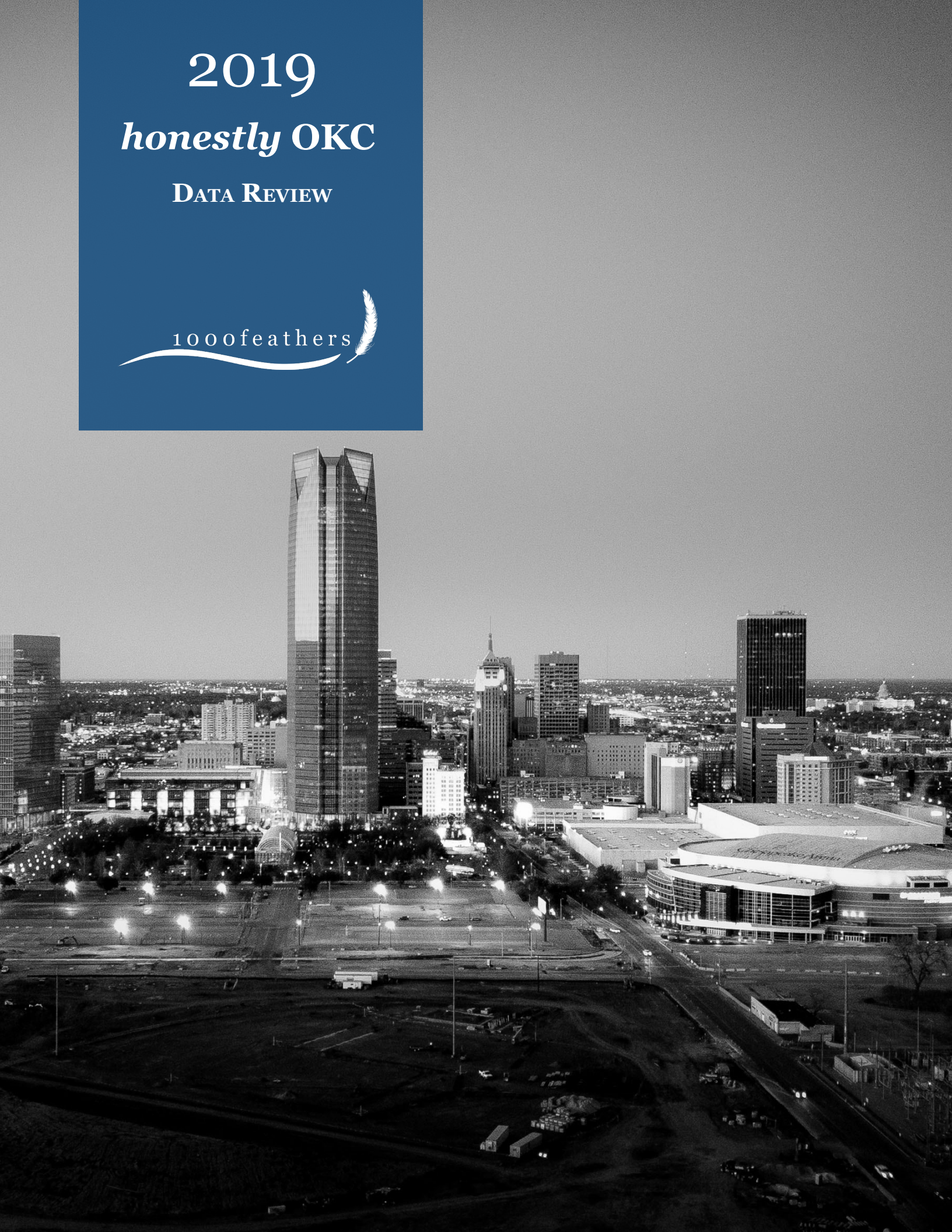


# 2019

## *honestly OKC*

DATA REVIEW

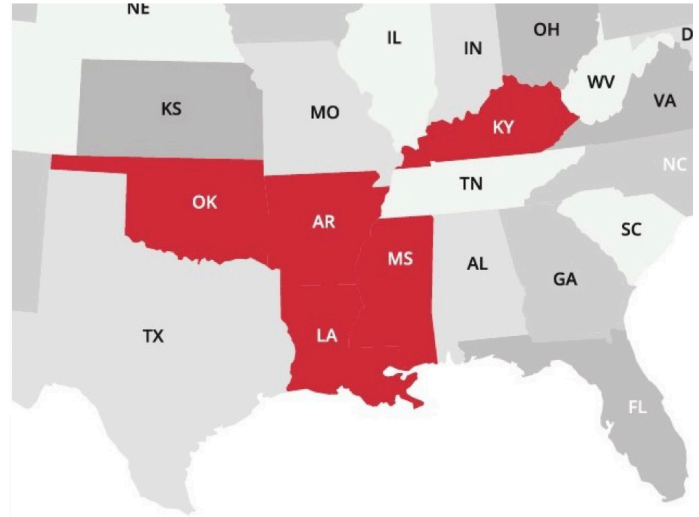


# INTRODUCTION

There is good news to share: intensive and focused efforts to prevent teen pregnancy over the past two decades in the United States (U.S.) are working. Nationally, there has been well-documented progress reducing teen birth rates and teen pregnancy rates.<sup>1</sup>

