



GEORGIA CAMPAIGN FOR  
ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PREVENTION  
INSPIRED FUTURES WITHIN REACH

## WHY PREVENTION MATTERS:

# Teen Pregnancy & Chatham's Economy

## Teen Pregnancy in Chatham County has cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

- Between 1991 and 2004, teen births in Georgia cost taxpayers a total of **\$5.7 billion**.<sup>1</sup>
- Teen births in Chatham County in 2004 alone cost taxpayers a total of **\$10.2 million**.<sup>2</sup>
- Chatham's teen pregnancy and repeat teen pregnancy rates exceed the state average.<sup>3,4</sup>

## Teen Pregnancy (Ages 15 to 19) in Chatham County<sup>3,4</sup>

County	# of pregnancies	Rate / 1,000	% Repeat Pregnancies
Chatham	670	78.1	32.8
GA	21,058	67.0	28.5

## How was the money spent?

Teen parents are often ill-equipped to support a family. Teen mothers commonly rely on state support services for financial assistance. Most of the public costs of teen childbearing are associated with harmful consequences for the children. In Georgia in 2004, costs associated with children born to teen mothers included:

- \$66 million for public health care
- \$44 million for foster care and other child welfare services
- \$65 million for incarceration costs for the sons of teenage parents
- \$114 million in lost tax revenue due to decreased earnings and spending.<sup>1</sup>

## How is teen pregnancy linked to economic issues of critical interest to Chatham County?

- In Chatham County, over 32% of teen pregnancies are repeat pregnancies.<sup>4</sup> Having multiple children can compound the challenges young mothers face to finish school or keep a job.
- Less than 4 out of 10 young mothers ever complete high school, making teen pregnancy a major contributor to high school drop out rates.<sup>5</sup> High school drop-outs are less likely to be employed and have significantly lower earnings than those with at least a high school degree.
- In Chatham County, 89% of teens ages 15 to 19 who gave birth in 2005 were unmarried.<sup>6</sup> Children in single-parent households have a higher risk of living in poverty.<sup>7</sup>



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**THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE:**

# Investing in teen pregnancy prevention is sound fiscal policy

**The teen birth rate in Georgia declined 30 percent between 1991 and 2004, saving taxpayers an estimated \$227 million in 2004 alone.<sup>1</sup>**

Preventing teen pregnancy is a cost-effective strategy for creating a competitive workforce, fighting child poverty, and reducing overall state and local government expenditures in Georgia.

**Chatham County's teen pregnancy rate has declined an impressive 27 percent in the past decade.<sup>3</sup>**

We've proven that we can make a difference in the teen pregnancy rate in Chatham County. By continuing to make progress in reducing the teen pregnancy rate, we will not only improve the well-being of our children, families and communities, but we will also reduce the burden on taxpayers.

## How can business leaders help keep Chatham moving in the right direction?

- 1 Teens who have high hopes for their future are less likely to become involved in a teen pregnancy. Partner with local schools to make the connection between academics and career opportunities a reality for students through internships and mentoring programs.
- 2 Host an educational meeting for your employees about teen pregnancy prevention.
- 3 Write an article for your local newspaper or Chamber of Commerce newsletter about how teen pregnancy impacts economic development.
- 4 Support the county and state's investment in proven-effective teen pregnancy prevention efforts, including teen-friendly public health services, health education, and youth development initiatives, especially for our most vulnerable youth.
- 5 Be a champion for local community-driven prevention programs and initiatives in Chatham County.



<sup>1</sup>The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2006). *By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Georgia*. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

<sup>2</sup>The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2008). *By the Numbers Calculator*. Retrieved on April 1, 2008 from <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/costs/calculator.asp>.

<sup>3</sup>Georgia DHR, Division of Public Health, Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS). *Pregnancies and Pregnancy Rate, Ages 15-19, 2005*. Retrieved April 1, 2008 from <http://oasis.state.ga.us/oasis/qryMCH.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup>Georgia DHR, Division of Public Health, Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS). *Repeat Pregnancies and Percent, Ages 15-19, 2005*. Retrieved April 1, 2008 from <http://oasis.state.ga.us/oasis/qryMCH.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup>The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2002). *Not Just Another Single Issue: Teen Pregnancy's Link to Other Critical Social Issues*. Washington, D.C.: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

<sup>6</sup>Georgia DHR, Division of Public Health, Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS). *Births to Unmarried Females and Percent, Ages 15-19, 2005*. Retrieved April 1, 2008 from <http://oasis.state.ga.us/oasis/qryMCH.aspx>.

<sup>7</sup>The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2004). *Teen Pregnancy—So What?* Washington, D.C.: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.