



The Costs and Consequences of Teen Childbearing

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Still Work to Do

- Three in ten girls get pregnant once before they turn 20
- One-quarter of teen parents have a *second* child before they turn 20
- Disparities (over 50% of Latinas and African Americans)
- Higher teen pregnancy and birth rates than comparable countries



Consequences for Children

- Compared to children born to older mothers (20-21 years old), children born to teen moms are more likely to:
 - drop out of high school.
 - become teen parents.
 - use Medicaid and CHIP.
 - experience abuse/neglect.
 - enter the foster care system.
 - end up in prison (sons).
 - be raised in single parent families.

Consequences for Children

- Lower scores on measures of kindergarten readiness
- Lower vocabulary, math, and reading scores
- Greater risk of being born at low birth weight

Source: Terry-Humen, E., Manlove, J., and Moore, K.A., (2005). *Playing Catch-Up: How Children Born to Teen*

Mothers Fare, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy: Washington, DC



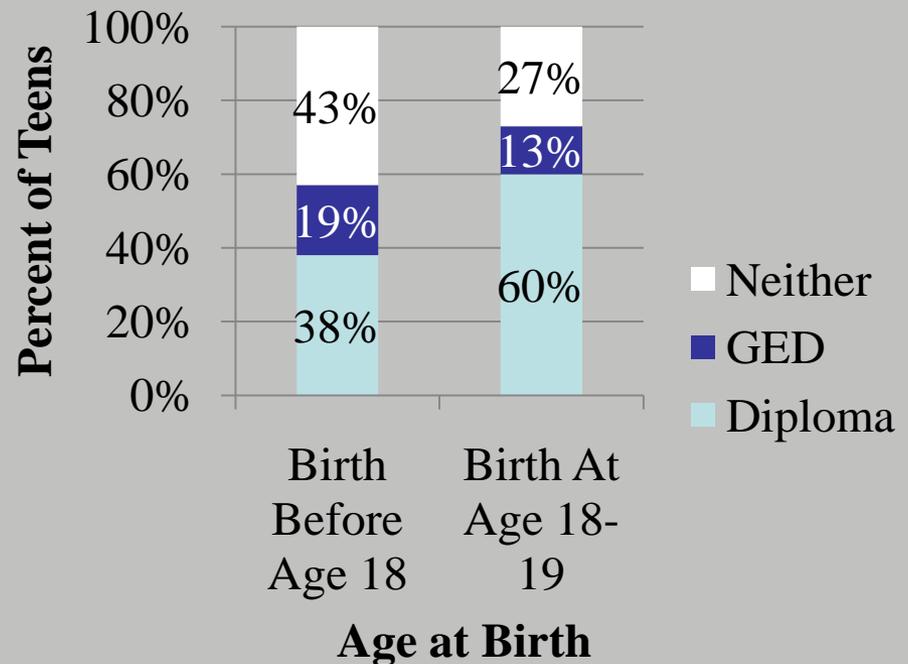
Connection with Poverty

- A child born to a teen mother who has not finished high school and is not married is **nine times more likely to be poor** than a child born to an adult who has finished high school and is married.
- What if the national teen birth rate had not declined 30% between 1991 and 2002? In 2002, 460,000 more young children would have been living in poverty.

Consequences for Education

- Overall 34% of women who have a birth as a teen do not attain a diploma or GED by age 22 compared to 6% of women who do not have a teen birth
- This bar chart shows the percent of teen mothers who attain a diploma or GED by age 22, depending on their age at the birth of this child; 43% of teens who gave birth before age 18 had neither compared to 27% of teens who gave birth at age 18 or 19

Diploma/GED Attainment Among Teen Mothers Before Age 22, By Age of Birth



Source: Perper, K., Peterson, K., & Manlove, J., *Diploma Attachment Among Teen Mothers, 2010*. *Child Trends, Fact Sheet: Washington, DC*. Retrieved March, 2010 from http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2010_01_22_FS_DiplomaAttainment.pdf



Connection with Child Welfare

- Almost one-half of girls in foster care become pregnant by age 19.
- Compared to mothers age 20-21, young teen mothers were 2.2 times more likely have a child placed in foster care during the first 5 years after a birth.
- Delaying age of birth from 17 or earlier to age 20-21 would reduce the overall foster care placement rate by 8% percent.

