



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

March 25, 2021

CONTACT: Paloma Zuleta
202-812-4477
pzuleta@powertodecide.org

POWER TO DECIDE CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Continuing Our Journey to Improve Reproductive Well-Being and Increase Agency for All Young People

(Washington, D.C.) — Power to Decide this year marks its [25th anniversary](#) in working to ensure all people have access to the full range of quality reproductive health resources and information.

Power to Decide (originally known as The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy) was founded in 1996 in response to President Clinton’s 1995 State of the Union call to reduce teen pregnancy rates. At the time, the rate of teen pregnancy in the U.S. exceeded most developed countries and was viewed by the President as the nation’s most pressing domestic issue.

Since peaking in the early 1990s, birth rates among teens ages 15-19 have declined [72%](#). According to final birth data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2018 the teen birth rate hit a record low of [17.4 births per 1,000 females \(down from 61.8 births per 1,000 in 1991\)](#).

Despite dramatic declines in teen pregnancies and births over the past two decades, approximately 45% of pregnancies to women of all ages are unplanned. To address the contrasting trends of declines in teen pregnancies and steady or increasing rates of unintended pregnancy among people in their 20s, we expanded our mission in 2005 and became the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

“Since our inception, we have worked to ensure that all people—regardless of who they are—have the power to decide their future,” said Dr. Raegan McDonald-Mosley, CEO, Power to Decide. “We are proud of the significant declines which in some measure may be attributed to improved access to the full range of contraception along with more consistent use of birth control. However, we are also keenly aware that disparities in access to information and opportunity remain. We have much work to do.”

Although teen births in all 50 states have [drastically declined](#) among all racial/ethnic groups over the past two plus decades, progress is not victory. Disparities in teen pregnancy and teen birth rates still remain high for many. Black and Latina teens are twice as likely and individuals living at or below the poverty level are five times as likely to report an unplanned pregnancy compared to their white counterparts.

“The disparities in unplanned pregnancy rates that persist for women of color, women living in poverty and women in rural areas demonstrate that these women are not being adequately served by the nation’s current systems and programs,” Dr. McDonald-Mosley continued. “As we mark 25 years of service, we

remain committed to fighting for equitable access to ensure all young people have the power to decide if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. All young people deserve optimal access, information and opportunity so that they can determine their destinies.”

Throughout our 25 year history, we have remained both uniquely positioned and respected among national, state and local advocates for providing evidence-based information and statistics on unplanned pregnancy and related issues.

Power to Decide continues to work with diverse organizations such as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and MTV to elevate and inform a variety of audiences about our issues. Our successful partnerships with sister organizations, advocacy groups, entertainment media and pop culture allow us to reach our audiences where they are. From *TLC's Unexpected* to *Freeform's The Bold Type* to *Marie Claire* and *Cosmopolitan*, we partner with leaders and influencers in the [entertainment industry and popular culture](#) to talk about sexual health, relationships and birth control in a relevant, approachable way. All while our online birth control support network, [Bedsider](#), reaches 6.5 million people every year between ages 18-29; it is a proven valuable resource for people to find the method that's right for them.

“Our work over the last 25 years is just the beginning, we will continue to lead the way until every young person has access to accurate, quality sexual health information and the full range of contraceptive methods—without barriers or judgment,” stated Dr. McDonald-Mosley.

How to Help

One important way you can help [Power to Decide](#) achieve these goals and celebrate its 25th anniversary is by donating to [BCBenefits, our Contraceptive Access Fund](#). Just a \$5 donation can provide a month of birth control pills to a person in need. Join us and be a part of the effort committed to breaking down barriers that restrict people's access to quality contraception.

Power to Decide is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Please visit us at www.PowerToDecide.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.