



Committee on Ways and Means Democrats

Representative Charles B. Rangel - Ranking Democratic Member

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STEEP DECLINE IN TEEN BIRTH RATE SIGNIFICANTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR REDUCING CHILD POVERTY AND SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

Executive Summary

The steep decline in the teen birth rate during the 1990s is an important but often overlooked factor in the decline of child poverty and children living in single-parent families. Because teenage mothers and their children tend to have poorer economic outcomes than older mothers, a reduction in the number of teen mothers and the number of children born to them has resulted in fewer children living in poverty and living in families headed by single mothers.

The teen birth rate peaked in 1991, and since then has fallen 30 percent. Simultaneously, the overall child poverty rate fell by 23 percent and the percentage of children living with a single mother declined for the first time in decades.

Many factors contributed to the improving trends in child poverty and the living arrangements of children, including a strong economy, increased child care outlays, child support policy, changes in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), welfare reform, and other work supports. However, the decline in teen birth rates during the 1990s had a significant, positive impact on child poverty and living arrangements.

This report finds that the decline in the teen birth rate explains:

- 26 percent of the reduction in the number of children under age six living in poverty, and
- 80 percent of the decline in the number of children under age six living with a single mother, between 1995 and 2002.

This report estimates that if teen birth rates had not declined after 1991:

- Almost 1.2 million additional children would have been born to teenage mothers by 2002.
- The number of poor children would have increased by 460,000 in 2002—over 80 percent would have been under age six.
- The 2002 poverty rate for children under six would have been nearly a full percentage point higher.
- There would have been an additional 180,000 black children under the age of six in poverty in 2002, an increase of almost 15 percent.

The effects of the declining teen birth rate are even more striking on children's living arrangements:

- About 560,000 more children under age six would have lived in single-mother households in 2002—more than half would have been African American.
- Children under six living with a single mother would have increased by 1.4 percentage points in 2002.

Although overlooked in past research, the decline in teen births has played a significant role in explaining the fall in child poverty, especially for young children, and the decline in the number of children living in single-parent families during the late 1990s. The downward trend in teen birth rates predates welfare reform and any major federal funding of abstinence education initiatives by at least five years, and cannot be attributed to those efforts. These findings suggest that lawmakers should identify and pursue policies and programs that effectively lower teen birth rates in order to reduce child poverty and single-parent households.

Teen Birth Rate Trends

From the 1950s through the mid 1980s, teen birth rates steadily decreased. From 1987 to 1991, however, there was a sharp increase in the teen birth rate before declining again after 1991.

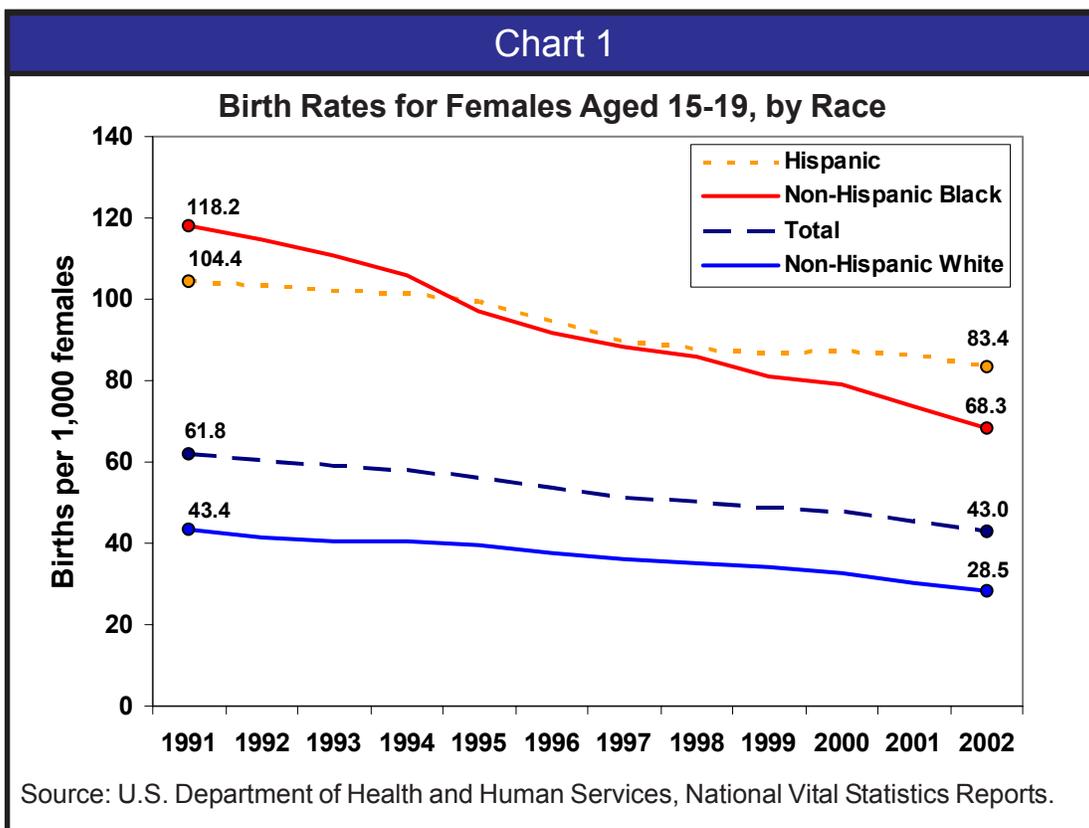
The teen birth rate has declined by 30 percent since its recent peak in 1991 from 61.8 to 43.0 births per 1,000 (**Chart 1**). Currently, teen birth rates are the lowest they have been in the last fifty years for all teens. The drop in teen births was steepest among non-Hispanic African-American teens, the group with the highest teenage birth rate in 1991. The teen birth rate fell by 42 percent for non-Hispanic black teenagers between 1991 and 2002. Non-Hispanic white teenagers,¹ who have the lowest teen birth rate, experienced a 34 percent decline in their birth rate, while Hispanic teen birth rates fell 20 percent during this same time period.

