



## Postcard: Teen Pregnancy Affects Graduation Rates

6/17/2013

### Not Making the Grade: Academic Achievement Difficult for Teen Parents

Thirty percent of all teenage girls who drop out of school cite pregnancy and parenthood as key reasons. For Hispanic (36 percent) and African American (38 percent) girls are higher. Educational achievement affects the income of teen mothers: two-thirds of families started by teens are poor, and nearly one in four will depend on public assistance within three years of a child's birth. Many children will not escape this cycle of poverty. Only about two-thirds of children born to teen mothers earn a high school diploma, compared to 81 percent of their peers with older parents.

### The Numbers Don't Add Up to Success

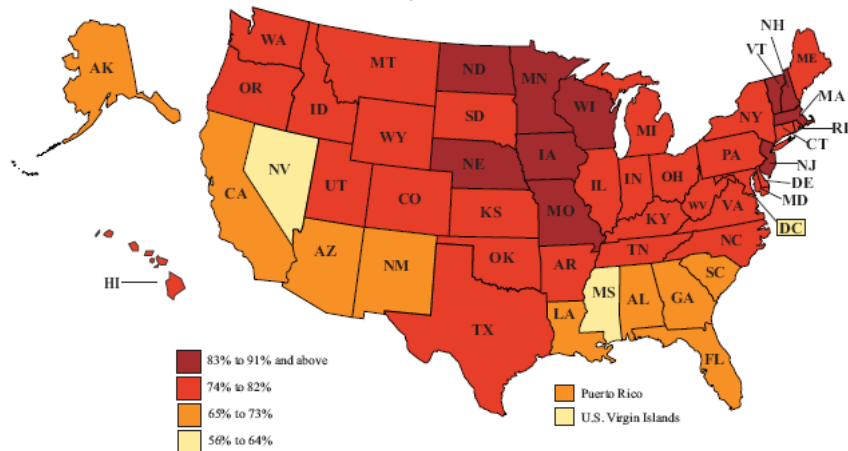
- Only 40 percent of teen mothers finish high school. Fewer than 2 percent finish college by age 30.
- Young women who give birth while attending a community college are 65 percent less likely to complete a degree than women who do not have children during that time.
- Children of teen mothers perform worse on many measures of school readiness, are 50 percent more likely to repeat a grade, and are more likely than children born to older mothers to drop out of high school.

### State Policy Options

- Incorporate teen pregnancy prevention into state efforts to reduce the dropout rate and improve educational attainment.
- Educate community college students about the importance of pregnancy planning for college success through orientation, first year experience, academic courses, service learning, or other activities.
- Develop access to online courses, flexible scheduling and other services to help young mothers earn school diplomas or GEDs.
- Make full and effective use of federal funding for teen pregnancy prevention through the Personal Responsibility Education Program, Title V Abstinence Education Program, and the Pregnancy Assistance Fund. In states that have received pregnancy assistance grants to support pregnant and parenting teens and women with their education.

**Sources:** The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, "Preventing Teen Pregnancy: Improving School Completion," Briefly... (Washington, D.C.) July 2010; The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, "Unplanned Pregnancy: What Community Colleges Can Do," Briefly... (Washington, D.C.) March 2010.

### Teen Pregnancy Affects Graduation Rates Average Freshman Graduation Rate of Public High School Students, School Year 2008-2009



#### NCSL Member Toolbox

##### Members Resources

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- Staff Directories
- StateConnect Directory

##### Policy & Research Resources

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- Legislative Websites
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##### Accessibility Support

- Tel: 1-800-659-2656 or 711
- Accessibility Support
- Accessibility Policy

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- Calendar
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