

Older Teens: The Forgotten Age

Teen pregnancy prevention among 18-19 year-olds



“Adults should not assume that children are ‘out of the woods’ when they turn 18, particularly considering that the risk of pregnancy actually increases as teens get older.”

Power To Decide (formerly National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy)



Older teens, ages 18-19, are:

- Over 7 out of every 10 teen births in Oklahoma.
 - More likely to be having a subsequent birth.
 - Less likely, if males, to use protection consistently.
 - Most likely to have had sex if they are not working and are not in school.

What do they need?

- **MEDICALLY ACCURATE INFORMATION** about reproductive health from well-trained and trusted health care providers who have an aptitude for relating well with young people – or from high quality online sources.
- **EASY-TO-ACCESS, CONFIDENTIAL, FREE OR LOW-COST REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES** that meet their needs and are provided in settings which are comfortable for both male and female teens.
- **MESSAGES AND INCENTIVES** in school, at work and in community settings that encourage them to take care of their reproductive health and plan for the future.
- **ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE** to complete their education, secure employment and prepare for parenthood *before* they start a family.

For ideas and resources:

Answer: Sex Ed, Honestly
answer.rutgers.edu/page/

Power To Decide (National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy)
powertodecide.org
stayteen.org
bedsider.org

Advocates for Youth
advocatesforyouth.org

Healthy Teen Network
healthyteennetwork.org

Healthy Teens OK!
healthyteensok.org

Take Control-Oklahoma
takecontrolinitiative.org

What this means for teen pregnancy prevention:

Parents and other adults can still have a strong influence on older teens... and need to find ways to keep communicating and stay connected with the teens in their families and daily lives.

Peer influences remain strong for older teens, although their larger group of peers may be replaced by a few close friends and more serious relationships.

Feeling connected to school (college or other training settings) is important for older teens, as a sense of belonging and engagement has been associated with lower rates of substance abuse, sexual intercourse, violence, delinquency and suicide among teens.

For more information, check:

Thrive: Sexual Health Collective for Youth
thriveokc.org

Tulsa Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
tulsacampaign.org

Healthy Teens OK!
healthyteensok.org

Youth Assets as Protective Factors

The Youth Asset Study (YAS), a CDC-funded research project conducted by the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, explored the relationship between 17 key youth assets and 8 risk behaviors. Over 1,100 pairs of youth and a parent in the Oklahoma City area participated in the survey.

Of the 286 older teens surveyed, **nearly 3 out of 4 (72%) of the said they had had sexual intercourse -- and almost half (46%) of those said they did not always use birth control.** Over one-third (35%) said they had been pregnant.

Of the 17 youth assets, those most strongly associated with **not having had sex** for 18-19 year-olds (female and male) were:

- **Parental Monitoring**
- **Positive Peer Role Models**
- **Relationship with Father**
- **Non-Parental Adult Role Models**
- **School Connectedness**

Assets for females associated with **not becoming pregnant** by ages 18-19 were:

- **Parental Monitoring**
- **School Connectedness**
- **Family Communication**
- **Non-Parental Adult Role Model**
- **Positive Peer Role Model**

Positive Relationships Matter!

Compared to youth without these assets, youth with...

- Parental Monitoring were 10 times less likely to have had sex and, if female, were 6 times less likely to have been pregnant.
- Positive Peer Role Models were 4 times less likely to have had sex and, if female, were 2-1/2 times less likely to have been pregnant.
- A positive Relationship with Father were over 3 times less likely to have ever had sex.
- School Connectedness were 2-1/2 times less likely to have had sex and, if female, were 3-1/2 times less likely to have been pregnant.
- Adult Role Models were 2-1/2 times less likely to have had sex and, if female, were 2-1/2 times less likely to have been pregnant.