Teen Pregnancy

Woonsocket has many services in place to help teens—including those who are pregnant and parenting—achieve their education, career, and personal goals. Opportunities exist to build on these strengths to prevent teen pregnancy and enhance individual, family, and community well-being.

Why we care about teen pregnancy

Teen pregnancy affects the long-term well-being of families and communities. Teen pregnancy is associated with serious health risks for the mother and child. For example, Rhode Island women younger than 20 years old are more likely to use tobacco during pregnancy and are less likely to breastfeed.1 Teen pregnancy and parenting also contribute to higher high school drop-out rates and lower income and educational attainment.2 For fathers, education statistics are similar; between 2002 and 2006, 40% of infants born to teens had fathers with a high-school diploma or less. Children of teen parents are more likely to have lower school achievement and drop out of high school, have more health problems, be incarcerated at some time during adolescence, give birth as a teen, and face unemployment as a young adult.3 In Rhode Island in 2008, public sector costs associated with teen childbearing were estimated at nearly $49 million.4

Community strengths

- The number and rate of teen pregnancies have been decreasing—although at a slower rate in Woonsocket (24%) than across Rhode Island (28%) during 2007-2011. (See Figure 1 on the next page.)
- Most Woonsocket teens want to continue their education. Fewer Woonsocket 12th graders, however, had planned to attend college during the 2010-2011 school year (82%) than their peers statewide (90%).
- Woonsocket has many community-based services for teens, including programs to help teens prevent pregnancy, continue their education, find employment, prepare for a baby, and improve their parenting skills and confidence. See page four for a partial listing.
During Spontaneous Fetal Deaths During 2009-2011 in Woonsocket, the teen birth rate was...

**Figure 1**: Teen Pregnancy Rates by Selected Geographic Areas, Rhode Island, 2009-2011

- **Source**: Maternal and Child Health Database, Rhode Island Department of Health

**Figure 2**: Low Birth Weight among Teen Births by Selected Cities/Towns, Rhode Island 2009-2011

- **Source**: Maternal and Child Health Database, Rhode Island Department of Health

**Figure 3**: Teen Pregnancy Rates by Selected Geographic Areas, Rhode Island, 2009-2011

- **Source**: Maternal and Child Health Database, Rhode Island Department of Health

**Figure 4**: Teen Birth Rates by Selected Racial/Ethnic Groups, Woonsocket, Rhode Island

- **Source**: Maternal and Child Health Database, Rhode Island Department of Health

**Figure 5**: Teen Pregnancy Outcomes, Woonsocket and Rhode Island, 2009-2011

- **Source**: Maternal and Child Health Database, Rhode Island Department of Health

**Community challenges**

- **Woonsocket** (tied with Central Falls) had the highest teen pregnancy rate in the state during 2009-2011. The rate in Woonsocket (95 per 1,000 teens) was 2.5 times that for the state (38), with 359 teen pregnancies occurring during the three-year period (Figure 2).

  - The repeat teen birth rate was higher in Woonsocket than statewide. Among the 261 infants born to teens in Woonsocket during 2009-2011, 53 (20%) were born to teens who were already mothers, compared to 16% statewide.

  - More than one in five (21%) of the Woonsocket teens who gave birth during 2009-2011 received late1 or no prena....

**Worth noting**

A higher proportion of teen pregnancies result in a live birth in Woonsocket than statewide. Among the 359 Woonsocket pregnancies during 2009-2011, 261 (73%) resulted in a live birth, and 78 (22%) in an induced termination. The rate in Woonsocket (95 per 1,000 teens) was 2.5 times that for the state (38), with 359 teen pregnancies occurring during the three-year period (Figure 2).

**What you can do**

- **Make a data-driven action plan** to address teen pregnancy and promote adolescent health in Woonsocket. Take advantage of your community’s many strengths and support services to do so.

- **Encourage referrals to community-based programs and services** that can help teens prevent pregnancy and support them if they do get pregnant. Providers should coordinate care for teens and follow up on referrals, as appropriate, to assure access to care.

- **Keep talking with us**. We hope to engage in continuous conversation and collaboration to help you enhance adolescent health in your community. For more information, contact Kim Harris, Adolescent Health Program Manager, at 401-222-4354.

- **Visit www.health.ri.gov/for/pregnantwomen for useful information for pregnant women.**

*Prenatal care that begins after the first trimester.

References

3. *Worth noting* A higher proportion of teen pregnancies result in a live birth in Woonsocket than statewide. Among the 359 Woonsocket pregnancies during 2009-2011, 261 (73%) resulted in a live birth, and 78 (22%) in an induced termination. The rate in Woonsocket (95 per 1,000 teens) was 2.5 times that for the state (38), with 359 teen pregnancies occurring during the three-year period (Figure 2).

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