Despite the substantial progress over the past decade in reducing teen birth rates, 34 percent of teenage girls get pregnant at least once before age 20, the U.S. still has the highest teen pregnancy and birth rates in the

industrialized world, and teen childbearing costs taxpayers at least \$7 billion a year.²

No new research is presented in this paper to explain why teen birth rates fell during the 1990s.³ Experts who have studied this question believe it is a combination of greater public and private efforts to reduce teen pregnancy. Research has shown that some teen pregnancy programs do work: those with a range of services along with sex education and reproductive health services have reduced teen pregnancy rates by as much as one-half. Other factors at work that have reduced teen birth rates include fear of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, the availability of more effective forms of contraception, more conservative attitudes among the young, messages about work and child support embedded in welfare reform and media campaigns designed to change teen behavior. “Abstinence only” programs are relatively new, have not yet been carefully evaluated and what research exists has not been encouraging.³

It is worth noting, however, that teen birth rates started to fall well before the federal welfare act was being implemented by states in late 1996 and in 1997 and



that the rate of decline was continuous and similar throughout the entire time period after 1991. Thus, for these and other reasons, federal welfare reform does not appear to have influenced the decline in teen birth rates to any significant degree. The decline in teen birth rates also predates by at least five years any major federal funding for abstinence education.

Fewer Children in Poverty

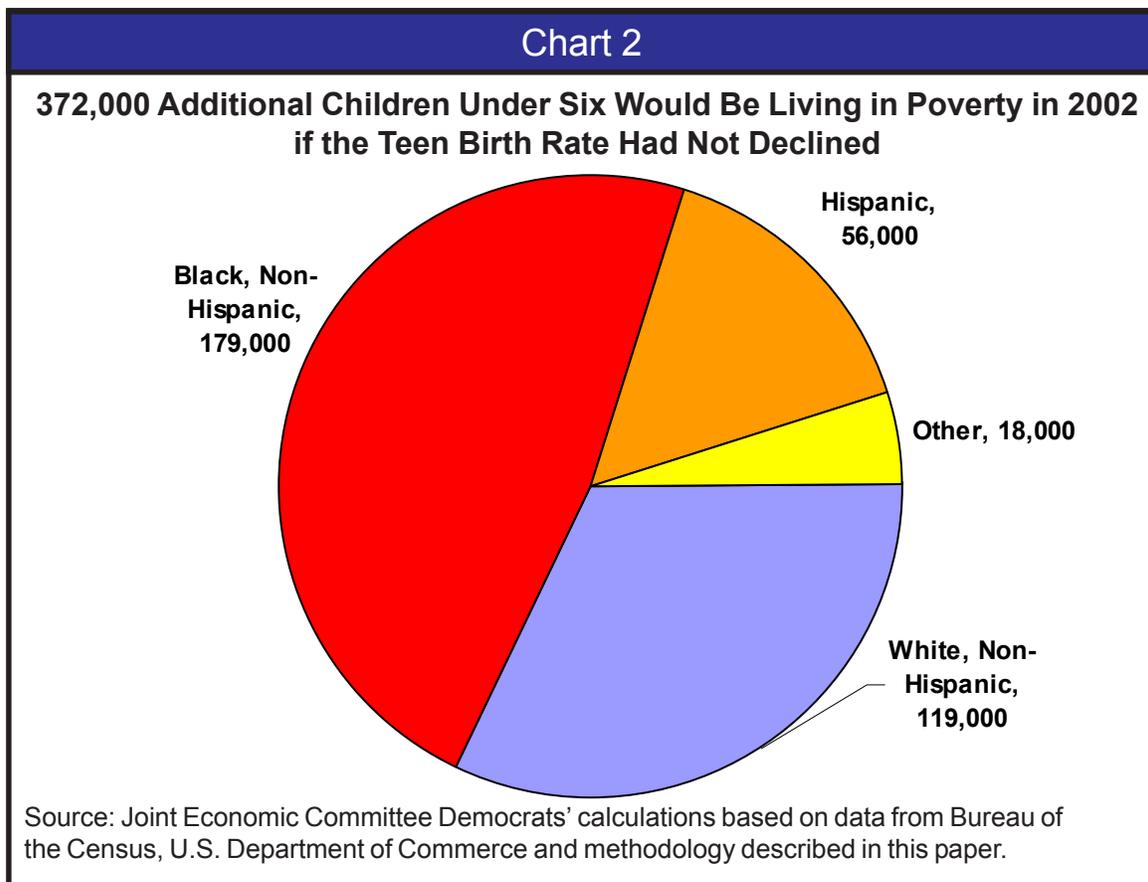
If the teen birth rate had not declined, there would have been an additional 1.2 million children under age 18 born to teenagers between 1992 and 2002. (See **Appendix** for detailed explanation of the methodology.) Assuming these additional children lived in the same economic situations as actual children born to teenage mothers, some 40 percent or 460,000 would have been officially classified as poor.⁴ The overall number of children would have increased by 1.6 percent, while the number of poor children would have increased by 3.8 percent. The percent of poor children increases more because children of teenagers experience higher poverty rates. (**Appendix Table 4**)

