



# A Crucial Connection: Working Together to Address Teen Pregnancy Among Youth in Foster Care

The National Stakeholders Collaborative

April 8, 2010

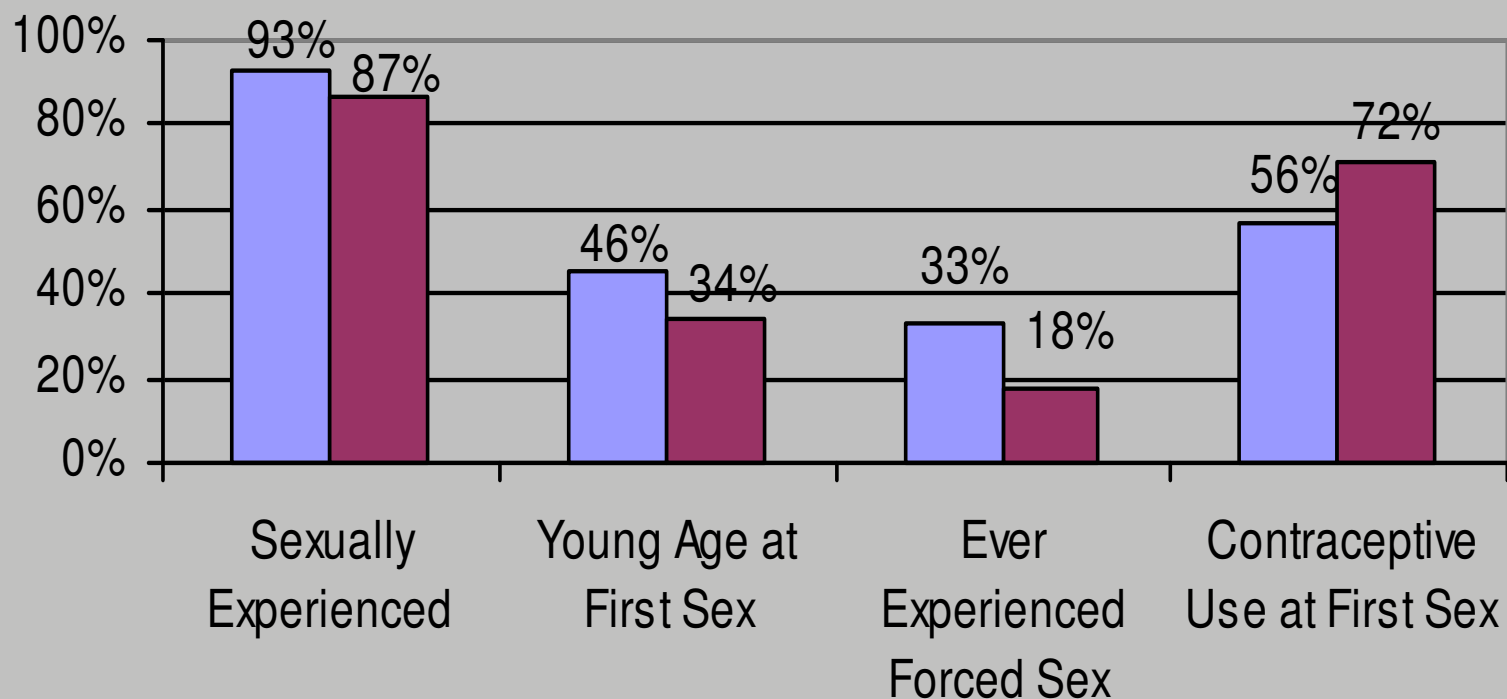
# The National Campaign's Foster Care Initiative

- Raise awareness and spark action
- Build partnerships
- Offer technical assistance
- Provide resources for parents, teens, and communities
- Reach out to policymakers

# Teen Pregnancy Data for Youth in Foster Care

- Teen girls in foster care are 2.5 times more likely to experience a pregnancy by age 19
- By age 21, over 1/2 of young women and nearly 1/3 of young men in foster care have had at least one child
- Youth who remain in foster care until age 19 are 38% less likely to become pregnant

