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***For additional information about teen pregnancy prevention in Alabama, please visit [www.acptp.org](http://www.acptp.org). Please feel free to share this resource with others interested in the issue of teen pregnancy prevention.***

## Emerging Answers 2007 What Works to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Alabama has made encouraging progress in reducing teen pregnancy during the past several years. Unfortunately the rate did increase in 2006 (*see related story on page 2*) leading many to question what really works to prevent teen pregnancy.

*Emerging Answers 2007*, by researcher Douglas Kirby, Ph.D., is the most comprehensive review to date of evaluation research that answers the question, what programs work to prevent teen pregnancy and STDs.

The review includes the following:

1. Summary of research results on sexual risk behavior and its consequences.
2. Identifies the particular types of adolescent sexual risk-taking behavior that affect pregnancy and STDs.
3. Provides an overview of important factors that influence such sexual risk-taking.
4. Describes the programs and approaches that have reduced teen sexual risk-taking and teen pregnancy or STD.
5. Expands the list of programs with strong evidence of impact.
6. Describes the characteristics of effective sex and STD/HIV education programs.
7. Describes promising strategies for organizations and communities that want to select, adapt, design or implement prevention programs for their own teens.

Please note, the review does not include programs to prevent second pregnancies and births to teenage mothers and it does not assess the efficacy of various methods of contraception.

This report offers clear answers to the questions of why teens engage in sexual risk-taking, and what programs might be useful in addressing the factors affecting teen sexual behavior. Opportunities to affect change should not be missed because there are too-high levels of sexual risk-taking among teens. According to the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS):

- 50.6 percent of high school students in Alabama report having sex. (46.8 in the U.S.)
- 23.3 percent of sexually experienced high school students in Alabama say they used alcohol and/or drugs the last time they had sex. (25.4 in the U.S.)
- 14 percent of high school students report they have been forced to have sexual intercourse. (7.5 in the U.S.)

There are risk and protective factors associated with sexual risk-taking behaviors. Understanding the link between these factors and behaviors will help us select and implement effective programs that will reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy and childbearing. For more information visit the Campaign's web site at [www.acptp.org](http://www.acptp.org).

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## From the Executive Director

During the period 1995-2005 the rate of teen pregnancy in Alabama decreased from 57.6 to 37.5 (*calculated as the number of pregnancies occurring per 1,000 in the female population 10-19 years of age*). A recent release of statistics from the Alabama Department of Public Health indicates the teen pregnancy rate increased to 39.6 in 2006. Nationally, the numbers have also increased.

The National Center for Health Statistics released preliminary birth data for 2006 and is based on 99.2% of all births. The startling headline from this release was "The national teen birth rate increased three percent between 2005 and 2006—the first increase in 14 years."

Some key findings from the release include:

- For 2006, the preliminary birth rate for girls increased for the first time in 14 years (since 1991).
- The preliminary rate in 2006 is 41.9 per 1,000 teen girls (aged 15-19). (53.3 in Alabama).
- The preliminary birth rate for girls aged 10-14 in 2006 is 0.6 per 1,000. (1.06 in Alabama)
- The preliminary birth rate for girls aged 15-17 in 2006 is 22 per 1,000. (28.04 in Alabama)
- The preliminary birth rate for girls aged 18-19 in 2006 is 73 per 1,000. (91.3 in Alabama)
- In 2006, the proportion of non-marital births reached a record high. 84.4% of births to teens 15-19 are non-marital, up from 83.5% in 2005. (2006 data not available for Alabama)

## ACPTP 2008 Conference

Make plans now to join the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy for the fifth annual conference on teen pregnancy prevention, scheduled for Tuesday, April 29, 2008. Children's Hospital in Birmingham will host the conference at the Bradley Lecture Center. Presenters during the conference will be Dr. Doug Kirby, ETR, author of *Emerging Answers 2007*. Dr. Kirby will discuss the results of this research. Mary Martha Wilson, Healthy Teen Network, will also participate in the conference. Ms. Wilson will provide training on the use of a tool available to communities—TAC (Tool to Assess the Characteristics of Effective Sex and STD/HIV Education Programs). Coach Tony Pierce is also planning to attend and will discuss a program focusing on fathers—Fathers In Touch.

