

## The Black Church and Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy:



VALUES  
PARTNERSHIPS



The National Campaign  
to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

# What Are the Facts and Why Does It Matter?

### What do we mean by teen pregnancy?

**Teen pregnancy**, quite simply, is when a girl or young woman between the ages of 13 – 19 becomes pregnant. Teen pregnancy is a critical issue because it impacts both the woman and her partner's future and that of their family and community.

### What do we mean by unplanned pregnancy?

When we say **unplanned pregnancy**, we're referring to a pregnancy that a woman herself says happened when she didn't want to get pregnant at all or didn't want to get pregnant at that time. Unplanned pregnancy is most prevalent among unmarried women in their twenties but can include women of all ages.

### Why does teen and unplanned pregnancy matter?

Research shows that having an unplanned pregnancy as a teen or in one's twenties has a huge impact on a woman, her partner, family, and community.

- 62% of girls who become pregnant before age 18 fail to get a high school diploma.
- Daughters of teen mothers are 3x more likely to become teen parents themselves.
- 67% of teen mothers who move out of their families' home live below the poverty line.
- Children born to teen parents perform worse on math and reading assessments.
- Unplanned pregnancy among young adults can interrupt education and career planning and limit opportunities.

### Is teen and unplanned pregnancy a real problem in the Black community?

There has been great progress made in reducing teen and unplanned pregnancy, especially among Black teens and young adults—but there is more work to do, and we need help from church leaders.

- Births among Black teen girls have declined 49% since 2007 and 73% since 1991.
- But there are 32 births per 1,000 Black teen girls, which is still far too high.
- In 2011, 45% of all pregnancies were unintended.
- Taxpayers spend an average of \$9.4 billion annually on teen childbearing.

### What does this have to do with the Black church?

The Black church has historically been a place where we can discuss tough issues in our community—and find solutions. Young women and men who are pregnant or who are at risk of becoming pregnant/causing a pregnancy often feel worried or alone and are looking for support; leaders in the church are uniquely positioned to provide resources and comfort as well as guidance and leadership to these young people.

### Does this work have anything to do with abortion?

No. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy does not work on abortion issues, focusing instead on prevention and contraception, support, education, and public policy.

### How can I learn more?

Visit [TheNationalCampaign.org/blackchurch](http://TheNationalCampaign.org/blackchurch) for more information and to get involved.