Fewer Young Children in Poverty

Throughout the remainder of the paper, we highlight the impacts upon children under age six because they are more representative of the long-run impacts of declining birth rates (assuming teen birth rates remain constant or continue to fall).

In 2002, over 80 percent of the additional children would have been under age six. **Chart 2** illustrates the additional 372,000 children under six who would have lived in poverty in 2002 if the teen birth rate had not declined. The number of poor children under age six would increase by 8.5 percent compared to a 3.8 percent increase in the number of children. For children under age six, the poverty rate would have increased nearly a full percentage point – from 18.7 to 19.6 percent.

Because teen birth rates declined the most for black teenagers, the number of additional black children and poor black children under six would have increased the most under the assumption that teen birth rates remained the same. Just under half (179,000) of the



additional poor children under age six would have been black. The poverty rate for young black children would have increased by 1.7 percentage points.

Fewer Children in Single-Mother Families

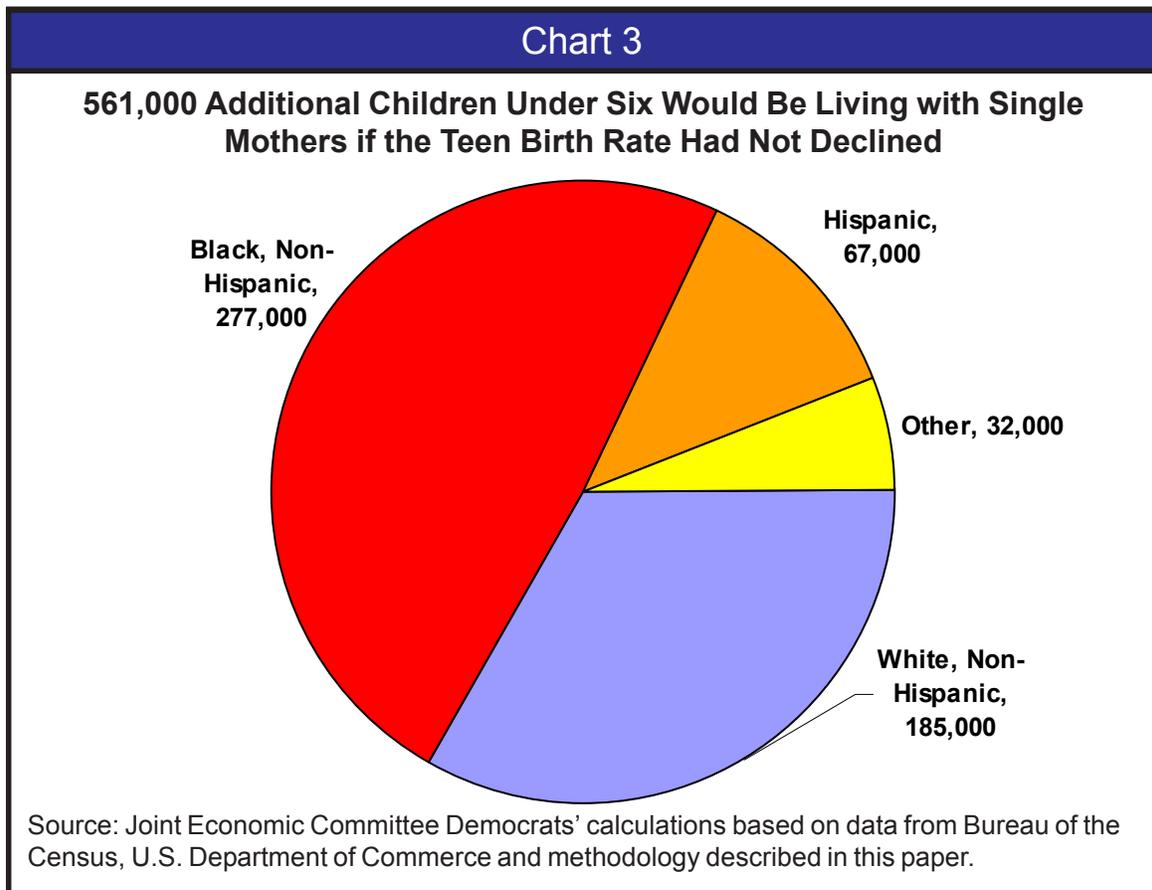
Overall, if the teen birth rate had remained constant at 1991 levels, there would have been nearly 700,000 more children living in single-mother families. The percent of all children living with a single mother would have increased by more than half of a percentage point (0.6 percent).

