

Teenage Pregnancy

Definition

Teenage pregnancy is measured by the number and rate of conceptions to women under the age of 18 at the time of the conception. Statistics are collected from the Office for National Statistics from birth registrations and notifications of terminations of pregnancy. The figures do not include stillbirths. Rates are measured by the numbers per 1000 of 15 to 17 year olds.

Why is teenage pregnancy important?

The reasons for tackling teenage pregnancy and supporting teenage mothers and young fathers are well documented and include health and wider inequalities issues. Babies born to teenage mothers have a 60% higher infant mortality rate and a 63% increased risk of being born into poverty compared to babies born to older mothers. Children born to teenage mothers do less well at school and disengage early from learning and sometimes well before they have finished compulsory education. Daughters of teenage mothers are twice as likely as daughters born to older mothers to become teenage mothers themselves. Similar disadvantages affect young fathers.

Efforts to improve outcomes for teenage mothers and young fathers will, in turn, reduce the chances that children born to teenage mothers and young fathers become teenage parents themselves, because they are less likely to experience some of the factors associated with teenage pregnancy. Supporting teenage mothers to access and use contraception effectively after the birth of their first child will also help prevent subsequent unplanned pregnancies.

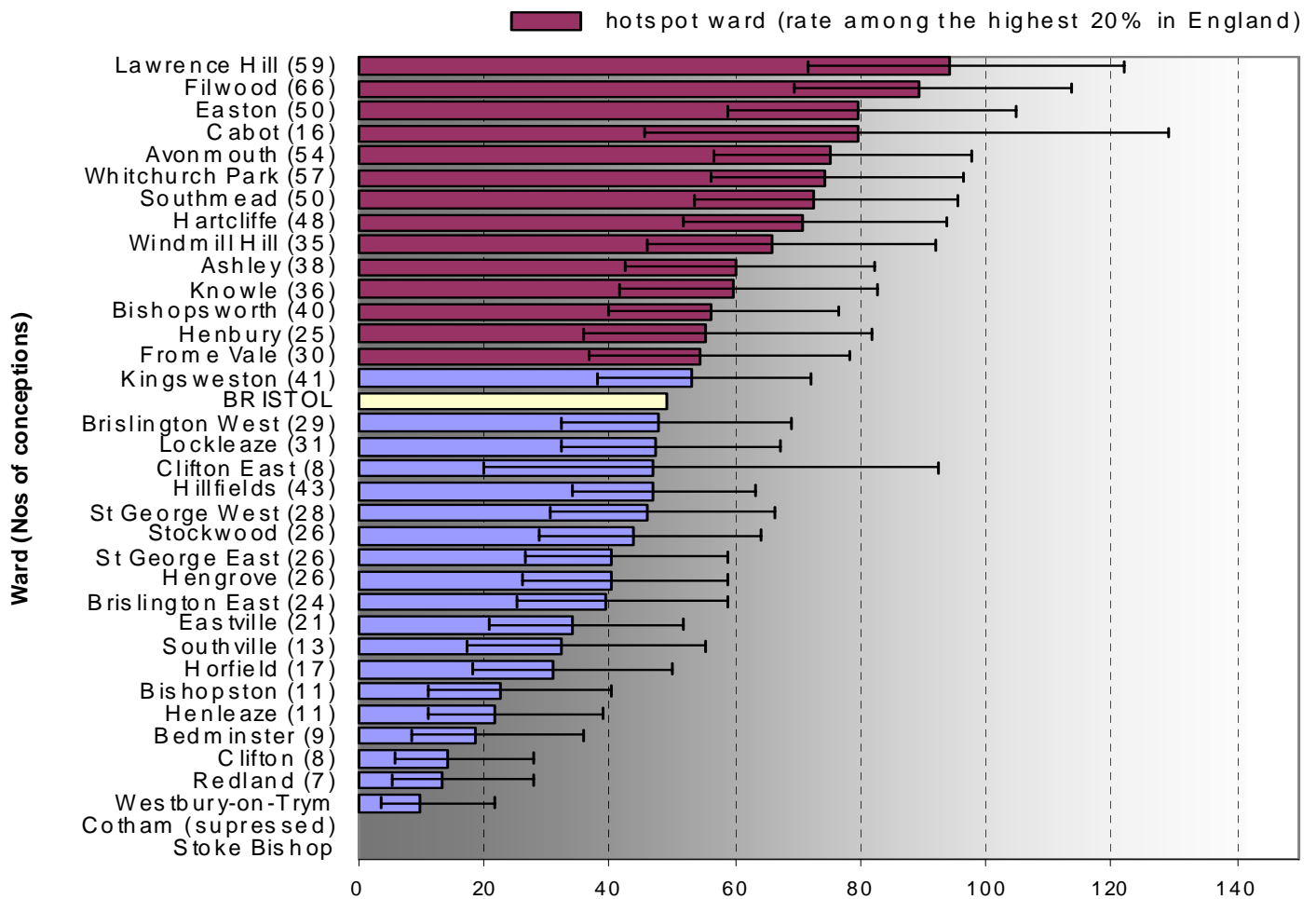
Programmes to prevent teenage pregnancy and support teenage mothers and young fathers are part of a long-term effort to narrow social and health inequalities and tackle child poverty. Tackling the risk factors for teenage pregnancy can have an impact on a range of other local priorities.

