

# Oklahoma Alert: Federal budget cuts endanger teen health



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Teen pregnancy is preventable, yet Oklahoma has provided no state funding to address this issue in well over a decade. Support for evidence-based prevention programs has come primarily from federal funding, now in danger of elimination, and from foundation grants. Oklahoma City, Tulsa, other communities and several tribes have made teen pregnancy prevention a priority – building strong partnerships, investing in effective programs and expanding health services. The results are very clear – *their efforts are working!*

## Trends in Oklahoma teen birth numbers

<u>Ages</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
14 & younger	91	101	64	66	69	58	43	49	43	32
15 – 17	2,167	1,917	1,684	1,667	1,517	1,269	1,225	1,100	964	818
18 – 19	5,112	4,573	4,335	4,176	3,792	3,523	3,166	3,146	2,822	2,662
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,370</b>	<b>6,591</b>	<b>6,083</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>5,379</b>	<b>4,850</b>	<b>4,434</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>3,829</b>	<b>3,512</b>

## A closer look at the 2018 teen birth numbers

Oklahoma had 3,512 births to teens aged 19 and younger in 2018, a decrease of 8% from 2017. One-fourth (24%) of the births were to teens aged 17 and younger, 32 of them occurred among 10 to 14 year-olds. Three-fourths (76%) were births for older teens, aged 18 to 19. Half (50%) of the teens had not finished high school, and nearly one birth in every five (17%) was to a girl who was already a parent.

**Reducing teen and unintended pregnancies is a smart, cost-effective strategy for improving health, education and economic outcomes.**

### Number of births by birth order

1 <sup>st</sup> birth	2,920
2 <sup>nd</sup> birth	493
3 <sup>rd</sup> birth	81
4 <sup>th</sup> birth	11
5 <sup>th</sup> birth	-

### Percentage of births by race/ethnicity

White	67%
Black	15%
American Indian	16%
Asian	1%
Hispanic*	21%

### 2018 birth rates\*\*

<u>Age</u>	<u>OK</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
15 – 19	27.2	17.4
15 – 17	10.7	7.2
18 – 19	52.4	32.3

\* Hispanic may be of any race  
\*\* Rates = number of births per 1,000 females the same age

Sources: Oklahoma State Dept. of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics 2018  
National Center for Health Statistics/CDC, *Births: Final Data for 2018*, December 2019

For more information contact: **Healthy Teens OK! at Oklahoma KIDS COUNT**  
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# Teen births in Oklahoma are declining -- but funding cuts threaten progress.



In 2018, Oklahoma remained among the states with the highest teen birth rates, ranked **46<sup>th</sup>** overall (15-19), **45<sup>th</sup>** for younger teens (15-17), and **48<sup>th</sup>** for older teens (18-19). This means, Oklahoma had the...

- **5<sup>th</sup> highest** birth rate to teens, ages 15 – 19.
- **6<sup>th</sup> highest** birth rate to young teens, ages 15 – 17.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> highest** birth rate to older teens, ages 18 – 19.

## States with the highest birth rates for ages 15-19 in 2018:

<b>OKLAHOMA</b>	<b>27.2</b>
Kentucky	27.3
Louisiana	27.5
Mississippi	27.8
Arkansas	30.4
<b>U.S. Average</b>	<b>17.4</b>

## Priorities for action:

- Where teen birth rates/ numbers are highest
- Youth at **greatest risk** for early sexual activity
- Children and youth growing up in **poverty**
- Children experiencing **early school failure** or **family dysfunction**

## Groups with high teen birth numbers and rates:

**School dropouts** - 30% of girls cite pregnancy/parenting as the reason

**Older teens (18-19)** – nearly *three-fourths* of all teen births each year

**System-involved youth (state foster care and juvenile justice, or county juvenile bureau systems)** – very vulnerable and underserved

**Victims of sexual abuse** - in national studies, two-thirds of teen mothers indicate their first sexual intercourse was *non-consensual* and occurred *between ages 9-12*; preventing child sexual abuse is critical!

**Teen parents** – one in every five teen births is a subsequent birth

**Siblings of teen parents** - at high risk of becoming a teen parent

**Disconnected youth** - young people who are not connected to school or work have the greatest potential for risk-taking behaviors

## Effective ways to reduce teen birth numbers and rates in your community:

- **Expand high quality, evidence-based, well-evaluated programs** that provide medically-accurate, age appropriate information by trained health educators in safe, caring settings -- and show they work!
- **Build partnerships** like Thrive OKC ([thriveokc.org](http://thriveokc.org)), Teen emPower Inc. ([teenempower.org](http://teenempower.org)), Take Control Initiative ([takecontrolok.org](http://takecontrolok.org)), Tulsa Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy ([tulsacampaign.org](http://tulsacampaign.org)), Youth Services of Tulsa ([yst.org](http://yst.org)) and J.A.M.E.S. Inc. ([jamesinc.org](http://jamesinc.org)). Check: [healthyteensok.org](http://healthyteensok.org)
- **Use the latest research and resources** from the Power To Decide (Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy), [powertodecide.org](http://powertodecide.org); the Healthy Teen Network, [healthyteennetwork.org](http://healthyteennetwork.org); and the Annie E. Casey Foundation/KIDS COUNT Data Center, [datacenter.kidscount.org/data#OK/2/0](http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#OK/2/0)
- **Engage youth as leaders in prevention**, check Forum for Youth Investment: [www.readyby21.org](http://www.readyby21.org)