

What Challenges Do Pregnant and Parenting Students Face?

- Three in 10 girls in the U.S. will become pregnant before age 20, which is the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the developed world.
- Fifty-two percent of Latina teens and 50 percent of African-American teen girls will become pregnant at least once before they are 20 years old. Birth rates among Latina and African-American youth ages 15 through 17 are more than twice the birth rates of Caucasian youth in the same age range.
- Many pregnant and parenting students face significant barriers in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school, including:
 - Discrimination in violation of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, including stigmatization at school by administrators, teachers, and peer students;
 - A lack of consistent policies at the State, district, and school levels that allow for excused absences for prenatal and postnatal health care appointments in order for teen parents to successfully complete their education;
 - Difficulty maintaining academic progress while out of school leading up to or following the birth of a child;
 - Juggling school work with parenting responsibilities;
 - Lack of access to affordable quality child care and transportation to and from the child care arrangement and school, which can, as a practical matter, make it virtually impossible for a parenting student to attend school regularly; and
 - Stereotypes that future opportunities for postsecondary education or careers are limited for pregnant and parenting students, which can diminish students' motivation to stay engaged in school.