What's the position in Bristol?

Latest available performance data show there were 357 under 18 conceptions in 2007. This represents a 7.3% increase from the 1998 baseline. It is worth noting that increases for 2007 are also indicated in other major cities and nationally. Local data for 2008 indicate a small decrease from 2007 rates.

As ward conception numbers are relatively small (even when aggregated over three years) rates may vary markedly from year to year and should be interpreted with some caution. In 2004-6, 14 wards had rates among the highest 20% in England. The 10 wards consistently in the 20% highest among England were: Lawrence Hill, Filwood, Easton, Avonmouth, Whitchurch Park, Southmead, Hartcliffe, Ashley, Bishopsworth, Henbury. Lawrence Hill has consistently had the highest rate in Bristol. Avonmouth has consistently been among the 5 highest wards in Bristol. Rates in Ashley, Henbury, Lockleaze and Bedminster rates have fallen over each 3 year period (although the numbers are too small to affect the overall picture). The information on the next page is the latest available.

**Under 18yrs conception rates (per 1,000 population 15-17yrs)
and numbers per ward in Bristol 2004 -2006
(Latest period of data available from Teenage Pregnancy Unit)**



What are we doing about teenage pregnancy?

Following a visit from the Department of Health's Teenage Pregnancy National Support Team in 2008, we have put in to place programmes to improve our performance. To do this, we have taken advice from other major cities/health authorities in the country that have achieved higher results following review, (Liverpool, Hackney and Brighton). Programmes include:

- A contraception outreach service offering a full range of advice and treatment, operating in 25 venues, including: schools, pupil referral units and further education establishments.
- A common identity for young people friendly contraception and sexual health service, 4YPBristol, which includes a website with all local services.
- Condom distribution scheme across Bristol and a comprehensive free emergency contraception scheme for young people through pharmacies.
- Level one and two training programme for all staff working directly with young people.
- Sex and Relationships Education Programmes for the most vulnerable young people, delivered by trained youth and sexual health outreach workers in non-school settings.
- Teenage pregnancy midwives working with all pregnant young women under 18.
- Primary care offering enhanced sexual health services to young people through 15 practices.
- Children and Young People's Services are leading on improving sex and relationships education in schools and work with those most at risk to improve educational attainment and attendance.
- Second pregnancy prevention nurses for young women who have had abortions or births.
- A school nurse post to lead on sexual health developments in the school nursing service.
- A nurse to work with the most vulnerable young people to ensure that they are able to access contraception and sexual health services.

What works?

The national Teenage Pregnancy Unit undertook an evaluation exercise where they took an in depth look at programmes in areas that were reaching targets in comparison to areas that were not. The table below shows the elements that need to be in place to reduce conception rates. In Bristol the following were identified for action:

