



G-CAPP Policy and Advocacy News

G-CAPP Annual Conference Wrap-Up

Thank you to everyone who attended the 11th Annual G-CAPP Conference. The conference was a success, with many inspiring speakers, useful workshops and great energy and participation among attendees.

This year's conference concluded with a Policy Roundtable entitled "No Time for Complacency", in which leaders in government and the adolescent health field discussed the fact that, although our state has seen dramatic declines in teen pregnancy in the recent decade, there is no guarantee that rates will continue to decline into the future. The following are some of the recommendations our panel offered for keeping the adolescent pregnancy trend moving in the right direction into the next decade:

Providing Services to Teens

- *Preserve teens' confidential access to family planning services
- *Improve teens' access to health services, especially in rural areas, by providing them in non-traditional settings in the community
- *Provide evening and weekend services that are low cost or free
- *Regularly test for STDs and HIV among teens
- *Provide bilingual/bicultural staff who are nonjudgmental to work with members of minority groups, including the Latino community
- *Link family planning services for teens to mental and behavioral health support services
- *Provide for continuity of overall medical care for teens.

Policy Issues

- *Inform and educate the state General Assembly about teen pregnancy and the cost benefits of prevention, to encourage them to keep prevention funding in place and to continue to support the state's teen centers
- *Address the impact of recent state-level immigration legislation that could make Latino families afraid to access services
- *Provide teens with access to accurate information about reproductive health and contraception
- *Address the problem of repeat teen pregnancy, and its link to the cycle of poverty.

"15 by 15" State Teen Pregnancy Reduction Goal

As part of the "No Time for Complacency" policy roundtable at the G-CAPP Annual Conference, G-CAPP officially announced the **15 by 15** statewide teen pregnancy reduction goal. The goal is to achieve another 15% reduction in adolescent pregnancies for girls ages 15 to 19 in Georgia by year 2015. This goal can be met if we achieve a reduction of only about 20 fewer pregnancies per county on average.

In Georgia, a broad range of prevention efforts have proven effective in making significant reductions in the adolescent pregnancy rate. Over the past decade in our state, the pregnancy rate for 15 to 19 year old girls declined 29%. In spite of this progress, Georgia continues to rank among the bottom ten states in the nation in teen pregnancy rates. The **15 by 15** goal is a call to action for policymakers, community leaders, adolescent service providers, and other key stakeholders to continue to support prevention efforts to ensure that we maintain the downward trend in the teen pregnancy rate in Georgia.

Stay tuned to the [G-CAPP website](#) for future updates about the 15 by 15 campaign and how you can get involved.

Celebrate "Let's Talk Month"

October is "Let's Talk Month", a national public education campaign coordinated by Advocates for Youth as an opportunity for community agencies, religious institutions, businesses, schools, media, parent groups and health providers to plan programs and activities which encourage parent/child communication about sexuality. For tips on how to be an "askable parent" and other information, visit the [Advocates for Youth web site](#).

Also, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has a [web page](#) devoted to helpful tips for parents,

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including a recent research report, "Science Says #25: Parent-Child Communication About Sex and Related Topics", which shows that a majority of teens say that their parents influence their decisions about sex more than their friends or the media, and that it would be easier for them to postpone sexual activity and avoid teen pregnancy if they could have more open and honest discussions with their parents about these issues.

Don't Forget to Register to Vote

Spread the word to family, friends and neighbors that to be eligible to vote in the November 7th General Election you must be registered by tomorrow, Tuesday, October 10th. (Mailed registrations must be postmarked no later than October 10th.) Visit the [Secretary of State's web site](#) for more information.

G-CAPP Fast Fact

Nationwide, the teen birth rate (ages 15-19) declined by one-third between 1991 and 2004. Between 2003 and 2004, though, the teen birth rate declined by only 1%, the smallest decrease since 1991, and the Hispanic teen birth rate increased slightly.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, [National Vital Statistics Reports](#), Volume 55, No. 1.

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