## Reproductive Health Behaviors Among Young Adults (Age 18-26)



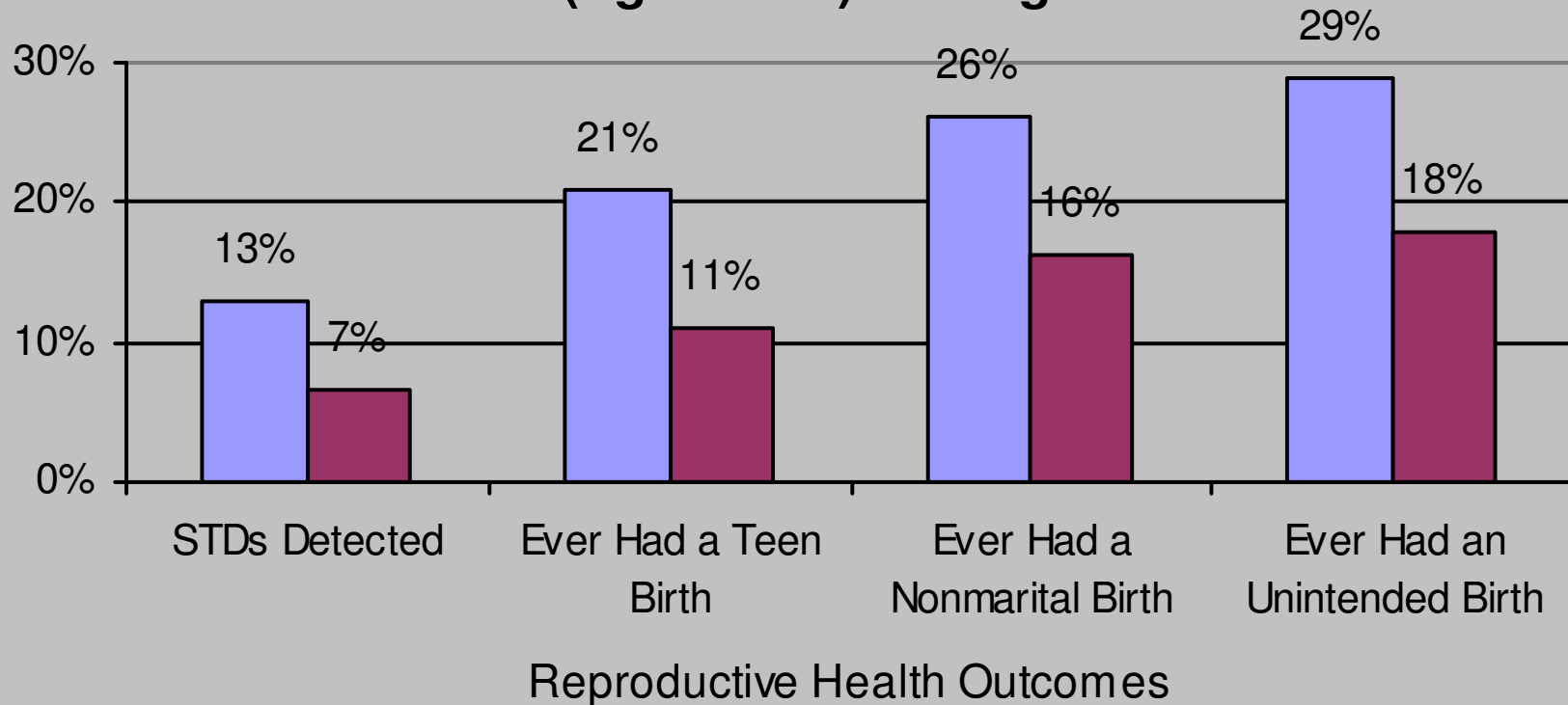
### Reproductive Health Behaviors

■ Youth Who Ever Lived in Foster Care
 ■ All Other Youth

Source: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Fast Facts: Reproductive Health Outcomes of Youth Who Ever Lived in Foster Care

[http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/FastFacts\\_FosterCare\\_Reproductive\\_Outcomes.pdf](http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/FastFacts_FosterCare_Reproductive_Outcomes.pdf)

## Reproductive Health Outcomes in Young Adulthood (Age 18-26) Among All Youth



■ Foster Care Youth ■ All Other Youth

Source: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Fast Facts: Reproductive Health Outcomes of Youth Who Ever Lived in Foster Care

[http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/FastFacts\\_FosterCare\\_Reproductive\\_Outcomes.pdf](http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/FastFacts_FosterCare_Reproductive_Outcomes.pdf)

# Costs and Consequences

- Teen childbearing cost the child welfare system \$2.3 billion nationally in 2004.
- Compared to mothers 20-21, young teen mothers (age 17 and younger) were:
  - 2.2 times more likely to have a child placed in foster care during the first 5 years after a birth.
  - Twice as likely to have a reported case of child abuse or neglect.

Source: Hoffman, S.D. *By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing* 2006. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/costs/national.aspx>

## Consequences (cont)

- Delaying age of birth from 17 or earlier to age 20-21 would reduce:
  - the overall foster care placement rate by 8% percent
  - the incidence of abuse and neglect by almost 11%
  - child welfare costs by \$1.8 billion annually (federal, state and local).

# How are states addressing this issue?

- Curriculum for youth in foster care
- Funding for programs
- Policies
- Research and data gathering



# Lessons Learned

- Child welfare: more focus on parenting than prevention
- Teen pregnancy: no particular focus on youth in foster care
- Child welfare employees are overwhelmed, need resources and outside experts
- More research is needed on effective/adapted models for this population
- Conveners, or “glue,” to bring the right people together

# What You Can Do

- Promote collaboration between child welfare and teen pregnancy prevention fields
- Collect teen pregnancy data for youth in foster care and child welfare system in your state
- Provide effective and promising teen pregnancy programs to foster care youth and evaluate them
- Incorporate teen pregnancy prevention lessons into life skills /health education curriculum for youth in care
- Bring in health experts to train caseworkers, CASA volunteers, child advocates, and foster parents

★★ Thank-you! ★★

For more information:

Visit our websites:

[www.TheNationalCampaign.org](http://www.TheNationalCampaign.org)

[www.stayteen.org](http://www.stayteen.org)

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