As shown in **Chart 3**, about 560,000 more children (10.7 percent) under age six would have lived with a single mother if the teen birth rate had not declined. Of these children, some 185,000 would have been white, non-Hispanic, about 277,000 would have been black, non-Hispanic and 67,000 would have been Hispanic.

The percentage of young children living with a single mother in 2002 was 22.4 percent but would have been nearly one and a-half percentage points higher had teen birth rates stayed constant at 1991 levels.⁵ The decline in the percentage of children living with single mothers is most noticeable for black, non-Hispanic children. Over fifty percent of black, non-Hispanic children lived with a single mother in 2002. However, if the decline in the teen birth rate had not occurred, the result would have been 2.6 percentage points higher, representing 277,000 more children who would have lived with a single mother.

Estimating How Much Declining Teen Birth Rates Contributed to Child Poverty and Living Arrangement Trends

In this section, we estimate how much of the decline in poverty and the change in the number of children living with a single mother between 1995 and 2002 can be explained by declining teen birth rates.



Number of Young Children in Poverty

Table 1 illustrates what percentage of the decline in young child poverty can be explained by declining teen birth rates. Overall, the number of poor children under age six declined by almost 1.5 million between 1995 and 2002.⁶ The decline in teen birth rates reduced the number of number of poor children under six by 370,000 or 26 percent of the total decline of 1.5 million. (See **Appendix Table 6** for a more complete derivation of the numbers in Table 2 and for additional results.)

Similarly, young black child poverty declined by 617,000 children between 1995 and 2002, with an estimated 180,000 the result of lower teen birth rates. Therefore falling teen birth rates account for about 29 percent of the decline in the number of young black children in poverty (Table 1).⁷

Poverty Rates for Young Children

Declines in teen birth rates had less of an impact on the decline in poverty rates for children under six. The poverty rate for all young children has fallen 5.4

percentage points over the decade, from 24.1 percent in 1995 to 18.7 percent in 2002. If teen birth rates had not declined, poverty rates for children would have been nearly a full percentage point higher (0.9 percent) in 2002, or 19.6 percent. Thus, 15 percent of the drop in the young child poverty rate from 1995 to 2002 can be explained by the decrease in the teen birth rate (Table 1).

Number of Children Living with Single Mother

Even more striking is the impact of declining teen birth rates on the number and percent of children living with a single mother. The trend in child living arrangements toward more children living in married-couple families and fewer children living in single-mother families is quite recent.⁸ This analysis shows that declining teen birth rates are largely responsible for these recent trends.

Between 1995 and 2002, the number of children under age six living with a single mother declined by 682,000 or 12 percent. However, if teen birth rates had not declined, an additional 561,000 children would have lived with a single mother. Thus, declining teen birth

Table 1		
Proportion of Change in Poverty Measures and Living Arrangements of Children under 6 Between 1995 and 2002 That Can Be Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rates		
Children under Age 6	All Groups	Black, Non-Hispanic
Change in Number of Poor Children that can be explained by decline in the teen birth rate	26%	29%
Change in Poverty Rate that can be explained by the decline in the teen birth rate	15%	14%
Change in Number of Children Living with Single Mother that can be explained by the decline in the teen birth rate	82%	76%
Change in Percent of Children Living with Single Mother that can be explained by the decline in the teen birth rate	68%	92%

Source: Joint Economic Committee Democrats' calculations based on data from Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce and methodology described in this paper.

rates explains 82 percent of the decline in young children living with a single mother (Table 1). For young white children, declining teen birth rates explain about 32 percent of the total decline in young children living with a single mother, while for young black children declining teen birth rates explains 76 percent of the decline in young children living with a single mother (Table 1).

