

MEASURE

The estimated number of young women ages 15–17 years who have given birth or experienced abortion or miscarriage per thousand teens residing in Montcalm County.

WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

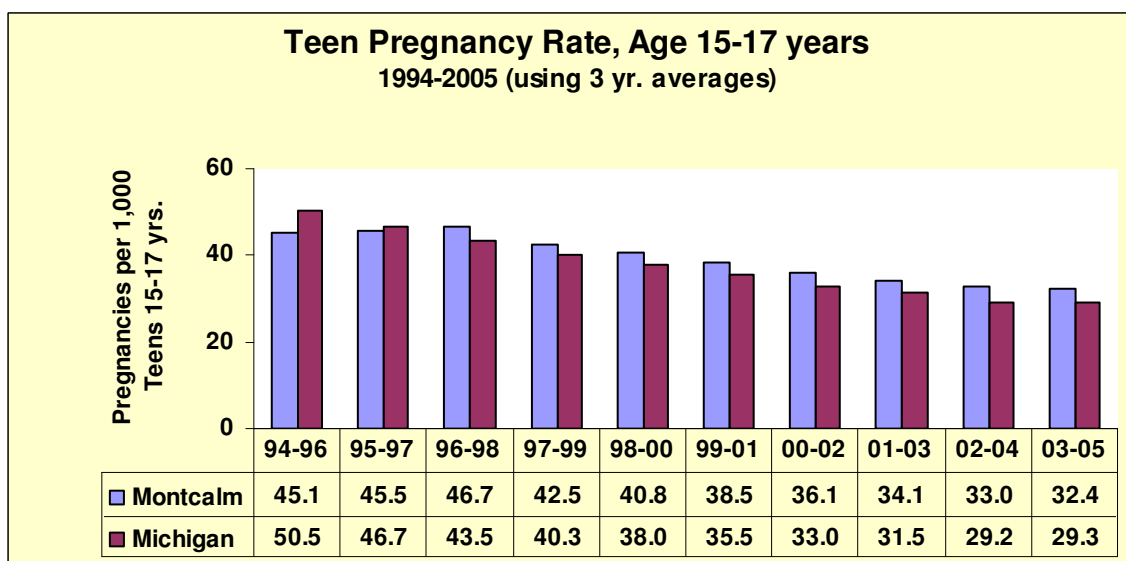
Teen pregnancies are considered to reflect other health behaviors and societal concerns within a community such as inadequate health and sex education, lower socioeconomic status, abuse of alcohol and drugs, poor academic progress, history of sexual abuse, lack of birth control, and low self-esteem. The impact of teen pregnancy is significant for teen parents, their children and the community. They are more likely to experience social and economic disadvantage which may last throughout their lives. Children of teen parents face significant disadvantages throughout their lives as well. They are more likely to struggle in school, both academically and behaviorally. They are more likely to grow up in single parent households, spend time in the justice system, and become teen parents themselves; thereby continuing the cycle of social and economic disadvantage.

HOW WELL IS THE MONTCALM COMMUNITY DOING?

Montcalm County has seen an appreciable and near steady decline in the teen pregnancy rate since the early 1990's, mirroring the trend observed throughout most of the state of Michigan. The Montcalm County teen pregnancy rate for 15 to 17 year olds, while declining, has remained greater than the Michigan rate since the mid 1990's — see figure below. Teen births have followed a similar trend as pregnancies.

GOAL FOR MONTCALM COUNTY

Continue the current trend of declining teen pregnancy rates for teens age 15-17 years of age. *HP2010* has set a goal of no more than 43 pregnancies per 1,000 teens aged 15-17 years, to be achieved by the end of this decade. Both Montcalm County and Michigan have already attained this HP2010 goal, but will need to sustain the progress for several more years.



NOTE: All rates are per 1,000 age and sex specific population. Pregnancies are the sum of Live Births, Abortions and Estimated Miscarriages.

SOURCE: Pregnancies, Live Births, Abortions and Population Estimates obtained from Vital Records & Health Data Development Section, Michigan Department of Community Health, 2006.