

Facts For Teens About...

Sexual Activity

- ◆ Abstinence means saying NO to sexual intercourse. It is the most effective, least expensive way to protect yourself from sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy. Even if you have had sex before, you can choose to become abstinent. Nationally, more than half of teenagers are virgins until they are at least 17 years old.¹
- ◆ Among 9-12th grade students who have had sexual intercourse, more than one in four (27%) say they are currently abstinent. Males (31%) are more likely than females (24%) to report being currently abstinent.²
- ◆ In the U.S., 7 in 10 females who had sex before age 14 and 6 in 10 females who had sex before the age of 15 report having had sex involuntarily.³
- ◆ Additionally, among women who had sex before reaching age 13, 71% report that it was unwanted and 23% report that it was involuntary. In general, the younger teens are when they first have sex, the more likely they are to report the experience as unwanted and/or involuntary.⁴
- ◆ Nationally, in 1999, 37% of 9th grade students and 65% of 12th grade students reported being sexually active.⁵
- ◆ In 2001, 17% of 9th grade females and 22% of 9th grade males in Minnesota public schools reported being sexually active.⁶ Also in Minnesota, 49% of 12th grade females and 48% of 12th grade males reported being sexually active.⁷
- ◆ In a recent survey of teens aged 15-19, 55%--including some who had not had vaginal intercourse--reported having engaged in oral sex.⁸
- ◆ "I don't want to get an STI" and "One or both of my parents would object" are the most common reasons why male students in Minnesota said they are not sexually active. Among female students, "I don't want to get pregnant" and "I don't want to get an STI" were the major reasons for abstaining from sex.⁹

Contraceptive Use

- ◆ A sexually active teenager who doesn't use contraception has a 90% chance of getting pregnant within one year.¹⁰
- ◆ Nearly ¾ of teens use some method of contraception – usually a condom – the first time they have sex.¹¹
- ◆ Most sexually experienced teenage males use condoms, nearly half do not use them every time they have sexual intercourse. The older a teenage male is, the less likely he is to use a condom every time he has sexual intercourse.¹²
- ◆ Among Minnesota students who reported being sexually active, more 12th graders than 9th graders report using some sort of contraceptive method during the last time they had sex. However, only about half of these 12th and 9th grade students spoke to every sexual partner about using protection to prevent STIs, and HIV/AIDS.¹³

Pregnancy and Birth

- ◆ In the U.S., 4 in 10 young women become pregnant at least once before turning 20 years old. There are nearly one million teen pregnancies each year and about half as many births.¹⁴
- ◆ In Minnesota, 7,721 teens under age 20 became pregnant in 2000 (an average of 21 teen pregnancies every day). Teen pregnancies account for 10% of all pregnancies in the state.¹⁵
- ◆ Of the almost one million teens in the U.S. who become pregnant each year, 52% give birth, 25% choose abortion, and 14% miscarry.¹⁶ One estimate suggests that among unmarried mothers younger than 17, only about 8% of infants are placed for adoption.¹⁷
- ◆ Teens account for 13% of all births in the country.¹⁸ In 2000, 5,396 teens gave birth in Minnesota.¹⁹
- ◆ Many of the fathers of children born to teen mothers are older – nearly 40% of those young men who impregnate a minor teen (under age 18) are 20 years old or older.²⁰

Consequences of Teen Childbearing

- ◆ Twenty-five percent of teen mothers have a second child within two years of their first.²¹
- ◆ Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school. Only 1/3 receive a high school diploma. Teen mothers are also more likely to end up on welfare – an estimated 80% of unmarried teen mothers rely on welfare at least sometime in their lives.²²
- ◆ Children of teen mothers are at an increased risk of mental retardation, low birthweight, prematurity, poverty, growing up without a father, welfare dependency, poor school performance, insufficient health care, inadequate parenting, abuse and neglect.²³

- ◆ The sons of teen mothers are 13% more likely to end up in prison while daughters are 22% more likely to become teen mothers, themselves.²⁴