Percent of Children Living with Single Mother

Just as with poverty rates, one can also examine the impact of declining teen birth rates on the percentage of children living with a single mother. Between 1995 and 2002, the proportion of children living with a single mother declined by 2.1 percentage points. Without the decline in the teen birth rate, the percent of children living with a single mother would have declined by 1.5 percentage points between 1995 and 2002. Thus, the decline in teen birth rates explains 68 percent of the proportion of young children living with a single mother (Table 1). An astounding 92 percent of the decline in the percent of black children living with a single mother can be explained by falling teen birth rates (Table 1).

Implications of These Findings

This paper demonstrates that without the significant decline in teen birth rates, there would have been almost 460,000 additional children in poverty and about 700,000 more children would be living with a single mother. Over half of the additional children in poverty would have been African-American.

Although overlooked in past research, the decline in teen births has played a significant role in explaining why child poverty declined in the mid to late 1990s, especially for young children under age six. Moreover, a very high percentage of the declines in the number

and percentage of children living with a single mother can be explained by the declines in teen birth rates.

Declining teen birth rates are rarely cited as a reason for improvements in child poverty and living arrangement trends, especially in comparison to the attention given to welfare reform in explaining these changes. However, this paper illustrates that declining teen birth rates have played a significant role.

The role of teen birth rates should also be kept in mind when one analyzes the impact of the two recent recessions on child poverty and the role of government programs during these recessions in reducing child poverty. In the 1990-91 recession, teen birth rates had been rising for several years and were significantly higher than in the 2001 recession. Prior to the last recession, teen birth rates had been falling for 10 years.

These findings also have important implications for future child poverty trends. If teen birth rates stay at their current levels or fall further, the impact on child poverty and living arrangements will become even greater over time, primarily because the number of children not born to teens continues to grow relative to a scenario where teen birth rates stayed at their 1991 levels.

This analysis suggests that more attention needs to be given to reducing teen birth rates. Providing additional resources to effectively send strong messages to teens about sexual behavior and to programs that have been proven to be effective may be the best way to reduce child poverty and the number of children living in single-mother families. In addition, funding should be provided to determine which programs and policies work best to reduce teen pregnancy and birth rates, instead of investing in largely untested initiatives such as promoting marriage skills.

Appendix – A Detailed Description of the Methodology and Further Results

The methodology used to determine the impact of declining teen birth rates on poverty and the living arrangements of children is fairly straightforward. Using data from National Vital Statistics Reports, the number of additional children that *would have been born* if the teen birth rate had remained steady at the 1991 level for each race and ethnic group over the past decade is derived.⁹ These are shown in **Appendix Table 1** by year and race/ethnicity. In 1995, for example, a total of 61,080 additional children would have been born to teenage mothers, and 144,270 additional children would have been born to teenage mothers cumulatively since 1991. From 1992 to 2002, there would have been 1.16 million more children born to teenage mothers.

Using the Current Population Survey for March 2003, children who had been born to teen moms were identified and their sample weights adjusted uniformly so that the number of additional children matched the totals shown in Appendix Table 1 by race and ethnic group and by age of child. For the March 2003

simulation, 208,620 newborn children under the age of one were added to the population plus 182,690 one-year-olds and so on. Using the unadjusted sample weights, there were 72,667,930 children under 18 in 2002, but after adjusting the weights on children with teen moms to simulate the extra children that would have been born, the population of children under 18 increases to 73,840,650. The CPS with the enhanced weights is then compared to that of the original CPS to determine what would have happened to poverty and living arrangements of children and the extent to which the decline in teen birth rates explains the declining poverty rates among children.

