



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES CHICAGO TEEN BIRTHRATE HITS NEW HISTORIC LOW
FOLLOWING NINE YEARS OF CONSECUTIVE DECLINES**

*Chicago recognized as one of the top five cities for reproductive health
by the National Institute for Reproductive Health*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) today announced teen births have reached a new historic low in Chicago. In 2015, the most recent year for which [data](#) are available, there were 27.5 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years old, a more than a 67 percent drop from the 85.2 rate in 1999.

“Chicago has made a concerted, collaborative effort to help young people plan for the future, make responsible choices and lead successful lives,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “A record low number of teen births means more Chicago teens can focus on their educations, work towards their goals and create better futures for themselves.”

Since 2010, Chicago has seen declines in teen births across all racial and ethnic groups. African American teens, who historically face greater disparities regarding teen births, have seen the greatest decline, from more than 72 births per 1,000 females to just 34.9, which represents a more than 51 percent drop overall. Chicago’s teen birthrate is higher than the national average but continues to aggressively close the gap, dropping 20 percent more than national rates since 2010.

“This decline in teen births means an increase in opportunity and empowerment for teens,” said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. “This is because we know that the vast majority of teen pregnancies are unintended and adolescent parenthood is associated with serious health and educational implications for teens and their babies.”

Research has consistently shown that teen birth and unintended pregnancies increase the chance of low birth weight and infant mortality. Studies also show that approximately 38 percent of teen mothers earn a high school diploma and less than 2 percent earn a college degree by the age of 30.

CDPH and its partners have worked aggressively to reduce teen births and improve the reproductive health of residents. Chicago was recently recognized by the National Institute of Reproductive Health (NIRH) as a leader in reproductive freedom. NIRH’s Local Reproductive Freedom Index evaluates 40 cities across the nation on their policies and work in 37 categories like supporting young people, funding reproductive health care and advancing inclusive policies.

Chicago received four out of five stars, placing it in the top five cities nationwide and the only Midwestern city to receive four stars.

“Amidst a hostile federal climate, the ability of local leaders to advance reproductive rights, justice and policies is paramount. Because of Chicago’s outstanding and unwavering commitment to reproductive freedom, I am proud to say that the Windy City has achieved 4 out of 5 stars according to the [Local Reproductive Freedom Index](#),” said Andrea Miller, President of the National Institute for Reproductive Health. “Great advancements have been made in Chicago and yet, we cannot be complacent; cities have a unique opportunity to lead by example and influence state and federal policy and we will continue to drive progress forward. We applaud Chicago’s work to champion this effort and urge them to double down and to remain a guiding light for communities around the state and the country.”

Under Mayor Emanuel’s leadership, CDPH has launched a comprehensive effort to further reduce the teen birth rate and promote equity for youth sexual and reproductive health in Chicago. That effort, included in Healthy Chicago 2.0, the city’s public health plan, includes a number of evidence-based strategies to ensure every teenager has access to information and resources, from expanding comprehensive sexual health education to making condoms available in schools.

CDPH’s Chicago Healthy Adolescents and Teens (CHAT) program offers education on birth control, abstinence and healthy relationships in select CPS high schools, in addition to testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections. Since March 2015, CHAT has provided sexual health education to more than 32,000 youth and screened more than 18,000 youth in high schools, colleges and community based organizations throughout the city. In 2015, CDPH was awarded a five-year, \$5 million grant by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to assess the impact of the program on youth sexual and reproductive health outcomes. In July of 2017, HHS made the decision to defund the federal Teen Prevention Program entirely at the conclusion of year three (June 30, 2018). This represents a \$2 million loss in funding and shortens the rigorous evaluation by two years.

“In spite of these short-sighted, politically motivated cuts from the Trump administration, Chicago will continue to advocate for our youth to ensure they receive the information and resources they need to stay healthy,” Mayor Emanuel continued.

In May, in observance of Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month, CDPH launched the second phase of the award winning Chicago Wears Condoms campaign and a social media campaign to educate teens most at risk for STIs and unplanned pregnancies. The Chicago Wears Condoms campaign, originally launched in 2015 and was honored by the Obie advertising awards, is a citywide condom education and prevention campaign developed in partnership with youth from Mikva Challenge’s teen health council and Serve Marketing. The campaign includes a comprehensive social media effort, website, billboards and CTA ads on buses and trains to engage youth on the south, west and southwest sides.

For the latest teen birth rate data visit www.chicagohealthatlas.org.

To see other data on maternal, child and adolescent key indicators and reports, please visit <http://www.healthychicagobabies.org/data.html>

For more information on teen pregnancy prevention visit ChatAboutIt.org and <http://chicagowearscondoms.com/>.

To view the Local Reproductive Freedom Index [click here](#).

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