



3708 Mayfair Street  
Suite 310  
Durham, NC 27707

(919) 226-1880  
[www.appcnc.org](http://www.appcnc.org)

## Press Release

---

**EMBARGOED UNTIL OCTOBER 14, 2013**

CONTACT: Elizabeth Finley  
Director of Strategic Communications  
**Mobile: (919) 749-7309**  
Office: (919) 226-1880  
[efinley@appcnc.org](mailto:efinley@appcnc.org)

### **North Carolina Teen Pregnancies Drop to New Historic Lows**

#### *Age and Racial Shifts Help Drive Trend*

**DURHAM, N.C. (OCTOBER 14, 2013)** – North Carolina’s teen pregnancy rate fell 10% last year to a historic low, according to new data provided by the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics and released by the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APPCNC).

The 2012 teen pregnancy rate was 39.6 per 1,000 15-19 year old girls. In other words, fewer than 4% of 15-19 year old girls in North Carolina experienced a pregnancy last year.

Other highlights from the newly released data include:

- Reduced pregnancies among girls of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, helping to minimize some historical disparities. Pregnancies to white, black, and Hispanic teens dropped 8%, 11% and 13%, respectively.
- Reducing the teen pregnancy rate also reduced all potential outcomes of a teen pregnancy. The teen birth rate dropped by 9% and the teen abortion rate dropped by 13%.
- 74% of counties saw teen pregnancy decrease in 2012.
- Less than one-quarter (24.5%) of pregnancies happened to a girl who has been pregnant before, the lowest proportion of repeat pregnancies in state history.

Nationwide, researchers and advocates have attributed teen pregnancy declines to increased use of birth control, the availability of more effective birth control methods like IUDs, and a slight increase in the average age when teens first engage in sexual intercourse.

## **Concentration in the Older Years**

Part of the decline in teen pregnancy has been driven by the shrinking number of pregnancies to minors, which have been cut almost in half in the last decade.

A full 71% of all teen pregnancies in North Carolina happen to 18-19 year old girls. Twenty-three counties had more than 10% of all 18-19 year olds get pregnant last year.

Advocates note that the most effective solutions for reducing 18-19 year old pregnancies connect these teens with effective birth control methods, largely through clinic outreach and social marketing to this traditionally hard-to-reach demographic group.

## **Celebrating Successes**

Positive trends in younger pregnancies and shrinking racial disparities point to the successes of strategically placed proven programs, which tend to focus on younger teens and more at-risk demographic groups.

Gaston Youth Connected, a project run by APPCNC and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), announced Monday that they have closed the disparity between African American and White teen pregnancy rates. The project, which combines evidence-based prevention programs and clinic interventions, has seen heavy participation and leadership from African Americans in the community.

Likewise, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiatives (TPPI) have been successful at connecting younger teens in 42 counties with evidence-based and evidence-informed pregnancy prevention programs. For example, El Pueblo of Wake County's Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program works with Hispanic teens and their families in an effort to close the disparities gap in teen pregnancy rates.

TPPI also works with pregnant and parenting teens through their Adolescent Parenting Program, which provides pregnant and parenting teens with evidence-based home visiting and peer group education to help them prevent a second pregnancy, graduate high school and gain parenting skills.

Unfortunately, the federal shutdown has put many programs like those run by TPPI in jeopardy, leaving some of the state's most at-risk youth disconnected from their mentors until the Federal Government resumes funding.

## **Additional Resources:**

Snapshot of North Carolina Data: <http://www.appcnc.org/data/map/northcarolina>

Data for Each North Carolina County: <http://www.appcnc.org/data/map>

Historical Data: <http://www.appcnc.org/data/state-statistics/archived-state-statistics>

NC State Center for Health Statistics: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/vitalstats.cfm>

###

*APPCNC is North Carolina's nonprofit leader in preventing adolescent pregnancy through advocacy, collaboration and education. Learn more at [www.appcnc.org](http://www.appcnc.org).*