



# INVESTING IN YOUTH



Teen  
emPower!

# ABOUT Teen emPower!

Teen emPower! Inc. (TEI) is the only direct-service nonprofit in the Oklahoma City metro area with an **18-year record of success providing high-quality sexual health education for middle and high school youth**, helping them build healthy relationships, increase their decision-making skills, and manage the peer and social pressures during their adolescent years. TEI's programs have **served more than 21,000 students** in the Oklahoma City, Mid-Del, and

Crooked Oak school districts, many of whom face a disproportionate burden of health, education, and economic disparities. The lack of access to information, resources, and services creates barriers that limit their healthy growth and development.

Evaluations by university research teams have continued to document the positive results of our programs and partnerships.

**Our programs work!**

## THE ISSUE

Oklahoma continues to have one of the highest teen birth rates in the country. Oklahoma County has the largest number of births to teens each year, resulting in far too many young people who are unable to complete their education, are unprepared to be parents, lack the ability to support a family, and face limited opportunities for the future.

The good news: births to teens in Oklahoma County have been **reduced by over 50%** during the last decade, due in part to TEI's innovative peer education program, effective school and community partnerships, and collaborative approach to promoting adolescent health. Our programs have a **strong track record of success.**



**MISSION:**  
**Empower, educate  
and motivate  
adolescents to make  
informed decisions  
for their sexual  
health**



# NEED

Teen birth rates are considered a key indicator of the health and well-being of children and youth. In 2020, Oklahoma's teen birth rate ranked 47th in the nation. Only three states had higher (worse) rates.

Until recently, Oklahoma had no requirement for health education and remains one of 21 states that does not require any sexual health education in middle or high school.

**Oklahoma had the 4th highest teen birth rate in the nation in 2020.**

The consequences of teen pregnancy and parenting can include low educational attainment, lack of employment skills, serious health problems, family instability, and poverty – **often, for a lifetime.**

Other issues for young people resulting from a lack of quality sexual health education can include unhealthy relationships, dating violence, STIs, sexual victimization, and sexual abuse.

## Teen Birth Rates in 2020

United States 15.4 / 1000

Oklahoma 25.0 / 1000

Oklahoma County 27.4 / 1000

*\*Source: (CDC/National Center for Health Statistics, <http://healthyteensok.org/>)*



Learning about consent, assertiveness techniques, and decision-making skills that **help avoid risk-taking situations** and behaviors is important information that teens need during their adolescent years and will use as adults.

Can just kissing someone get you pregnant?

# WHAT WE DO

TEI's innovative peer education program, SHAPE (Sexual Health And Peer Education), helps middle school youth build confidence and decision-making skills in managing social and peer pressures, media messages, and relationships.

Since 2008, **more than 200 high school peer educators and 10,000 students in 7th grade** have participated in this popular and successful program.



## PARTNERSHIPS

TEI partners with the **Oklahoma City-County Health Department, Variety Care Teen Clinic, the Hudson College of Public Health at the University of Oklahoma**, and a dozen Oklahoma County middle and high schools on initiatives that provide quality adolescent sexual health programs for thousands of area youth.

The most recent project, **REACH (Reproductive Education to Achieve Community Health)**, was funded by a teen pregnancy prevention grant from the **HHS/ Office of Population Affairs**, with support from the **Kirkpatrick Family Fund**.

# IMPACT

An investment in Teen emPower! pays a big dividend for our youth and community! Evaluations of our programs have consistently documented their importance to the health and safety of the middle and high school participants.

Check: [teenempower.org/our-impact/](https://teenempower.org/our-impact/)

Teen emPower! has received awards from the College of Education & Professional Studies at the University of Central Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Public Health Association in recognition of our outstanding adolescent health programs.

*“TEI is a community-builder in the classroom. These programs help students in making decisions and protecting themselves, teaching them for their future, giving them a voice -- they become self-advocates.”*

~ 7th Grade Teacher

Teen EmPower!, Inc. is a **local grassroots nonprofit** making a big impact. We focus solely on **education and prevention**. Ours is the only program in the state that uses an effective, **school-based peer education model**.







To support Teen emPower! and the youth in our community, please send your check to the address below or donate online at [teenempower.org/donate/](https://teenempower.org/donate/)





# WE NEED YOU

**GET IN  
TOUCH**

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**STAY IN  
TOUCH**

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