## Teenage Girls, High School and Pregnancy

National Women's Law Center released a report identifying the issue of dropout rates for females. *When Girls Don't Graduate We all Fail—A Call to Improve High School Graduation Rates for Girls* is a detailed review of the alarmingly high number of females who drop-out of high school. In fact, one in four girls overall do not finish high school. As you might imagine, female dropouts are at particular economic risk because girls who fail to graduate from high school have higher rates of unemployment; make significantly lower wages; and are more likely to need to rely on public support programs to provide for their families.

From information available through the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, we know that teenage pregnancy is a leading reason for dropping out of school. According to a recent study, *The Influence of High School Dropout and School Disengagement on the Risk of School-Age Pregnancy*, we have discovered that dropping out of high school increases the risk of school-age pregnancy leading to a live birth for some groups of girls. The study demonstrated that 40% of the female dropouts surveyed—about 48% of Hispanic female dropouts, 34% of the White female dropouts, and 33% of the Black female dropouts—gave birth before age 20.

Teen pregnancy and childbearing are issues that are complex and very closely linked to many other social issues—including education, economic security, health and child well-being. In an effort to provide effective programs to prevent teen pregnancy we must consider all the variables that influence teen pregnancy and childbearing. Of significant importance is the educational experience of teen girls.

## Preventing Teen Pregnancy Around Alabama

**Dallas County's Children Policy Council (CPC)** is on fire for children and teens within their community! Recently twenty-five concerned Ministers, City Council Members and Children's Policy Council members gathered together at Church Street United Methodist Church's Fellowship Hall for a first-ever "Coffee Talk" to learn about the issue of teen pregnancy in Dallas County. The Health Committee of the CPC organized the event and unveiled their plans to host a Silver Ring Thing concert as a way to reach youth and their parents. The event will be in the spring of 2008 in Dallas County. Other plans to address the issue of teen pregnancy and teen childbearing in Dallas County are being discussed and will be released as details become available.

**Huntingdon College's Rural Pastor Leadership Institute** met recently at Huntingdon College, included in their agenda was a presentation from the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy addressing the relationship between poverty and teen pregnancy and discussing some of the opportunities available in the faith community to address these issues. The Rural Pastor Leadership Institute motivates, supports, prepares and trains clergy in rural churches for the transformation of rural congregations and communities. The first cohort of 22 United Methodist pastors will meet in five two day sessions over six months. In these sessions these pastors will develop their capacity to lead, and gain awareness of the social, political, historical and economic forces that have shaped the rural areas. The Institute is being provided free of charge and is being funded by a generous grant from the Sybil H. Smith Trust.

A group of individuals and organizations with an interest in the issue of teen pregnancy has begun to meet in **Jefferson County** for the purpose of re-organizing a teen pregnancy prevention coalition. People of Purpose, Inc. will convene the initial meetings of the interest group. If you would like to be involved in this effort, please contact People of Purpose, Inc. at 205-705-3784 or 205-577-0797.



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We're on the web :  
[www.acptp.org](http://www.acptp.org)

## Events, resources, etc.

### Events

- Spring, 2008—Silver Ring Thing, Dallas County Children's Policy Council, Selma
- March 29, 2008—Survive and Thrive, Montgomery Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Montgomery
- April 4, 2008—Adolescent Health Conference, AUM, Montgomery
- April 24, 2008—FOCUS Rally, Talladega
- April 29, 2008—ACPTP Conference, Bradley Conference and Lecture Center, Children's Hospital, Birmingham.

### Resources

The resource section of the Campaign's web site has been updated and loan procedures revised. Please visit the site and let us know if you or your organization has a need for the resources in our library. Materials may be borrowed for a two-week period. The loan period may be extended if there is not a waiting list for the item. Resources include books, brochures, reports, studies, videos, etc. Currently there is no fee for this service! Call for more information.

### Etc.

If you are interested in being a point of contact in your community for teen pregnancy prevention issues, please contact April Smith at the Campaign office (334-265-8004 or [asmith412@bellsouth.net](mailto:asmith412@bellsouth.net)). We are in the process of identifying individuals/organizations in all of Alabama's 67 counties for the purpose of distributing timely and relevant information that will help in a community's work to prevent teen pregnancy.

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