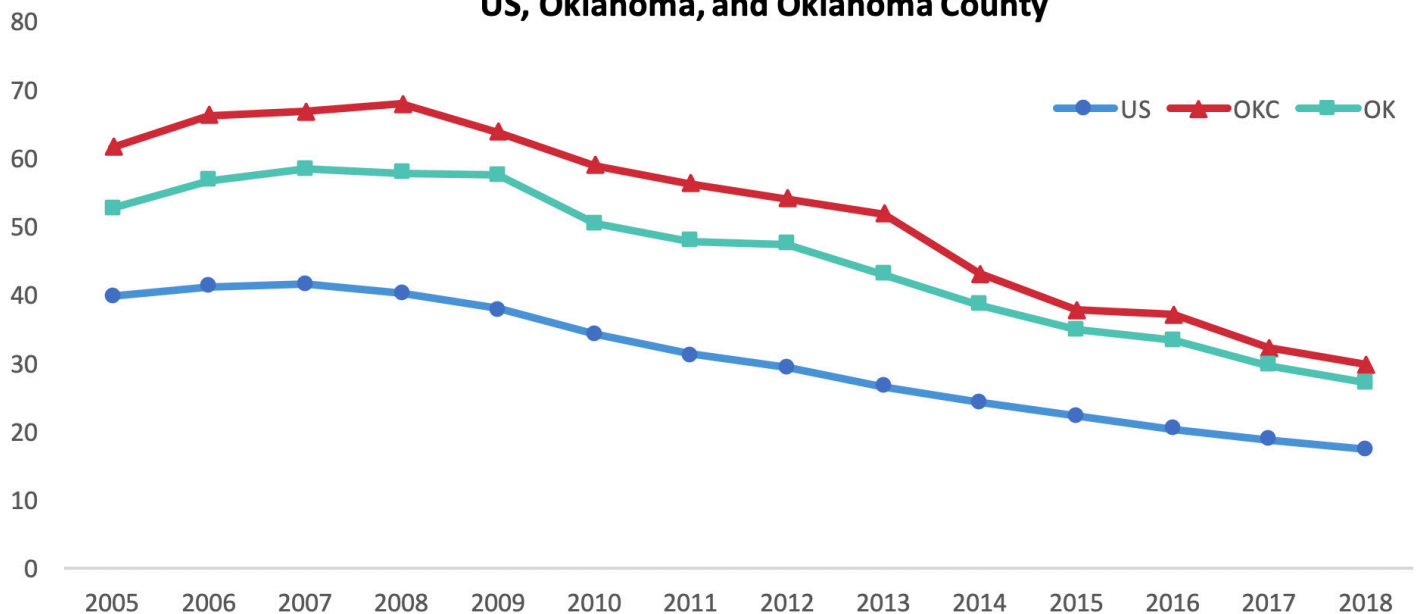
Since its peak in 1991, the teen birth rate in the U.S. has decreased 70%, with declines among all age groups, all races, and in all 50 states.<sup>2</sup> As shown in the image below, teen birth rates nationally, in Oklahoma, and in Oklahoma County rates have been on a steady decline for the last decade after modest increases in the early 2000s.