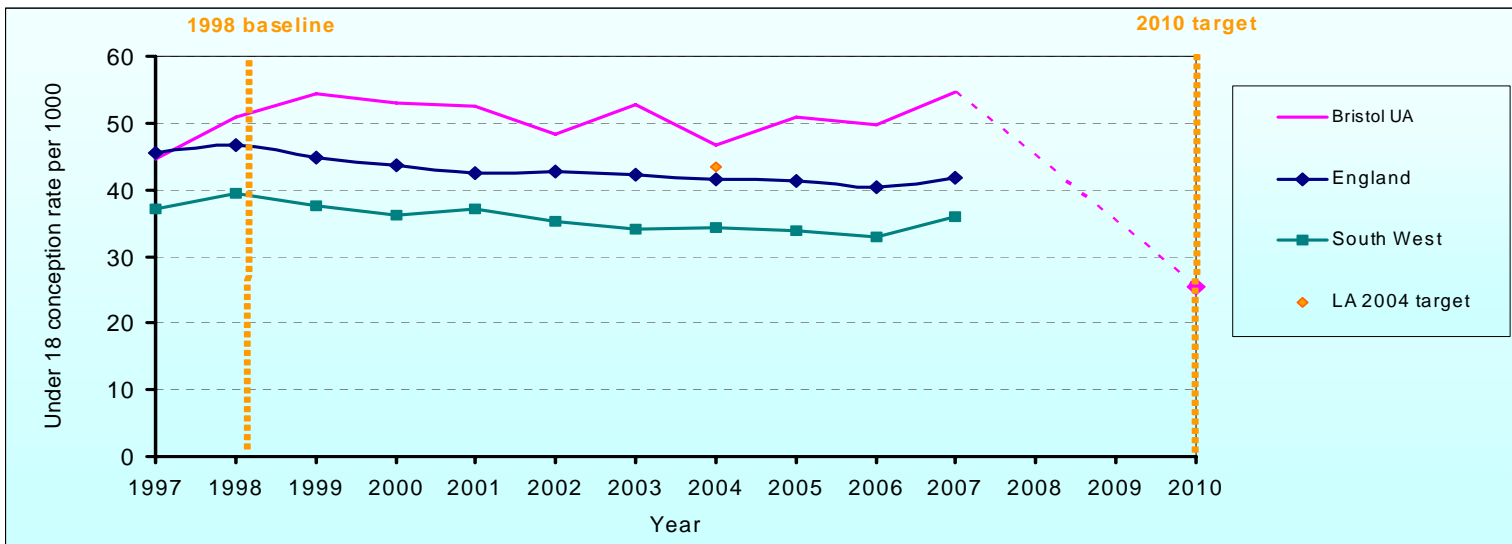
- Senior local sponsorship and engagement of all key partners. This has been achieved through strengthening the teenage pregnancy group and its links to the Children's Trust.
- Effective use of data and clear performance management. A local data set has been created and an analyst is leading on developing a data scorecard to ensure better performance monitoring of the strategy.
- Targeted work with at risk groups of young people. NHS Bristol has funded the development of a team to work with young people at risk of teenage conceptions. A nurse has also been appointed to support all young women under 18 who have had births or abortions.
- Effective internal and external communication about teenage pregnancy and services available. A communications lead has been appointed, and a comprehensive strategy is being implemented for young people, key stakeholders and parents.
- Easy access to friendly contraception and sexual health services for young people. There has been substantial investment in developing programmes in Bristol schools and pupil referral units. Currently, 25 drop-in sessions offer comprehensive sexual health advice and supplies. Evaluation of the service has shown them to be highly effective at engagement. Bristol has been held up as an area of good practice in developing school-based services.
- Support the delivery of good quality sex and relationships education (SRE) in schools. Schools are currently supported by a specialist consultant, who is working with them to develop their own sex and relationships education programme.



For electronic copy of this factsheet, visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/healthfactsheets.
For more information about health topics in Bristol, visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/health or
email: health@bristol.gov.uk.

What is our current performance in this area?

Data for current performance will not be available until February 2011. Latest available performance data (2007) is a 7.3% increase in under-18 conception rates from the 1998 baseline. The rate in 2007 was 54.7 per 1,000 female population aged 15-17, compared to 51.0 per 1,000 female population aged 15-17 in 1998. The diagram below shows how Bristol compares to the South West, the rest of England and to the 1998 baseline.



Need Someone to Talk to about Teenage Pregnancy?

For local resources, visit: <http://www.4ypbristol.co.uk/someone-to-talk-to>

Sexwise Confidential Helpline

If you are under 18 and feeling unsure about relationships, sex or contraception a confidential chat with someone can really help. Lines are open from 7am to midnight seven days a week, are free from landlines and won't appear on the bill. Tel: 0800 28 29 30.

References

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/teenagepregnancy/teenagepregnancy>

www.4ypbristol.co.uk



This fact sheet was produced by Bristol Public Health in cooperation with:



For electronic copy of this factsheet, visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/healthfactsheets.
For more information about health topics in Bristol, visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/health or
email: health@bristol.gov.uk.