

# **New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition**

## **NEWS FLASH**

**July 2003**

Welcome to the July issue of the New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition's

### **NEWS FLASH**

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#### **1. The US Teen Birth Rate Continues to Decline**

For the 11<sup>th</sup> straight year, the national teen birth rate continued to decline. In 2002, the teen birth rate fell to 43 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19. These new figures represent a five percent decline from 2001 and a 28 percent decline from 1990.

This new data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is available from their web site,

[www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr51/nvsr51\\_11.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr51/nvsr51_11.pdf)

As a comparison, New Mexico's 2001 teen birth rate for 15-19 year olds is 65 per 1,000 15-19 year olds. The provisional 2002 data is not yet available for New Mexico, however, we expect to be able to report on it next month. New Mexico is now ranked as having the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest teen birth rate in the nation. This ranking is based on final revisions of the 2001 data, per the National Vital Statistics Report.

#### **More New Data**

The Allan Guttmacher Institute reports that the US teen pregnancy rate declined 26.8 percent between 1990 and 1999. (Note that the data above is for *birth* rates; this is for *pregnancy* rates.) Based on this new data, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy now calculates that 35 percent of teen girls get pregnant at least once by age 20. This is an improvement, since until recently, the Campaign estimated that four in ten girls became pregnant by age 20.

#### **2. What Teens Want Adults to Know About Teen Pregnancy**

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has updated its publication, *Talking Back: What Teens Want Adults to Know About Teen Pregnancy*. The National Campaign continues to ask young people a direct question: If you could offer your parents and other adults advice about how to help you and your friends avoid pregnancy, what would it be? Here are a few highlights from the publication.

- Above all, young people really do want to hear from their parents. Particularly about sex, love, relationships and values – even if they don't always act like it. But they want communication, not lectures!
- Teens want adults to model good, responsible relationships. They say they are as influenced by what we do as by what we say.
- Teens want adults to pay attention to them before they get into trouble. They want to be left alone less often and need more adult-supervised constructive activities during after-school hours.
- Young people say they're clear that the best way to protect themselves is to *not* have sex. But they also say they need to know about contraception as well as abstinence.

Sarah Brown, Director of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy recently issued the following statement:

"This nation is now moving into a second decade of steady and robust declines in teen births. Credit for this good news goes to teens themselves who increasingly recognize the importance of waiting to have sex and waiting to get pregnant and have children. While many adults continue to get bogged down in debates about abstinence and contraception, teens are charting a different course. ...the National Campaign released *Talking Back*, a new document by teens for parents that reflects what teens want adults to know about teen pregnancy. That document and the continued good news about teen births make clear that while the adults are arguing about this issue, the teens are finding solutions."

You can download a PDF version of this publication or order copies (\$1.00 per copy or .70 for over 100) from the Campaign's web site [www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org)

### **3. From Maria Otero, Hispanic Community Liaison**

If you're looking for demographic information on Hispanics, I recommend a new report from Kids Count called *Latino Children: State-Level Measures of Child Well-Being From the 2000 Census*. This publication provides state-by-state information on populations in various age groups, families and households. It also includes data on income, poverty, education and employment.

To obtain this publication, please call 1-410-223-2890 or visit the Annie E. Casey Foundation web site, [www.aecf.org/publications](http://www.aecf.org/publications)

On another matter of interest to the Hispanic Community, the issue of body image and self-image for Hispanic girls has received some attention lately. According to a recent report, a mother's attitude toward her own body is the most important factor in how a girl views her body. Learn how mothers can help daughters develop a positive body image and accept themselves just as they are! Visit this web site at ¡Soy Unica! Soy ¡Latina!

<http://www.soyunica.gov/adults/monththemes/may/rolemodels.aspx>

¡Soy Unica! Soy ¡Latina! also has some useful information designed to help parents get their kids involved in after-school activities like sports, clubs, and youth groups. These activities increase kids' leadership, time management, organization, and social skills. There's information for parents on different types of after-school activities, the benefits a child receives from after-school activities, and ideas on encouraging a child to get involved. Obviously, anything that involves kids in constructive activities helps prevent teen pregnancy!

<http://www.soyunica.gov/adults/monththemes/july/afterschool.aspx> (English)

<http://www.soyunica.gov/adults/monththemes/july/afterschools.aspx> (Spanish)

I welcome your ideas and questions about issues related to Hispanic teen pregnancy. You can contact me at [maria@nmtpc.org](mailto:maria@nmtpc.org) or (505) 254-8737.

Maria Otero  
NMTPC, Hispanic Community Liaison

#### **4. From Sylvia Ruiz, Executive Director**

Last month we introduced you to NMTPC's new Board members. We also have another new member to welcome into our organization. We are excited to announce [Michelle McGinn](#) as the latest addition to our Board of Directors. Michelle is from San Fidel and works with the Laguna Development Corporation.

Many thanks to all our Board members, donors, and advocates. It is your support that will insure that New Mexico meets [the Challenge 2005: To Reduce Teen Pregnancy by 20% by 2005](#).

Mil Gracias!  
Sylvia Ruiz, Executive Director  
[Director@nmtpc.org](mailto:Director@nmtpc.org)

**NEWS FLASH** editor: Linda Phillips Lehrer, Director of Education & Outreach,  
[LPL@nmtpc.org](mailto:LPL@nmtpc.org)

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**New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition**

PO Box 35997, Albuquerque, NM 87176

Phone: (505) 254-8737

Fax: (505) 254-8741

Email: [nmtpc@nmtpc.org](mailto:nmtpc@nmtpc.org)

Web site: [www.nmtpc.org](http://www.nmtpc.org)

Physical Address: 540 Chama NE, Suite 11, Albuquerque, NM 87108