

Policy Priorities 87th Legislative Session

Add contraception as a covered benefit in CHIP

56,428

Females aged
15 - 18 enrolled
in CHIP in FY 18

Texas has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in the nation. However, in the last decade, the teen birth rate has declined by an astonishing 50%. Research is clear that contraception is a key factor in this decrease -- but not all young women in Texas have equal access to birth control. **Texas is one of only two states that does not cover birth control in the Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP).**

1,600

experienced a
pregnancy
by FY 19

Approximately 56,000 girls aged 15-18 are covered by CHIP in Texas. Among the cohort of teens enrolled in CHIP in FY 2018, 1,600 became pregnant by the end of FY 19. Though pregnancy rates are low amongst young teens, **3% of 17 year olds girls and 6% of 18 year old girls covered by CHIP in FY 18 experienced a pregnancy by FY 19.** Cost estimates associated with expanding coverage for birth control in CHIP project fiscal savings due to preventing unintended pregnancies which would be funded by Medicaid. Older teens on CHIP may be pursuing dreams such as enrolling in college or entering the workforce. They deserve support towards their goals, including access to contraception.

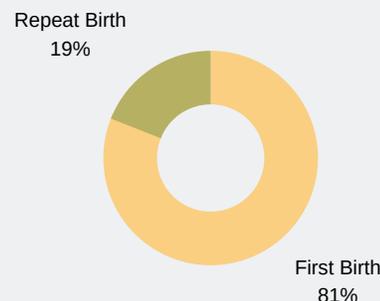
Let teen mothers consent to birth control

Texas has the highest rate of repeat teen births nationwide. In 2018, of the 25,000 births to Texas teens aged 15-19, **19% were to girls who already had at least one child.** While teen parents can complete their education, attain career goals, and achieve their potential, it becomes harder with each additional unintended birth.

A teen mother has a legal right and duty to consent to all medical care for her child and make important health-related decisions. However, under Texas state law, if she is under the age of 18, **she is not allowed to consent to her own contraception.** Research shows that having one birth during adolescence is a strong risk factor for future unintended and untimely pregnancies. For this reason, even states that require parental consent for birth control usually empower minors who have experienced pregnancy or given birth to be responsible for their own contraceptive needs.

Allowing teen mothers to consent to birth control would result in cost savings. A large majority of births to unmarried adolescents and young adults are covered by Medicaid. Teen mothers deserve support and help towards meeting their life goals -- including tools needed to avoid a repeat unplanned pregnancy.

Repeat Teen Births in Texas, 2018



Nearly 1 in 5 births to Texas teens are a repeat birth, the highest rate in the U.S.

Support funding and enrollment for reproductive healthcare

Texas funds access to reproductive healthcare through a variety of programs, including Medicaid, CHIP, Healthy Texas Women, and the Family Planning Program. The Texas Campaign works with partners to provide support and advocacy to ensure strong funding for these critical programs. Additionally, we support program improvements that decrease barriers to entry and streamline access for the populations served.

The Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, a statewide nonpartisan organization founded in 2009, aims to reduce teen pregnancy through research, advocacy, collaboration and training. Our work helps expand opportunity, creates positive social change, and allows young people to be stronger contributors to their communities