Source: Hoffman, S.D., (2006) *By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Adolescent Childbearing*.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy: Washington, DC.

Public Sector Costs





Methods

- National data from *Kids Having Kids* (Maynard 1996) and *Kids Having Kids: Revised Edition* (Maynard and Hoffman)
- Measure costs over the first 15 years following a birth – assume a steady state analysis
- Annual costs incurred in 2004



Methods (cont.)

- State costs are derived from national costs
- Account for the state's share of teen births, the per client cost (relative to the national average), and utilization rates (relative to the national average)
- State specific income and sales tax structure

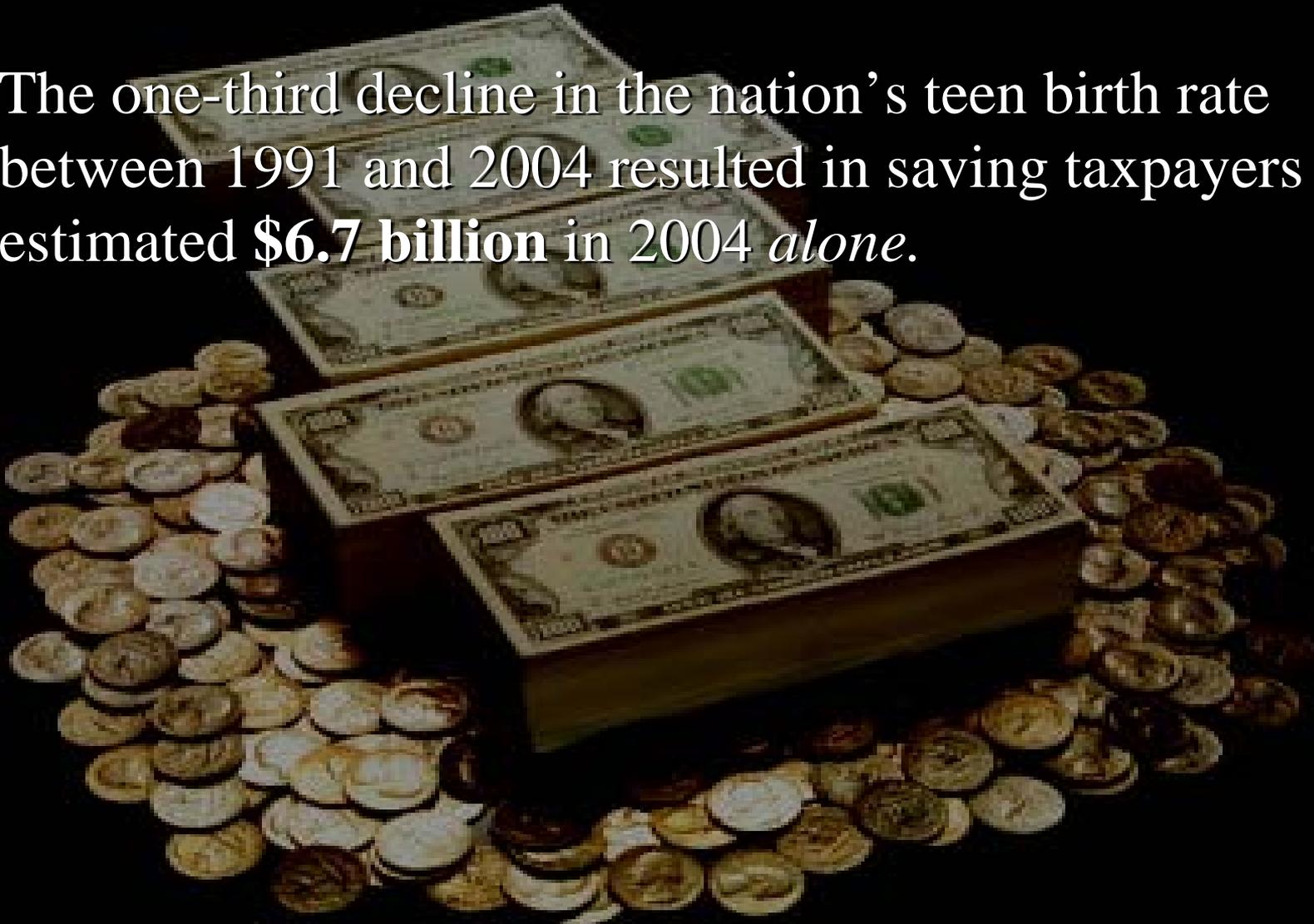
National Costs

Most of the costs of teen childbearing are associated with negative consequences for the children of teen mothers and include:

- \$1.9 billion for increased public health care costs
- \$2.3 billion for increased child welfare costs
- \$2.1 billion for increased costs for state prison systems (among adult sons of teen mothers)
- \$2.9 billion in lost tax revenue due to lower taxes paid by the children of teen mothers over their own adult lifetimes.

National Savings

- The one-third decline in the nation's teen birth rate between 1991 and 2004 resulted in saving taxpayers an estimated **\$6.7 billion** in 2004 *alone*.



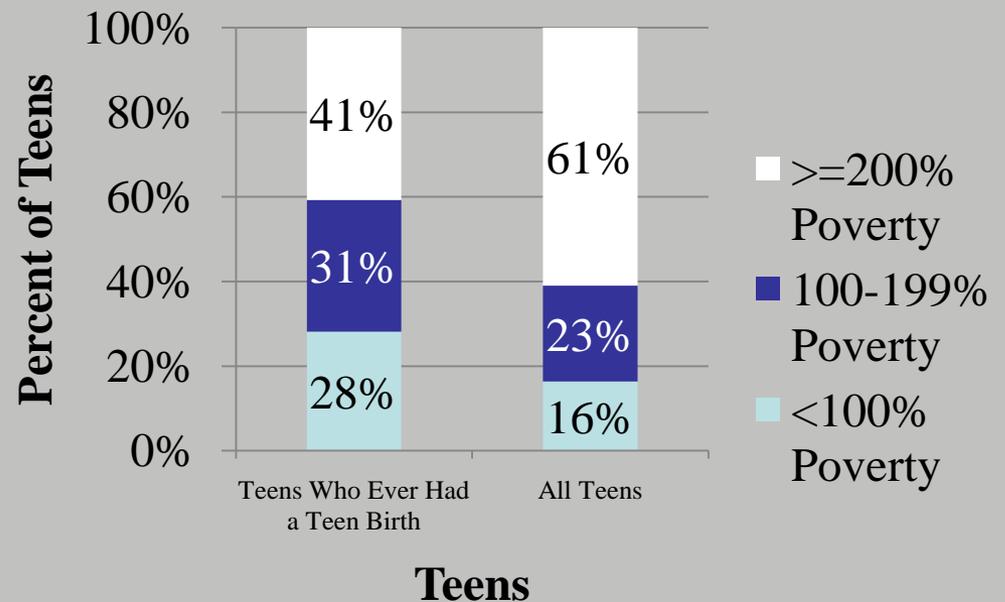
State Specific Costs

- Average cost associated with a child born to a teen mother ranges from \$7,836 in Vermont to \$2,997 in Texas.
- Cost savings in 2004 range from \$5 million in Wyoming to \$1.1 Billion in CA.
- More detailed information available in the report and at <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/costs>

Challenges and Limitations

- How to attribute poorer outcomes – circumstances before or after the birth
- The bar chart shows the distribution of teens by family income as a percent of poverty for teens who had a teen birth and those who didn't; 28% of teens who had a birth as a teen were living at <100% of the federal poverty threshold compared to 16% of all teens

Distribution of Teens by Family Income (at Age 12-19, Before the Birth) for Teens With/Without a Child as a Percent of Poverty



“Reduction of early parenthood will not eliminate the powerful effects of growing up in poverty and disadvantage. But it represents a potentially productive strategy for widening the pathways out of poverty, or at the very least, not compounding the handicaps imposed by social disadvantage.”

What can be Done

- Invest in evidence-based programs
- Intensify efforts with vulnerable youth/populations with high rates.
- Enlist parents, media, faith community, business, judges, and others to help.

★ ★ Thank-you! ★ ★

For more information:

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<http://www.TheNationalCampaign.org>

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