Not all of the news is positive. Progress reducing teen pregnancy and teen birth rates across the country has masked the fact that 1) teen birth rates in the U.S. are still substantially higher than those in other industrialized nations, and 2) significant disparities still exist by geography and demography.<sup>3,4</sup>



*A NOTE ABOUT DATA:* Comparing data across years and locations (national, state, local) is not always an easy proposition. A number of different data sources have been combined to create the graphs and charts on these pages. All local data comes from OK-2SHARE, however, many national data sets were also consulted. We have worked to the lowest common denominator in all cases – by year, by location, by race – and therefore every graph does not include every demographic. Also of note, “Central Oklahoma” and “Oklahoma County” are used interchangeably in this report to describe a geographic focus. “Central Oklahoma” describes the geographic area that includes both Oklahoma City and Oklahoma County, while “Oklahoma County” is used when data and statistics are specific to the county. Our goal is to use a broad term to encourage participation among school districts and communities that have a need and interest in addressing the issue of teen pregnancy, while being specific when required to ensure proper data collection for outcome measurement.

**Teen Birth Rate Over Time, ages 15-19, per 1,000 females  
US, Oklahoma, and Oklahoma County**



Oklahoma is a perfect example of a state that has seen decreases in teen pregnancy and teen birth rates over the last 20 years yet continues to have one of the highest teen birth rate in the nation. While incredible progress has been made reducing the teen birth rate nationally and more locally over the decade-plus, Oklahoma has one of the top-5 highest teen birth rates in the country.

## THE LOCAL STORY

In 2018 there were a total of 740 births to teens in Oklahoma County – more than 20% of all births to teens in the state. Further examination highlights an undeniable truth in Oklahoma County:

### Teen birth rates vary dramatically in Oklahoma County by age, race and geography.

Overall, teen birth rates in Oklahoma County are higher than national and state averages.<sup>5</sup> Teen pregnancy is an issue that impacts everyone, but data clearly show disparities in teen birth rates persist here in Oklahoma County and across the country.<sup>3</sup> Given limited resources in communities, understanding where and how to focus future efforts is critically important. Considerable time was spent examining potential focus areas, in this case defined by age, by geography (zip code), and data-defined special populations.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are top-of-mind issues for leaders in the community, so taking the necessary time to examine data trends and additional research was an important part of the process. In order to see continued success in Oklahoma County, there must be a laser-sharp focus on the health disparities and inequities that exist locally, including those that exist by age and ethnicity, age, and geography with additional attention paid to identified priority populations.



**(We need to) set a goal on disparities and those that are really hard to reach... Let's hone in on the hard to reach, which also seem to be the most vulnerable."**

*- Partner Interview*

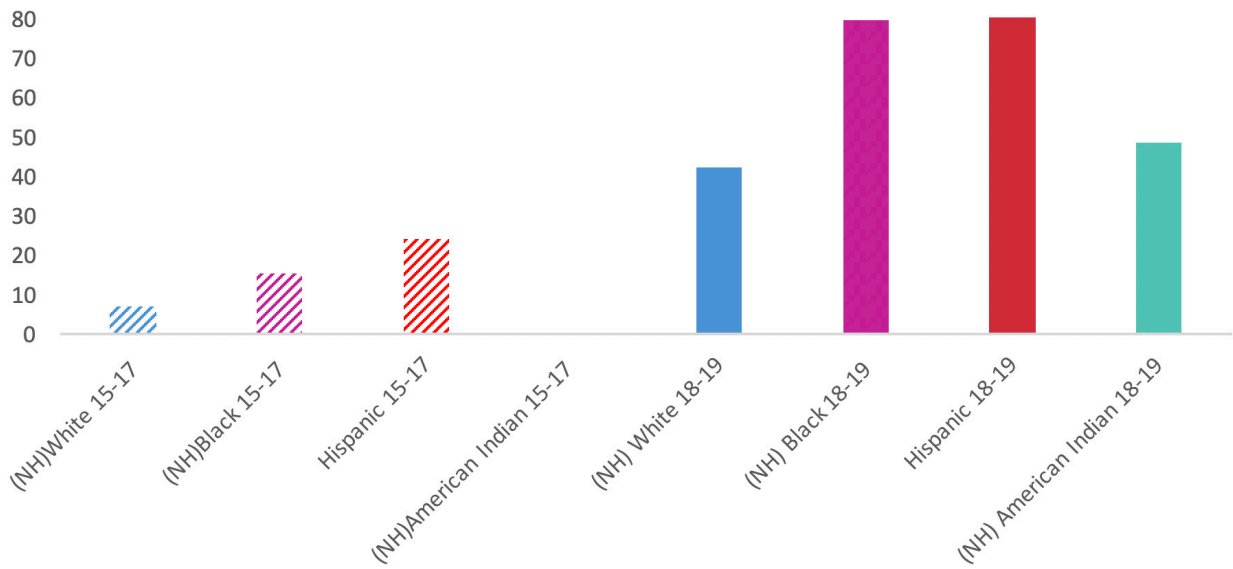
#### Disparities by Race and Ethnicity:

