

For your information, this release will be distributed to the news media statewide today.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The RSA Tower, 201 Monroe Street, P.O. Box 303017, Montgomery, AL 36130-3017
(334) 206-5300 • FAX (334) 206-5534 Web Site: <http://www.adph.org>

NEWS RELEASE

Teen pregnancies in Alabama increase for the second consecutive year

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Sandy Powell
(334) 206-5050
Jamie Keith
(334) 265-8004

The number and rate of births and pregnancies among teenage girls in Alabama rose in the past two years, reversing a downward trend in the teen pregnancy rate that had held steady for almost a decade.

According to the Center for Health Statistics of the Alabama Department of Public Health, there were an estimated 12,398 pregnancies in Alabama to females ages 10 to 19 for a pregnancy rate of 39.7 in 2007, a rate which is virtually unchanged from the 2006 rate of 39.6. During the years 1996 through 2005 the teen pregnancy rate decreased steadily from 57.1 to 37.5.

“We need to be aware that teen pregnancy is interrelated to health problems we’re seeing with infant mortality,” said Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer. “Also, we are concerned that risk behaviors seem to be increasing among our teenagers.”

The 8,776 births to teens represented 13.7 percent of total births in the state. In 2005 Alabama experienced its lowest percent of births to teenagers, 13.1 percent of all live births. Teen births increased by 767 between 2005 and 2006 and by an additional 106 between 2006 and 2007.

The infant mortality rates for teenage mothers in 2007 compared with adult mothers in Alabama made a statistically significant difference, 13.8 for teens versus 9.4 for adult mothers.

Jamie Keith, director of the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, said, “Teen pregnancy and childbearing have significant economic and community costs.”

Teen mothers are less likely to obtain adequate prenatal care and to complete high school or attend college. Children of teenage mothers are at greater risk for preterm birth, low birthweight, poverty and welfare dependence.

For more information contact Jamie Keith, Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, (334) 265-8004, www.acptp.org.

-30-

10/27/08