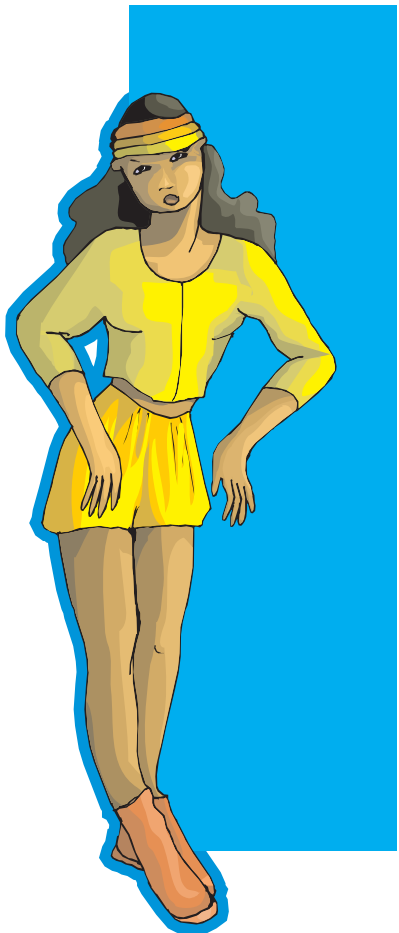


Teen Pregnancy in New Mexico



- NM has the 4th highest teen birth rate in the US —
- In 2002, there were 4,500 births to New Mexico teens —
- Almost 4 in 10 teen girls get pregnant at least once before age 20 —

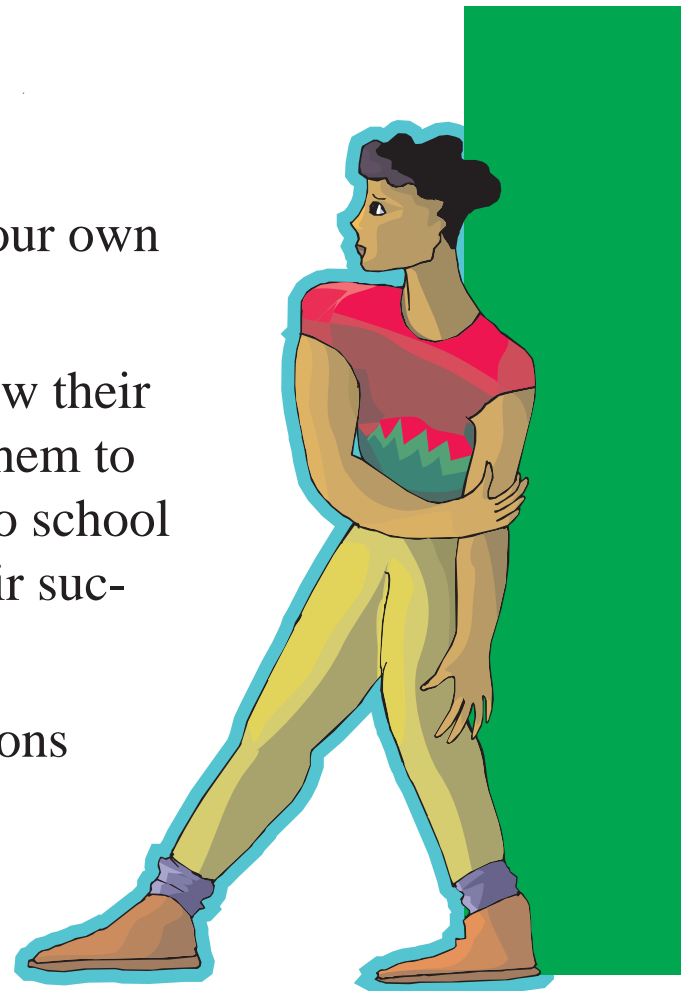
Teen pregnancy is everyone's problem ... it impacts us all.

- Less than 1/3 of girls who begin their families before age 18 *ever* earn a high school diploma. Young fathers also achieve less education than boys who postpone fatherhood.
- Children born to teen mothers are more likely to have health and developmental problems, grow up in homes without fathers, experience abuse and neglect, fail in school, rely on public assistance and live in poverty.
- Teen pregnancy costs New Mexico about \$216 million per year.

PARENTS are the Best Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program!

What parents can do to help their children avoid teen pregnancy —

1. Talk to your child *early* and *often* about sex. Be clear about your own values and attitudes.
2. Get involved in your children's education. Explain to them how their education will reward them in life and why it's important for them to take it seriously. Young people who feel a strong connection to school are less likely to be involved in a teen pregnancy. Support their success in school.
3. Help your teenager set goals and to believe that they have options in life and a promising future
4. Encourage your kids to get involved in fun, safe and fulfilling activities.
5. It's important for both dads and moms to be involved with both sons and daughters — don't forget the boys.
6. Stay closely connected to what's happening in your children's lives. Knowing where your kids are and what they're up to doesn't make you a nag — it makes you a caring parent.
7. Build a strong and close relationship with your children. Strive for a relationship that is warm in tone, firm in discipline, rich in communication, and one that emphasizes mutual trust and respect. Be an attentive parent without being authoritarian.



Message to Teens ...

- Use your teen years to get a good education, finish growing up and to enjoy yourself before becoming a parent.
- Abstaining from sex is the best way to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. If you do have sex, be sure to use contraception each and every time.

For more information, contact:

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