Effects Of Teenage Pregnancy Essay, Research Paper

The Effects of Teenage Pregnancy

The high level of teenage births continues to create numerous problems for social services, parents and the public at large. At the beginning of a new century, reducing teenage childbearing remains a challenge to social scientists, service providers and public officials. An organization named, The National Campaign to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy, have provided statistics listed on the internet. The research is broken down by individual states as well. The overall findings inidicate that birth rates have dcreased in the United States as a whole , for six consecutive years, (1992-1997). In 1997, the teenage birth rate was 52.9% births per 1000 females ages 15-19. The year 1997, is the most recent year for which data is available. This rate represents a siginificant 15% decrease since 1991. Althugh, the 1997 teenage birth rate is still higher than the 1986 rate of 50.2%, the lowest in more than half a century. In an effort to aim for a lower percentage in teenage pregnancy, the research from the following psycholgists and authors providing valuable information; can give a clear understanding of what remains to be done in the cultural, political and programs arena.

In a survey completed in the Illinois High Schools, Grades 9-12, 1995) students were asked the following questions regarding sexual activity and contaceptive use. 1st Question Have you ever had sexual intercourse? The survey showed 46% females and 51% males said yes. A liitle over 50% of those students did not use any form of contraceptive. (TNCTPTP) Every 31 seconds, an adolescent becomes pregnant and every 2 minutes one gives birth in the United States The United States adolsecent birth rates is the highest among western Countries and approximately one million teens under 18 years of age became pregnant. (Hardy and Zabin , 1991)

Those statitics are frightening, but the more imporant statistic is just under 50% of those teens gave birth and 90% keep their children. Due to lack of pre-natal care and the lack of knowledge concerning inappropiate child care techniques , teenage mothers are 1.4 likely to experience death of their infants. Some of those inappropiate techniques were due to alcohol, tobacco or other drug use, following birth and prior to the birth of the child. (C.Lambert, 1998). Some of the disruptions teenage mother face are school completion , economic self-sufficiency and restricted resources limiting the quality of life she an offer the child. Adolescent mother are still trying to resolve conflicts due to they re being a child. The morther s ability to cope is heavily dependent on social support received. Overall, the teenage mother has demonstrated limited knowledge about children and theor developmental process . Due to basic emotional immaturity and inexperience with child-rearing , teenage mothers are less nurturing than adult mothers and can place their child at risk for abuse.

Understanding that teenage girls are in jeopardy , due to some of the following factors, gives a clearer picture of reasons for this upheaval in their life. Teenage girls are more likely to develpo eating disorders, abuse drugs and alcohol, drop out of school; thus are at greater risk of depression and suicide attempts. According to the studies of Joan Jacobs Brumberg, between the ages of 11 and

16 , girls self-confidence and self-esteem crumbles, physically and

mentally. Joan Brumberg s study involved the readings of middle-class diaries, the writings of physicians, and other women directing mothers how to raise daughters. Out of this research cane a theory that the declining age at menarche is central to understanding the adolescent girls. A hundred years ago sexual awakening could occur in college . Today typical girls menarche is happening at the age of 12 where hormonal upheaval begins in midle school. However, though the physical hormonal changes are happening at an earlier age, the accerlation in girls emotional and cognitive skills are not parallel. the funstions of being able to think abstractly , make judements and move beyond ego-centric are still in ealry stages. Teenage girls may look mature but essentially still think child-like. Our society ar large doesn t make a special effort for this lag between the biological and intellectual development. This ealry physical maturation increases vulnerability for all kinds of physiological and social problems. Depression and association with older age groups can provide the tendency for early sexual activity and drug or alcohol abuse. Young women are less protected than a century ago.

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