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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES TEEN BIRTHRATE AT HISTORIC LOW

New data demonstrates eighth year of consecutive declines

Mayor Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) today announced teen births are at a historic low in Chicago. This milestone comes after eight consecutive years of decline. In 2014, the most recent year for which data is available, there were 32 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years old, more than a 62 percent drop from the 85.2 rate in 1999. Even though Chicago's teen birth rate is higher than the national average, which is also dropping, that gap is closing as Chicago's teen birthrate has dropped 20 percent more than national rates.

"This is an important step in the right direction as Chicago continues to work towards fewer teen births," Mayor Emanuel said. "Every teen in this city deserves resources and education so they can make informed choices."

While Chicago has seen declines in teen births across all racial and ethnic groups since 2010, African American teens have seen the most compelling decline during that time, from more than 72 births per 1,000 females to just 41, which represents a 44 percent drop overall.

"These historic declines are good news for babies, teens and Chicago," said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "By providing teens with resources, information and support they need, we can drive these numbers down even further, ensuring every teenager has a chance to be teenager."

Becoming pregnant early in life can lead to challenges for birth parents and their children. Studies 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. Children born to teen mothers are also 50 percent more likely to repeat a grade and are less likely to complete high school than children of older mothers.

"We know that delaying parenthood beyond the teen years helps keep young people in school," said CPS Office of Student Health and Wellness Chief Health Officer Kenneth Fox, M.D. "The CPS comprehensive Sexual Health & Wellness curriculum is vital to those efforts. When teens reach important educational milestones like graduation, they benefit from increased opportunities for themselves and their families."

Despite this good news, disparities persist at both the local and national levels in the rates of teen births and other sexual health outcomes, like sexually transmitted infections. CDPH has launched a comprehensive effort to further reduce the teen birth rate and promote equity for youth sexual and reproductive health in Chicago.

- Last year, CDPH, in partnership with CPS, developed a [website](#) to empower youth by providing medically accurate, age appropriate sexual and reproductive health information and resources, designed with youth input.
- The city's public health plan, [Healthy Chicago 2.0](#), outlines 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.
- Healthy Chicago 2.0 focuses on improving health outcomes through strategic partnerships like the department's collaboration with Planned Parenthood of Illinois to implement the Chicago Healthy Adolescents and Teens (CHAT) [program](#) offering education on birth control, abstinence and healthy relationships in select CPS high schools, in addition to testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections. In 2015, CDPH was awarded funding by the US Department of Health and Human Services to assess the impact of the program on youth sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

"Everyone, regardless of age, should have access to high-quality, nonjudgmental health care," said Jennifer Welch, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Illinois.

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 which 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 more information on teen pregnancy prevention visit [ChatAboutIt.org](#) and [ChicagoWearsCondoms.com](#).

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

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