STIs and HIV/AIDS

- ◆ Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), aren't about a certain "type" of person. STIs and HIV are commonly spread through the direct exchange of two people's bodily fluids (e.g., blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk), including those bodily fluids exchanged via oral sex. Also, a pregnant woman can pass HIV to her fetus.
- ◆ In the U.S., approximately 1 in 4 sexually active teens become infected with an STI every year.²⁵ Some common STIs are chlamydia, gonorrhea, genital warts (also known as HPV - human papillomavirus), and herpes. In Minnesota in 2000, teens under age 20 accounted for 34% of all cases of chlamydia, 28% of all cases of gonorrhea, and 3% of all cases of syphilis.²⁶
- ◆ As of December 1997, more than 3,130 U.S. teenagers between ages 13 and 19 were diagnosed with AIDS.²⁷
- ◆ In Minnesota in the year 2001, six new cases of HIV infections (which includes both HIV and AIDS) were reported among 13-19 year olds, and as of the end of 2001 in the state of Minnesota there were 24 people between the ages of 13 and 19 living with HIV or AIDS.²⁸ Many people are infected with HIV for years before they actually seek testing and become aware of their HIV status. This is especially true for teenagers. As a result, the reported number of HIV infections among youth (13-24 year olds) is likely to underestimate the true number of new infections occurring in teenagers during their teen years.
- ◆ Of all new HIV infections, at least half are estimated to be among those under the age of 25. Among those aged 13-19, teen girls represent 54% of new AIDS cases. African Americans represent 64% and Latinos represent 20% of new AIDS cases in this age group.²⁹
- ◆ Treatments for STIs vary. For example, chlamydia, trichomoniasis, gonorrhea and syphilis are treated with antibiotics; external genital warts can be frozen off with liquid nitrogen but will not rid the virus; and there is no cure for herpes. Medications also exist to reduce outbreaks.³⁰
- ◆ Many people who have an STI, like chlamydia or HIV, don't feel sick. In fact, they may have no symptoms at all. The best way to reduce your risk of getting an STI is to use latex condoms and to get tested if you have any doubts. In addition, spermicides containing Nonoxynol-9 are no longer recommended for preventing STIs.³¹

Remember: ABSTINENCE (not having sexual intercourse including oral, anal and vaginal) gives you 100% protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS. (But be sure no semen, vaginal secretions, or blood are exchanged.) Learn about your options to make the right choices about your future!

For confidential information about birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, and affordable clinic referrals, call the Minnesota Family Planning and STI Hotline at (800) 78-FACTS

NOTE: Under Minnesota law, a minor does NOT need parental consent to get tested or treated for a pregnancy and STIs [Minn. Stat. §144.343(1)], or to get birth control [Op. Atty. Gen. 494-6-39, 8/25/72].

This fact sheet was prepared by the Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting. For more information contact the MOAPPP InfoExchange at 651.644.1447 or toll free in Minnesota 800.657.3697.

You can also send us an e-mail at moapp@moapp.org or visit us on the Web at www.moapp.org.

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¹ *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance* – US, 1999, MMWR vol. 49 no. 49 SS-5, US Dept. of Health & Human Services.

² *Teen Sexual Activity Fact Sheet*, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, August 2000.

³ *Facts in Brief: Teen Sex and Pregnancy*, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1998.

⁴ *A Statistical Portrait of Adolescent Sex, Contraception, and Childbearing*, Moore, et al., 1998.

⁵ *1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, see CDC, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance – United States 1999. <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov>

⁶ Sexually active is defined as having had sexual intercourse one or more times. It does not necessarily mean that the teen is currently having sex.

⁷ *Minnesota Student Survey*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 2001.

⁸ *Teen Sexual Activity Fact Sheet*, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, August 2000.

⁹ *Minnesota Student Survey*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 2001.

¹⁰ *Not Just for Girls: The Roles of Boys and Men in Teen Pregnancy*, K.A. Moore and A. Driscoll, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC, 1997.

¹¹ *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance* – US, 1999, MMWR vol. 49 no. SS-5, US Dept. of Health & Human Services.

¹² *Minnesota Student Survey*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 2001.

¹³ *Minnesota Student Survey*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 2001.

¹⁴ *Fact Sheet: Recent Trends in Teen Pregnancy, Sexual Activity, and Contraceptive Use*, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Feb. 2002.

¹⁵ *Minnesota Student Survey*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, 2001.

¹⁶ *Facts and Stats on Teen Pregnancy*, National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC, 2000.

¹⁷ *Minnesota Student Survey*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, 1998.

¹⁸ *Not Just for Girls: The Roles of Boys and Men in Teen Pregnancy*, K.A. Moore and A. Driscoll, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC, 1997.

¹⁹ Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Center for Health Statistics, 2000.

²⁰ *What Happened to Childhood?* The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC, 1997.

²¹ *Not Just for Girls: The Roles of Boys and Men in Teen Pregnancy*, K.A. Moore and A. Driscoll, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC, 1997.

²² *HIV/STDS Surveillance Report*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, 1997.

²³ *Fact Sheet: Recent Trends in Teen Pregnancy, Sexual Activity, and Contraceptive Use*, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Feb. 2002.

²⁴ Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Center for Health Statistics, 2000.

²⁵ *Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Minnesota Surveillance Report*, Minnesota Department of Health, AIDS/STD Prevention Services Section, 1998.

²⁶ Minnesota Department of Health, AIDS/STD Prevention Services Section.

²⁷ *Whatever Happened to Childhood?* The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC, 1997.

²⁸ Minnesota Department of Health, AIDS/STD Prevention Services Section.

²⁹ *The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the United States*, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, July 2002.

³⁰ Minnesota Family Planning and STI Hotline, 1.800.78.FACTS.

³¹ Minnesota Family Planning and STI Hotline. 1.800.78.FACTS.