To determine what would have happened to poverty and living arrangements of children if these additional births had occurred, it is assumed that the additional children lived in the same economic and demographic situations as actual children born to teenage mothers. Since teen fertility is correlated with characteristics of teens and their environments, the teens who did not become mothers probably have, on average, somewhat better characteristics (potential earnings ability, school grade completed, home environment) than the teens who are mothers. However, controlling

Appendix Table 1					
Number of Additional Children That Would Have Been Born to Teenagers if Birth Rates Had Remained at 1991 Levels					
	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Total	Cumulative Total
1992	10,150	4,430	1,350	15,930	15,930
1993	15,930	9,850	3,040	28,830	44,760
1994	18,260	16,420	3,750	38,430	83,190
1995	26,250	28,500	6,320	61,080	144,270
1996	38,380	36,740	12,570	87,680	231,950
1997	49,760	42,700	19,780	112,240	344,190
1998	55,460	47,340	23,070	125,870	470,060
1999	64,000	54,600	25,580	144,180	614,240
2000	74,160	57,340	25,660	157,160	771,400
2001	89,270	66,050	27,370	182,690	954,090
2002	101,680	74,450	32,490	208,620	1,162,710
Total: 1992-2002	543,310	438,420	180,990	1,162,710	

Source: Joint Economic Committee Democrats' calculations based on data from Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Vital Statistics Reports; and methodology described in this paper.

for race mutes the impact of this considerably as African American teens have more labor and marriage market challenges. Nevertheless, this analysis may overstate slightly the poverty reduction due to declining birth rates.

The methodology employed in the paper simulates extra births as if birth rates among 15-19 year olds remained at their 1991 levels. Measuring this impact on child poverty or living arrangements implicitly assumes that birth rates among other age groups were not affected by the decline in birth rates among teenagers during the 1990s. For example, the estimate of 1.2 million more children born in the 1992 to 2002 time period could be overstated by a substantial amount if these teens who did not give birth (but are simulated to have given birth) only delayed child birth for several years.

While, undoubtedly, delays in child bearing are happening, this would not make a large difference in the estimates derived from this analysis. First, as can be seen in **Appendix Table 2**, birth rates for women between ages 20 and 24 generally declined over the 1991-2002 time period for all race and ethnic groups.

In fact, the birth rate declined 10 percent for all women age 20 to 24 between 1991 and 2002 while the birth rate for African American women declined 21 percent. It appears that some of the same factors that caused teen birth rates to decline also caused birth rates between ages 20 and 24 to fall.

While we have demonstrated that birth rates among all 20-24 year olds fell, it could still be argued that child poverty and living arrangement effects are overstated. If birth rates among 20-24 years olds, who delayed childbearing from their teen years and who are more disadvantaged increased, while birth rates fell among more advantaged economically well-off women. The next table shows this was probably not the case. From the 1991 and 2002 CPS data files, we construct the percentage of women between 20 and 24 years old who have had a child between these ages. Education level is chosen as a proxy for potential earnings ability and economic well-being. **Appendix Table 3** shows that the percentage of 20-24 year old woman who had a child during that age range declined for women who had not completed high school and remained about the same for other women with more education.

Appendix Table 2				
Birth Rates for Females Age 20 to 24, by Race				
	All	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Hispanic
1991	115.3	95.7	164.8	184.6
1992	113.7	93.9	160.8	185.2
1993	111.3	92.2	154.5	180.0
1994	109.2	90.9	146.8	175.7
1995	107.5	90.2	137.8	171.9
1996	107.8	90.1	137.0	170.2
1997	107.3	90.0	138.8	162.6
1998	108.4	91.2	142.5	159.3
1999	107.9	90.6	142.1	157.3
2000	109.7	91.2	145.4	161.3
2001	106.2	87.1	137.2	163.5
2002	103.6	84.3	131.0	164.3
Percent Change 1991-2002	-10%	-12%	-21%	-11%

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Vital Statistics Reports.

Appendix Table 3			
Percentage of Women Aged 20-24 Who Gave Birth to A Child			
Level of Educational Attainment	1991	2002	Difference 2002-1991
All Levels	32.0%	28.8%	-3.2%
Less than High School Education	68.5%	58.1%	-10.4%
High School Graduate	43.3%	43.1%	-0.2%
Some College or Vocational Degree	17.0%	18.6%	1.6%
Bachelor Degree or Higher	4.3%	6.7%	2.4%

Source: Joint Economic Committee Democrats' calculations based on data from Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

From this analysis, we conclude that our estimate of 1.2 million additional children who would have been born if teen birth rates had not declined does not overstate the effects of the decline in teen birth rates on poverty and living arrangements of children. In fact, if the paper were extended to show the impacts of declining birth rates to the under 25 age group, the poverty and living arrangement impacts presented in this paper would be even greater.

Even more dramatic results could also have been obtained if we assumed that birth rates continued to increase during the 1990s as they did between 1986 and 1991. In this scenario, a decline in the teen birth rate would have explained an even larger portion of the decline in child poverty and decline in the number of children living with single mothers. However, assuming that birth rates simply remained at their 1991 levels for the three major racial groups seemed the most reasonable scenario to analyze in depth.

Appendix Table 4 and Appendix Table 5 provide the details for the calculations in Charts 2 and 3, respectively, as well as providing further results about poverty rates and the proportion of children living with a single mother.

