



Tom Barrett
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE
Commissioner of Health

Raquel M. Filmanowicz
Health Operations Administrator

Health Department

Family and Community Health Services

web site: www.milwaukee.gov/health

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Media Contact: Kwanza Newson
414-286-3548 Office
414-732-7250 Cell

Health Officials Announce Drop in Teen Birth Rate *City of Milwaukee on track to reduce Milwaukee's teen birth rate among 15-17 year olds by 46% by 2015*

Milwaukee's teen birth rate remains at a historically low level, health officials announced Thursday.

Data show that there were 46.73 births per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years old in 2008. This is a slight drop from 2007 when there were 47 births per 1,000 in the city.

The United Way of Greater Milwaukee and City of Milwaukee Health Department previously announced a goal to reduce the birth rate to 30 births per thousand teens 15-17 years by 2015.

The 2008 decline is attributed to expanded use of evidence-based education and prevention campaigns, including programs that target boys and parents of adolescents, the increased dissemination and implementation of faith-based strategies, and a continuous, bold public awareness campaign which included targeted TV, radio, print and outdoor tactics.

Health officials also say that increased funding and more widespread use of Human Growth and Development curriculum within MPS has had a positive impact within the community.

In addition, the City of Milwaukee Health Department's "No Condom, No Way" campaign continued its efforts to make condoms available, and to educate young people on responsible sexual decision-making. In 2008, 450,000 condoms and accompanying educational materials were distributed to Milwaukee youth.

"Our current teen birth rate improvement is encouraging, and is a definite step in the right direction," said Commissioner of Health Bevan Baker.

"It appears by all accounts that the tactics we're using are working," he said. "But we, as a community, must remain committed to this issue."

"I am pleased that the teen birth rate in the City of Milwaukee is continuing its downward trend," said Mayor Tom Barrett. "The education and prevention campaigns have done a commendable job of reducing the teen birth rate. Teenage pregnancy reduces educational and economic opportunities to the youth of our community, and we must continue our efforts to reduce the prevalence of teenage pregnancy."

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