

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS &
CHAIR SHEILA KUEHL

May 1, 2018

National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month

The month of May is National Teen Pregnancy Prevention month. For many years, various efforts have been underway to help young people prevent early and unplanned pregnancy. These efforts have resulted in significant declines in rates of pregnancy among young people. According to a 2017 Guttmacher Institute report, containing the most recent analysis of birth rates, “National estimates of pregnancy. . . show a continuation of the long-term decline in rates of pregnancies, births and abortions among young women in the United States. Pregnancy rates among women aged 15–19 have declined dramatically since a recent peak in 1990, as have the births and abortions that result.”¹ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the reasons for the declines are not totally clear. However, evidence suggests these declines are due to more teens abstaining from sexual activity, and more teens who are sexually active using birth control than in previous years.

¹ https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/us-adolescent-pregnancy-trends-2013.pdf.

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Despite these achievements, research demonstrates that girls in foster care are still 2.5 times more likely to experience early and unplanned pregnancy than their non-foster care peers. Thus, while pregnancy rates are declining among some populations, our most vulnerable children are still at risk. These children deserve our greatest efforts to empower them to make healthy decisions through meaningful conversation and education with trusted adults, and through access to high quality and appropriate care.

The Los Angeles Reproductive Health Equity Project for Foster Youth (LA RHEP) is an example of outstanding work being done to address unplanned pregnancy among foster youth in Los Angeles County. LA RHEP is a new, innovative public-private partnership that brings together foster youth and the agencies that serve them to promote evidence-informed strategies that reduce unplanned pregnancies and remove institutional barriers to sexual and reproductive health education and services. LA RHEP is generously funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and is spearheaded by the Department of Children & Family Services, Alliance for Children's Rights, Children's Law Center of California, John Burton Advocates for Youth, National Center for Youth Law, Public Counsel and Seattle Children's Hospital. The goal of LA RHEP is to dramatically reduce unintended pregnancy rates for youth in care over the next ten years. Accordingly, as we recognize the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month and Foster Care Month in the County of Los Angeles, let us also recognize the impactful work being across the County by public and private partners to reduce teen and unplanned pregnancy among young people in foster care.

WE THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors,

1. Proclaim the month of May "Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month" in the County of Los Angeles;

2. Urge all residents, public officials and County employees, as well as community groups, schools, clubs and organizations to take action to prevent unplanned teen pregnancy in Los Angeles County; and
3. Direct the Departments of Health, Public Health, Mental Health, Children and Family Services and Probation to actively collaborate with efforts to reduce unplanned pregnancy among foster youth such as LA RHEP, and to publicize and utilize the materials, training and education made available by LA RHEP, available at their website, www.FosterReproHealth.org, as well as distribute the materials made available by Power to Decide, formerly the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, among clients and constituents throughout the month of May. These resources are available at: www.FosterReproHealth.org and <https://powertodecide.org/news/talkingispower-six-ways-to-get-involved>.

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