Poverty rates for children under six born to teenage mothers are much higher than poverty rates for all young children. The poverty rate of all children under six born to teen mothers is 40.0 percent which is over

twice the actual poverty rate of all children under six. White, non-Hispanic children under six born to teen mothers have a poverty rate of 30 percent while the same poverty rate for black, non-Hispanic children is over 55 percent.

In general, the change in child poverty rates from declining teen birth rates is less than the change in the count of poor children. The child poverty rate is the number of poor children divided by all children and so the decline in the number of children affects this calculation only marginally. Declining teen birth rates lowers child poverty rates because the poverty rates of children born to teen moms is considerably greater than to older mothers. The impact upon poverty counts combines the poverty rate impact and the lowered number of births. For example, the number of young poor black children increases by nearly 15 percent if birth rates had remained constant at their 1991 levels. However, the poverty rate of young black children would only increase from 36.7 percent to 38.3 percent, an increase of about five percent.

Appendix Table 6 is an expanded version of Table 1. We calculate what proportion of the change in poverty measures and living arrangements of children under six can be explained by the decline in teen birth rates. The first four sections of the table show the change in the number of young children in poverty and the change in the percent of young children in poverty for two time periods: 1991 to 2002 and 1995 to 2002.

Appendix Table 4

2002 Increases In Child Poverty Under the Assumption that Teen Birth Rates Remained at 1991 Levels

	Total Under 18	Children Under 6			
		Total	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Number of Children					
Actual, thousands	72,678	23,420	13,573	3,384	4,734
With no decline in teen birth rate, thousands	73,841	24,351	13,969	3,706	4,888
Percent Increase with no decline in Teen Birth Rate, percent	1.6%	4.0%	2.9%	9.5%	3.3%
Number of Poor Children, thousands					
Actual, thousands	12,123	4,388	1,510	1,241	1,378
With no decline in teen birth rate, thousands	12,584	4,760	1,629	1,420	1,433
Increase with no decline in the teen birth rate, thousands	461	372	119	179	56
Percent Increase with no decline in Teen Birth Rate, percent	3.8%	8.5%	7.9%	14.4%	4.0%
Poverty Rate for Additional Children Born to Teens, percent	39.6%	40.0%	30.0%	55.7%	36.1%
Poverty Rate					
Actual, percent	16.7%	18.7%	11.1%	36.7%	29.1%
With no decline in teen birth rate, percent	17.0%	19.6%	11.7%	38.3%	29.3%

Source: Joint Economic Committee Democrats' calculations based on based on data from Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce and methodology described in this paper.

Appendix Table 5

2002 Increases in Number of Children with a Single Mother Under the Assumption that Teen Birth Rates Remained at 1991 Levels

	Total Under 18	Children Under 6			
		Total	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Number of Children Living with Single Mothers in 2002					
Actual, thousands	16,770	5,242	1,903	1,891	1,110
With no decline in the teen birth rate, thousands	17,463	5,803	2,089	2,168	1,178
Increase with no decline in the Teen Birth Rate, thousands	693	561	185	277	67
Percent Increase with no decline in Teen Birth Rate, percent	4.1%	10.7%	9.7%	14.7%	6.0%
Percent of Children Living with Single Mothers in 2002					
Actual, percent	23.1%	22.4%	14.0%	55.9%	23.5%
With No Decline in Teen Births, percent	23.7%	23.8%	15.0%	58.5%	24.1%

Source: Joint Economic Committee Democrats' calculations based on based on data from Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce and methodology described in this paper.

Appendix Table 6

Proportion of Change in Poverty Measures and Living Arrangements of Children under 6 Between 1991 and 2002 That Can Be Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rates

Children under Age 6	All Groups	White, Non-Hispanic	Black, Non-Hispanic
Change in Number of Poor Children Between 1991 and 2002, thousands	-1,313	-1,050	-610
Number of Additional Poor Children in 2002 If Teen Birth Rates Had Not Declined	372	119	179
Percent of Change Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rate	28%	11%	29%
Change in Poverty Rate Between 1991 and 2002, percent	-5.8%	-4.2%	-14.8%
Percentage Point Increase in Poverty Rate in 2002 If Teen Birth Rate Had Not Declined	0.8%	0.5%	1.7%
Percent of Change Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rate	14%	13%	11%
Change in Number of Poor Children Between 1995 and 2002, thousands	-1,432	-734	-617
Number of Additional Poor Children in 2002 If Teen Birth Rates Had Not Declined	372	119	179
Percent of Change Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rate	26%	16%	29%
Change in Poverty Rate Between 1995 and 2002, percent	-5.3%	-2.6%	-11.8%
Percentage Point Increase in Poverty Rate in 2002 If Teen Birth Rate had Not Declined	0.8%	0.5%	1.7%
Percent of Change Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rate	15%	20%	14%
Change in Number of Children Living with Single Mother Between 1995 and 2002, thousands	-682	-579	-362
Number of Additional Children Living with a Single Mother in 2002 If Teen Birth Rate had not Declined	561	185	277
Percent of Change Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rate	82%	32%	76%
Change in Percent of Children Living with Single Mother Between 1995 and 2002, percent	-2.1%	-1.2%	-2.9%
Percentage Point Increase in Percent of Children Living with Single Mother in 2002 If Teen Birth Rate Had Not Declined	1.5%	0.9%	2.6%
Percent of Change Explained by Decline in Teen Birth Rate	68%	78%	92%

