



The National Campaign
to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

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THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN APPLAUDS CONGRESSIONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT ABRUPTLY SHORTENED TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION GRANTS

HHS shortening of grants is highly unusual, flies in the face of federal commitments to evidence-based policy, and precedes congressional action on appropriations

(Washington, DC)—The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy (The National Campaign) is grateful for the multiple letters from members of Congress inquiring into the highly unusual actions of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which has abruptly shortened 81 grants from the evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program.

Grantees were notified that their projects would be shortened from five years to three, meaning grantees will lose approximately \$200 million in funding to continue their work. From FY 2010-2014, the TPP Program served 500,000 youth in 39 states and Washington, DC and the current grantees were well on their way to serving over a million youth. The letters from [37 Senators](#) and [149 Representatives](#), as well as a [letter](#) from 9 members of the Texas delegation, inquire about the rationale for cutting short these TPP Program grants—especially as it preempts Congressional action on FY 2018 appropriations and flies in the face of federal commitments to evidence and evaluation.

“These actions are devastating to communities around the country facing some of the highest rates of teen pregnancy,” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO of The National Campaign. “Dismantling this evidence-based program is short-sighted and will harm hundreds of thousands of our most vulnerable youth by denying them high quality information and education that will help them to make healthy decisions about their futures. The TPP Program is a gold-standard example of evidence-based policymaking—just the type of investment that independent experts and members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have called for.”

The TPP Program provides competitive grants to organizations around the country to implement programs with strong evidence showing they positively impact teens’ behaviors related to preventing unplanned pregnancy, as well as to innovate and rigorously evaluate new approaches. The program focuses on evidence and results rather than ideology. The program supports a wide variety of approaches, including those that focus on abstinence, those that address both abstinence and contraception, and those that focus on youth development. Communities choose interventions that best meet the needs

of young people in their area at different points in their lives. Since the TPP Program began in 2010, the teen birth rate in the U.S. has [declined](#) 41%—a drop that is more than twice as large as the decline in any other six-year period.

Nationally representative [polling](#) from The National Campaign shows that 85% of adults favor continuing the TPP Program (including 75% of Republicans and 89% of Democrats).

“Ending grants two years early is like starting to build a skyscraper and abandoning the project halfway through the construction process,” Ehrlich said. “The federal government will have spent millions, yet not seen the effort through in order to learn from the results—exactly the opposite of what a federal commitment to evidence looks like. We commend those who signed these letters, and the members of Congress on both sides of the aisle inquiring into why this funding is being cut short without their input.

“The TPP Program and the accelerated declines in our nation’s teen birth rate are part of a national success story that we should build upon, not dismantle,” Ehrlich added. “Despite the dramatic progress, the U.S. still has much higher teen pregnancy rates than other industrialized nations, and disparities by race, ethnicity, age, and geography persist. If we truly want to help all of our nation’s youth succeed, we must do better.”

About The National Campaign: The National Campaign is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that seeks to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families by preventing teen and unplanned pregnancy. Please visit us at www.TheNationalCampaign.org or follow along on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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