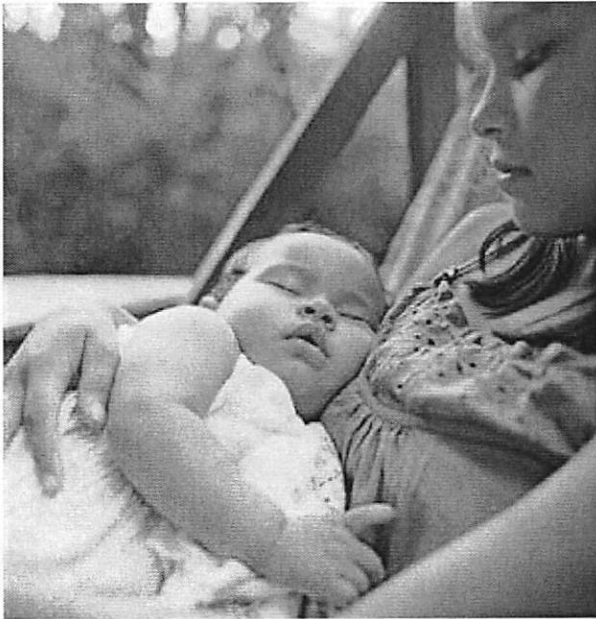


# Effects of Teenage Pregnancy

by Amy Williams on November 23, 2010

Teen pregnancy is an ever present issue in the world, with the US being at the top with almost 1,000,000 teen pregnancies each year. The teen birth rate was falling down until 2005 and since then it has shown a steady increase making it again a troublesome issue. The effects of teenage pregnancy are many, most of them due to the fact that a low number of future teen mothers ask for parental care or delay it until the last moment. That is backed up by the fact that 85% of all teen pregnancies are unplanned, and over 7% of them receives no care at all.



In most cases this is due to the fear of their parents and family accepting the fact that their teens are pregnant, these kids are afraid to tell their parents. Not only that, some teens live in denial about their pregnancy until it is too late. Most teens unfortunately don't know that each state has one or more health care institutions that provide very affordable care with guaranteed confidentiality.

Since there is no parental care teen mothers are at great risk. In most cases they fail to get enough nutrients which don't only lowers their health but it creates a significant risk for the baby as well as a high chance of low birth weight. For those that don't know, low birth rate is associated with high rate of infant mortality and childhood disorders. In some cases these babies have partially developed organs and in most cases that results in brain bleeding, intestinal problems as well as respiratory problems.

Children of teen mothers often receive fewer nutrients than needed, they don't have proper health care, and they lack proper social and cognitive stimulation, all of that can result in the possibility of underdeveloped intellect.

Effects of teenage pregnancy are not just pointed towards the health of the mother and the baby, these teens are far more likely to end up poor and have their children grow up in poverty. That results in increased risk of health issues, higher abuse rates, neglect, low academic achievement, and also leads to a repeated cycle of teen pregnancy. Also leads to inappropriate parenting as these teens were not yet ready to become parents, as such their children are more likely to engage in criminal activities, acts of delinquency, and have failed relationships.

Teen mothers usually never finish high school, let alone enter a college, so the lower level of education doesn't allow them to get a proper job or be prepared for the parenting that is ahead of them. Their career options are more than limited.

The risk factors for teenage pregnancy are poverty, low school performance, having a mother who gave birth as a teen, single parenting household etc.... Another effect of teenage pregnancy is the social effect on the entire country, and financial. Teen pregnancies are becoming a great burden on the public health as well. But on the other hand, teens that talk to their parents in the beginning and take care of their pregnancy the right way mostly finish high school and end up becoming good parents. In the end the **effects of teenage pregnancy** are still far too many for us to recog

### **Medical Complications**

Medical complications often occur in pregnant teenagers, according to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Too often, teens do not seek adequate medical care during the pregnancy. Complications that may occur during a teen pregnancy include anemia, toxemia, high blood pressure, placenta previa and premature birth of the baby. Ongoing medical care is crucial to prevent these complications from threatening the pregnancy and the mother's well being.

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### **Emotional Crisis**

A teenager may suffer an emotional crisis if she becomes pregnant and does not want the baby. This crisis may lead to rash behavior such as attempting to self-abort the baby or a suicide attempt.

### **Worries about Future**

Uncertainty about the future may arise when a teen is pregnant. A teen may feel she does not have enough knowledge to be a mother. She may also have fears about how having a baby will impact her own life and dreams for the future.

### **Delayed Education**

Education may be put on hold when a teen becomes pregnant. Some pregnant teens may decide to leave high school. Others who were planning to attend college in the future may put off that experience after becoming pregnant. They may decide to focus on the baby or getting married rather than pursuing further education.

### **Smoking & Drugs**

Smoking and drug use may be problematic during a teen pregnancy. A teen may not have the willpower to stop using substances that can harm the developing baby.

### **Exhaustion**

Exhaustion may arise during a pregnancy. A pregnant teen should try to exercise during the pregnancy; however, if exhaustion arises it is important to know that this is often a normal part of pregnancy. Getting the standard 8 hours of sleep every night (or more) is important.

## **Depression**

Depression may arise when a teenager is pregnant. The teen may fall into a depression while trying to handle the emotions a pregnancy creates and all of the possibly negative feedback about the pregnancy from friends and family. The fluctuating hormones that a pregnancy causes may also prompt depression.

## **Neglect of Baby**

Once their baby is born, teenagers may not be willing or able to give it the undivided attention it needs. A teen may not be an adequate mother because she is overwhelmed by the constant needs of the baby. She may grow annoyed at the lack of freedom to interact with her peer group due to the baby.

## **Trouble with Finances**

Financial difficulty may arise during a teen pregnancy or after the baby is born. It is expensive to raise a baby. Teens who do not have full-time employment may struggle to cover the basic expenses of life upon having a baby.

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## **References**

- [American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: Teen Pregnancy Issues](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: Tips for Pregnant Teenagers](#)
- [National Institutes of Health: Dangers of Teen Pregnancy](#)

Article reviewed by Libby Swope Wiersema Last updated on: Mar 6, 2011



# Fact Sheet

## The Effects of Teen Pregnancy

- 50% of adolescents who have a baby become pregnant again within two years of the baby's birth.
- Only 41% of teenage mothers complete high school, making it less likely for teen mothers to have the skills necessary to qualify for a well-paying job.
- Almost 50% of all teen mothers and more than 75% of unmarried teen mothers begin receiving welfare within five years of the birth of their first child.
- Nearly 80% of fathers of children born to teen mothers do not marry the mothers.
- Teen fathers pay less than \$800 in child support.
- Children born to teen mothers are more likely to have low birth weight and related problems such as infant death, blindness, and mental retardation.
- Children of teen parents often receive inadequate parenting, are subject to abuse and neglect, and often have insufficient health care.
- Children of teen parents are 50% more likely to repeat a grade, perform poorly on standardized tests, and ultimately less likely to complete high school.

### Sources:

1. National Vital Statistics, Vol. 50, No. 50, 2002
2. National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (2002). *Not Just Another Single Issue*, Washington, DC.
3. Maynard, R.A. (1996). Kids having kids: A Robin Hood Foundation special report on the costs of adolescent childbearing. New York, Robin Hood Foundation.