Source: Joint Economic Committee Democrats' calculations based on based on data from Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce and methodology described in this paper.

Endnotes

¹ In this paper, the white non-Hispanic includes all teenagers except those who are black non-Hispanic and Hispanic. Therefore, the white non-Hispanic group includes Asian and Native American teenagers.

² National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (1997). *Whatever Happened to Childhood? The Problem of Teen Pregnancy in the United States*. Washington, DC. National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2004). Factsheet: How is the 34% statistic calculated? Washington, DC. Maynard, Rebecca A., ed. 1997. *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.

³ This paragraph draws heavily from I Sawhill “What Can be Done to Reduce Teen Pregnancy and Out-of-Wedlock Births?” The Brookings Institution, Welfare Reform & Beyond Brief 8, October 2001. Other research on why teen birth rates have fallen are: JE Darroch and S Singh, *Why is Teenage Pregnancy Declining? The Roles of Abstinence, Sexual Activity and Contraceptive Use*, Occasional Report, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1999, No. 1. C Flanigan “What’s Behind the Good News: The Decline in Teen Pregnancy Rates During the 1990s,” The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, February 2001. J Manlove, E Terry, L Gitelson, AR Papillo, S Russell “Explaining demographic trends in teenage fertility, 1980-1995,” *Family Planning Perspectives* 32(4), 2000. JK Mohn, LR Tingle and R Finger, “An analysis of the causes of the decline in non-marital birth and pregnancy rates for teens from 1991 to 1995,” *Adolescent and Family Health*, 2002, 3(1): 39-47.

⁴ We use the official rate of poverty as defined by the Census Bureau. Income includes all money income, before taxes of all family members living in the same housing unit, not counting capital gains. We use the official poverty threshold as defined by the Census Bureau. For more information, see www.census.gov.

⁵ We base our definition of single mother families based on the Census Bureau’s survey question regarding the presence of parents for each child in a family. As a result, children who are coded as living with a “mother only” could actually live in a two-parent home, but the parents are unmarried. In addition, the designation of “mother only” does not preclude the existence of other adults in the household, such as grandparents or cohabiters.

⁶ The 1995 to 2002 time period (instead of the 1991 to 2002 time period) was chosen to show impacts upon poverty and living arrangements of children for several reasons. First, 1995 was the year that the number of children living with a single mother reached a peak. Thus, the decline in the number of children living with a single mother between 1995 and 2002 is much larger than the decline between 1991 and 2002. Between 1991 and 2002, the number of young children living with a single mother declined by 240,000 while between 1995 and 2002, the decline is 680,000. Second, following the adoption of 1990 Census weights, there was an enormous increase in the number of children in the CPS between 1993 and 1994, which distorts comparisons between 1991 and 1995. Third, as shown in Appendix Table 2, the vast majority of children that would have been born without a decline in teen birth rates would have been born after 1995. For consistency, we choose the same year for both poverty and living arrangement impacts. However, as we describe in the text, the results for the reduction in poverty for young children are not sensitive to the year. If one picked a different time period, the percentage of the overall decline in the number of poor young children that can be explained by declining teen birth rates remains similar. For example, about 28 percent of the decline in the number of children under age six between 1991 and 2002 can be explained by declining teen birth rates.

⁷ The statistics for Hispanics are not presented because poverty declines were very small (or non-existent), owing to the large increase in the number of Hispanic teens.

⁸ Gregory Acs and Sandi Nelson, “Honey, I’m Home”: Changes in Living Arrangements in the Late 1990s. 2001. Washington, D.C. Urban Institute. Primus, Wendell. “Child Living Arrangements by Race and Income: A Supplementary Analysis” November 2002. Washington, D.C. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Dupree, Allen and Primus, Wendell. “Declining Share of Children Lived with Single Mothers in the Late 1990s” June 2001. Washington, D.C. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

⁹ Data for teen birth rates comes from the National Vital Statistic Reports, published by the National Center for Health Research. Population counts for the number of teenage girls are from the Population Estimates Program at the U.S. Census Bureau for 1991 through 2002 (estimates from July of each year, except for 2000 estimates which are from April).