While there have been significant decreases among all age groups and among all races, youth of color – Black, Hispanic, and American Indian youth – have higher rates than their White peers. Perhaps more importantly, decreases in the county's teen birth rate have not been uniform by race and ethnicity. The most significant decrease between 2013-2018 occurred among American Indian teens; a decrease of 57%. White teens and Hispanic teens had decreases of 47% and 48% respectively. However, the decrease among Black teens has been much less substantial (26%), and rates among this group have even increased slightly in recent years.

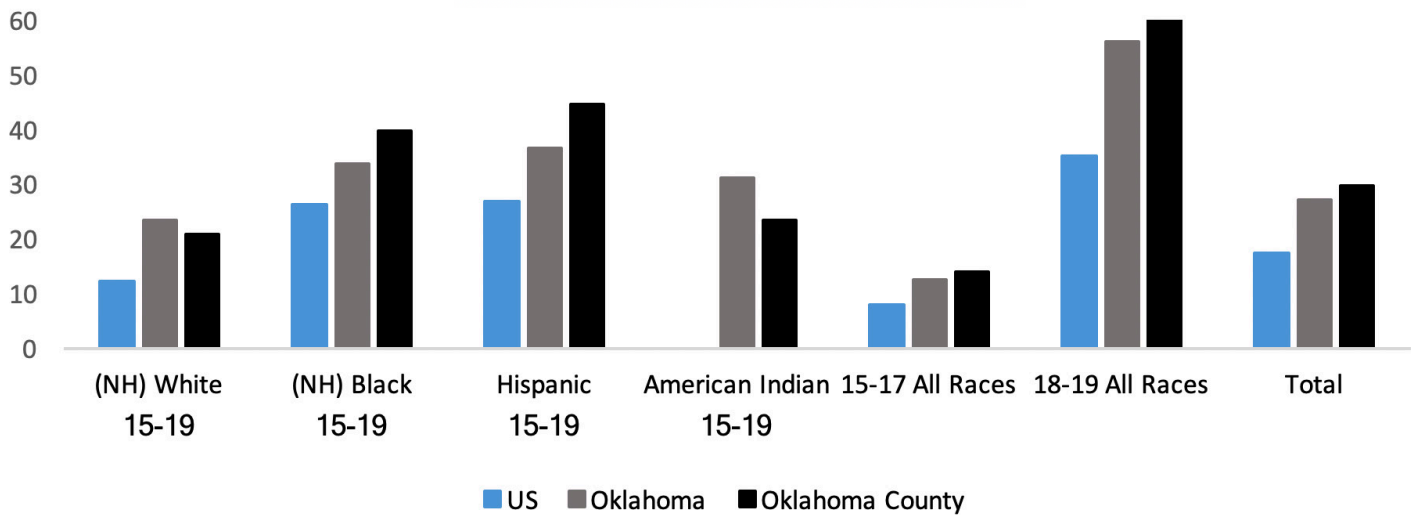
Truly addressing disparities among race and ethnicity in our community will require us to pay particular attention to the systemic, cultural, and generational factors at play.

