

Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act S. XXXX (Udall-NM)/H.R. XXXX (Polis-CO)

Why Focus on Pregnant and Parenting Students in Education Reform?

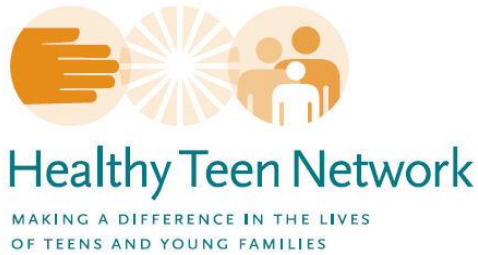
- Every year in the United States, there are approximately 750,000 teen pregnancies. Nearly 3 in 10 girls in the U.S. get pregnant at least once before age 20.
- Pregnancy and parenting responsibilities significantly increase a student's risk of dropping out of school. In a nationwide survey of dropout youth, 33% of female dropouts and almost 20% of male dropouts said that becoming a parent was a *major* factor in their decision to leave school.
- Parenting responsibilities impede students' graduation. Only 51% of women who gave birth as a teen have a high school diploma compared to 89% of women who did not have a teen birth.
- The dropout crisis experienced by this group of students has severe short- and long-term consequences for the economic success and well-being of their families and communities, as well as our nation. Ensuring the success of pregnant and parenting students is critical, not only for them but also for their children, who will be more likely to eventually drop out if their parents have done so.
- Pregnant and parenting teens face many barriers to enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school, such as discrimination, the challenge of juggling schoolwork with parenting responsibilities, and lack of access to child care, transportation, and other critical services.

Why Support the Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act?

- Providing supports for pregnant and parenting students can go a long way toward improving high school graduation rates, especially because pregnant and parenting students often are highly motivated. In the survey of dropout youth mentioned above, those who left school to care for a family member or because they became a parent were more likely than any other group of dropouts to say they would have worked harder if their schools had demanded more of them and provided the necessary supports.
- Eighty-one percent of all births to teens were first births and 16% were second births. The remainder were births to teens who had two or more previous births. For teen parents already struggling to finish their education, having another child can make it that much harder.

What Does the Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act Do?

- Authorizes necessary resources for states and school districts to ensure that pregnant and parenting students get the support and encouragement they need to stay in school and graduate college or career ready.
- Enables states to create a state plan for pregnant and parenting students, provide professional development and technical assistance to school districts, coordinate services with other state agencies, and disseminate information, among other activities.
- Establishes a state coordinator and school district liaisons for the education of pregnant and parenting students.
- Requires school district grantees to provide academic support services for pregnant and parenting students; assist students in gaining access to affordable child care, early childhood education, and transportation services; engage in student outreach, recruitment and retention; provide professional development for school personnel; and revise school policies and practices to remove barriers and encourage pregnant and parenting students to continue their education.



- Allows districts to provide parenting and life skills classes; case management services; pregnancy prevention strategies; referrals to primary health care, family planning, mental health, substance abuse, housing assistance, legal aid, mentoring, or other supportive services needed by the student; as well as to address school climate issues, including illegal discrimination against and stigmatization of pregnant and parenting students.
- Collects and reports data on pregnant and parenting students annually, including educational outcomes, and requires a rigorous evaluation of the program.

Who Supports the Pregnant and Parenting Student Access to Education Act?

(List in Formation)

- 9to5
- American Association of University Women (AAUW)
- American Sexual Health Association
- Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
- Equal Rights Advocates
- Healthy Teen Network
- Ms. Foundation for Women
- National Crittenton Foundation
- National Women's Law Center
- NAACP
- Our Bodies Ourselves
- Physicians for Reproductive Health
- RESULTS
- The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
- Women's Law Project
- Dependency Legal Group of San Diego (California)
- San Francisco Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (California)
- EyesOpenIowa
- Georgia Women for a Change
- Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
- SMART (Single Mother Academic Resource Team) (Oklahoma)
- Inwood House (New York City, NY)
- Division of Adolescent Medicine, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC (Pennsylvania)

Points of Contact

- **Healthy Teen Network** - Bob Reeg, bob@HealthyTeenNetwork.org, 202.265.7271
- **National Women's Law Center** - Lara Kaufmann, lkaufmann@nwlc.org, 202.588.5180