

# Adolescent Health in the San Joaquin Valley:

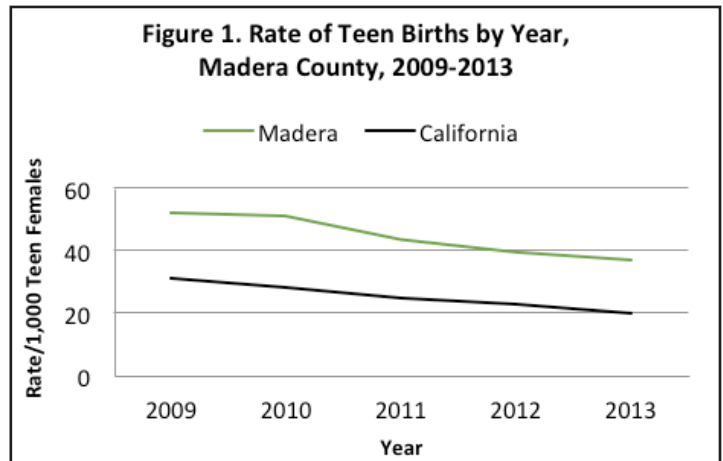
## Teen Pregnancy in Madera County

### Background and Implications

Promoting healthy pregnancies and births while reducing teen pregnancies are key objectives for public health. Research indicates that investments in initiatives that tackle these issues when people are young improve the health outcomes and well-being of the overall community. This report examines current trends in teen birth rates, how teen births are related to individual and neighborhood characteristics in Madera County, and the costs associated with related health outcomes.

### Summary of Findings

Social determinants such as socioeconomic status and employment opportunity are negatively associated with teen births. Figure 1 illustrates that Madera County has a higher teen birth rate than the state. However, the county has reduced teen births at a rate similar to the state. A 29% decline in teen birth (females ages 15 - 19) from 2009 to 2013 was found in Madera County. In 2009, the rate was 52/1,000 compared to a rate of 37/1,000 in 2013. The county saw a total of 1,419 teenage births between 2009 and 2013. Latinas account for 83% of teen births, but only compose 63% of the general population.



The prevention of teen pregnancy provides a cost benefit for youth and the community as a whole. Table 1 shows conservative estimates of the costs to taxpayers as a result of teen births. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy reports that the average annual cost to each taxpayer in the county to support a child born to a teen mother each year from birth to age 15 is \$1,682 as of 2013. By reducing the rate of teen pregnancy, Madera County has saved 28% of the costs in 2013 compared to 2009.

**Table 1. Total Costs to Taxpayers Associated with Teen Childbearing by Year, Madera County**

Year	Rate <sup>a</sup> of Teen Births	Total Costs of Teen Childbearing <sup>b</sup>	% Decline in Teen Birth Rate Compared to Previous Year	Cumulative Savings Due to Decline Teen Birth Rate
2009	59	\$485,384	-	-
2010	57	\$476,612	2	\$8,772
2011	48	\$406,436	14	\$78,948
2012	45	\$371,348	9	\$114,036
2013	42	\$346,494	8	\$138,890

<sup>a</sup> rate per 1,000 live births

<sup>b</sup> based on average cost of teen birth in California \$1,462 (2010)

## Success Stories on Teen Pregnancy Prevention Efforts in Madera County

**Success Story 1.** At a local non-traditional high school, MCPHD staff provided 6 sessions of education using the Be Proud Be Responsible curriculum. Upon returning to the classroom for the final presentation of the curriculum, three individuals approached the Public Health staff to request assistance in setting up appointments with a local reproductive health provider. Staff was able to assist the youth in scheduling appointments for the following day and to work with the youth in identifying options for transportation to their appointments. One of the students had not been a participant in the class, but had heard about the class through another student and felt comfortable enough to approach the MCPHD staff and ask for assistance.

**Success Story 2.** At a small high school within Madera County, the only teacher who teaches the schools health curriculum had repeatedly invited MCPHD staff to present the Be Proud Be Responsible curriculum for the past four years. The curriculum is provided once in the fall and once in the spring. Twice a year, every freshman in the school is provided with comprehensive reproductive health education and information about where to locate services that are accessible and youth friendly.

**Success Story 3.** Over the past several years, MCPHD has provided reproductive health to students at Enterprise School. Students at the school are youth who have not been successful in other more traditional school settings. As a result of these efforts, youth have often approached the MCPHD staff to ask a question that they do not feel comfortable asking their parents, their teachers or other adults. Questions often pertain to concerns the students have about a particular situation, such as a symptom they might believe is related to a sexually transmitted disease or concerns about an incident of unprotected sex. The students feel they can approach the MCPHD staff because they are confident in the staff's knowledge and expertise as well as the staff's ability to maintain their confidentiality and trust.



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## A Vision for Adolescent Health in Madera County

- Male Involvement Services – program targeted to young men to help them understand their responsibilities in preventing unplanned pregnancies.
- Parent-Child Communication – programs designed to provide parents with the information and skills to provide reproductive health information to their children at all ages, to support their children in the decisions that they make and to incorporate the families values and beliefs in the information the parents provide.
- Focused programs for youth that maybe at increased risk for early sexuality or unplanned pregnancy –foster youth, youth of color, LGBT youth, migrant youth, and youth affiliated with the juvenile justice system.
- Supporting youth service organizations in incorporating reproductive health information/education into programs that they already provide and that youth participate in. Examples would include afterschool programs, athletic programs, agricultural programs for youth or work training programs for youth.
- Addressing issues of income inequality, dropout rates, youth mental health, gender and sexual orientation issues and documentation issues within a given community. The stage is set for youth to gain access to accurate and comprehensive information and services that can lead to them having the tools and resources to make better decisions about their health and their future.

Develop a community-wide task force to address the issues of teen pregnancy specific for Madera County. Membership would be comprised of representatives from various local service providers and organizations who work with youth or on youth related issues. The main objectives of the task force would be to highlight the issue of teen pregnancy in Madera County, identify the reasons it is occurring and to work together on systematic and long term programs and services to address the issue and it's impact on Madera County.



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