DECREASES IN TEEN BIRTH RATE OVER TIME (per 1,000 females 15-19, by race)				
	(NH) White	(NH) Black	Hispanic	(NH) American Indian
2012	36.3	65.3	92.8	53.7
2018	20.7	39.7	44.6	23.3
<b>% Change</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>57%</b>

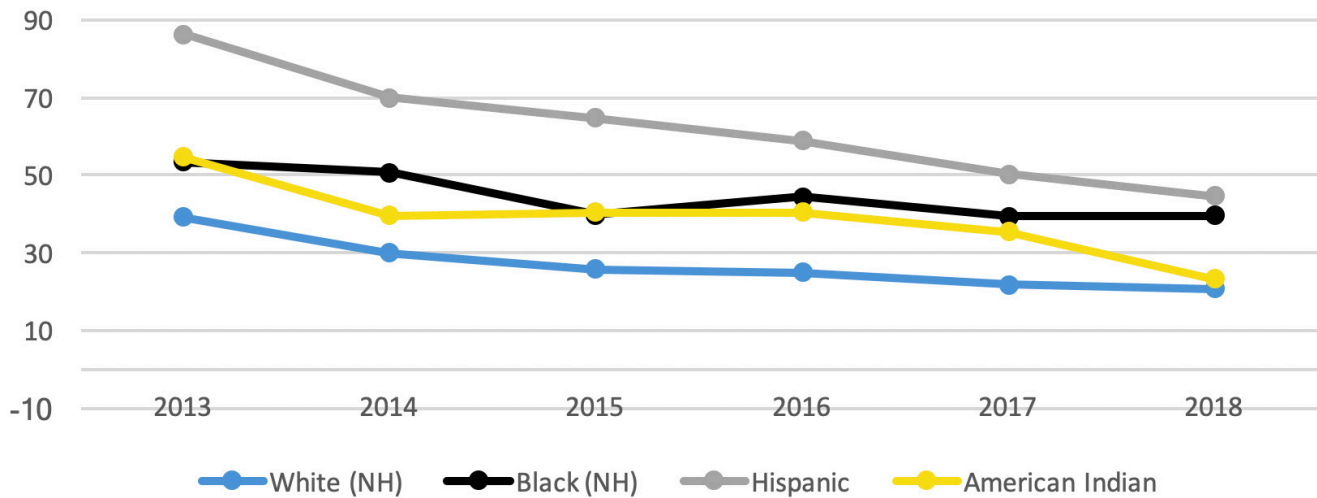
**US, Oklahoma, Oklahoma County Teen Birth Rates per 1,000 females  
(2018 by age and race)**



**US, Oklahoma, Oklahoma County:  
Teen Birth Rates per 1,000 females  
(2017 by age and 2018 by race, total)**



### Oklahoma County Teen Birth Rate Rate per 1,000 15-19 year old females By Race/Ethnicity (2013-2019)



#### Disparities by Age:

Because 73% of all teen births in Oklahoma County are to 18-19 year olds<sup>5</sup>, we must increase our focus on and resources directed to serving older teens. This population is too often excluded from community conversations about preventing teen pregnancy. However, it is undeniable that the teen birth rate for 18-19 year olds (57.4/1,000) is nearly five times as high as the rate of younger youth, ages 15-17 (12.7/1,000).

