



LA SALLE COUNTY
Office of The County Judge

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Proclamation
Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month

Whereas, Four in 10 young women become pregnant at least once before they reach the age of 20-nearly one million a year. Eight in ten of these pregnancies are unintended and 79 percent are to unmarried teens.

Whereas, Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school, (only one-third receive a high school diploma) and more likely to end up in welfare (nearly 80 percent of unmarried teen mothers end up on welfare).

Whereas, Most people say teens should remain abstinent but should have access to contraception. Ninety-five percent of adults in the United States-and 85 percent of teenagers-think it important that school-aged children and teenagers be given a strong message from society that they should abstain from sex until they are out of high school. Almost 60 percent of adults also think that sexually active teenagers should have access to contraception.

Whereas, Teens who have been raised by both parents (biological or adoptive) from birth, have lower probabilities of having sex than teens who grew up in any other family situation. At age 16, 22 percent of girls from intact families and 44 percent of other girls have had sex at least once. Similarly, teen from intact, two-parent families are less likely to birth in their teens than girls from other family backgrounds.

Whereas, Seven of ten teens interviewed said that they were ready to listen to things parents thought they were not ready to hear. When asked about the reasons why teenager have babies, 78 percent of white and 70 percent of African-American teenagers reported that lack of communication between a girl and her parents is often a reason teenage girls have babies. Surprise: Your teen wants to hear from you.

Whereas, A new crop of kids becomes teenagers each year. This means that prevention efforts must be constantly renewed and reinvented. And between 1995 and 2010, the number of girls aged 15-19 is projected to increase by 2.2 million.

Whereas, Declining teen pregnancy rates means we can make a difference. Rather than making us complacent, the recent good news should encourage us to do more to continue the current trends. The hard truth is that yesterday's good news about declining teen pregnancy and birth rates won't mean much to the boys and girls who turn 13 next year. For them, we must redouble our efforts to make sure that they benefit from the successes that their older brothers and sisters have begun to see.

Whereas, Involve teens early in the planning of program's goals and activities. Incorporate teen voices into decision-making and take teens' opinions seriously.

NOW THEREFORE, I do hereby proclaim the month of May to be Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month and urge all citizens to participate actively in the scheduled events and programs to eliminate teen pregnancy.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy P. Patterson".

Jimmy P. Patterson
LaSalle County Judge