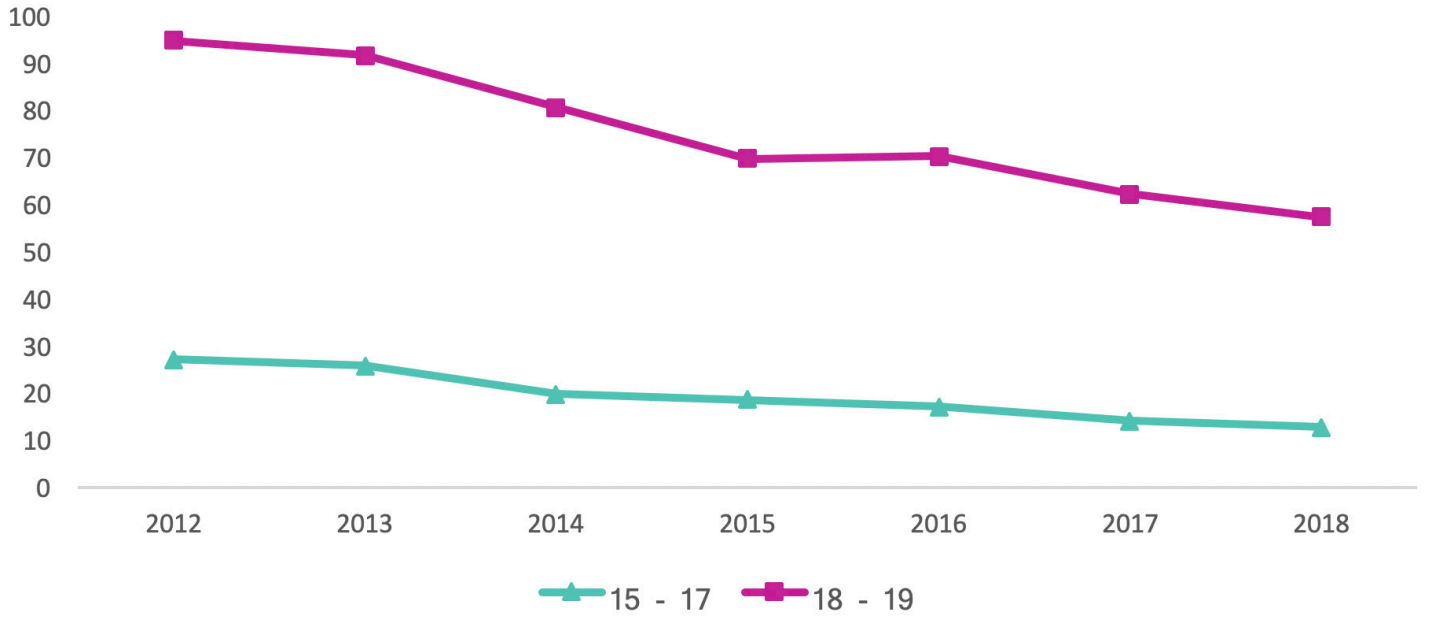
Sharp declines in the teen pregnancy rate and subsequent low numbers of births among younger teens are a testament to the hard work of many in Oklahoma County – and have caused a shift in priority age groups as the issue of children having children very clearly seems to be “aging up.” Young teens have received much of the public’s attention the last two decades largely because of the use of school-based sex education programs as a focus of teen pregnancy prevention efforts.

### 73% of all teen births in Oklahoma County are to 18-19 year olds.

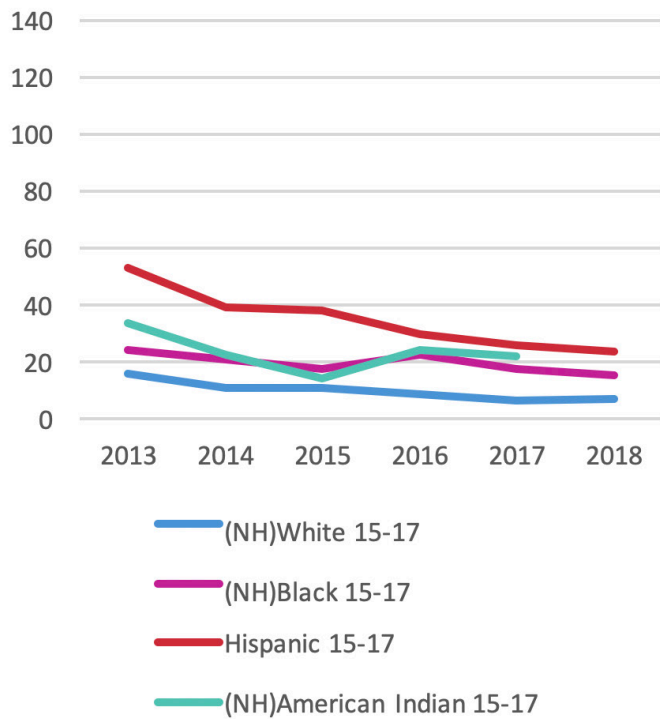
For communities interested in further reducing teen pregnancy and teen birth rates, youth 17 and younger obviously deserve continued attention, but communities must acknowledge the imperative of providing greater attention to older teens.

The issue of repeat teen births is also of special concern. In Oklahoma County, 16% of all teen births are to mothers who already have at least one child<sup>5</sup>, compounding the educational, economic, and health impacts of the issue.

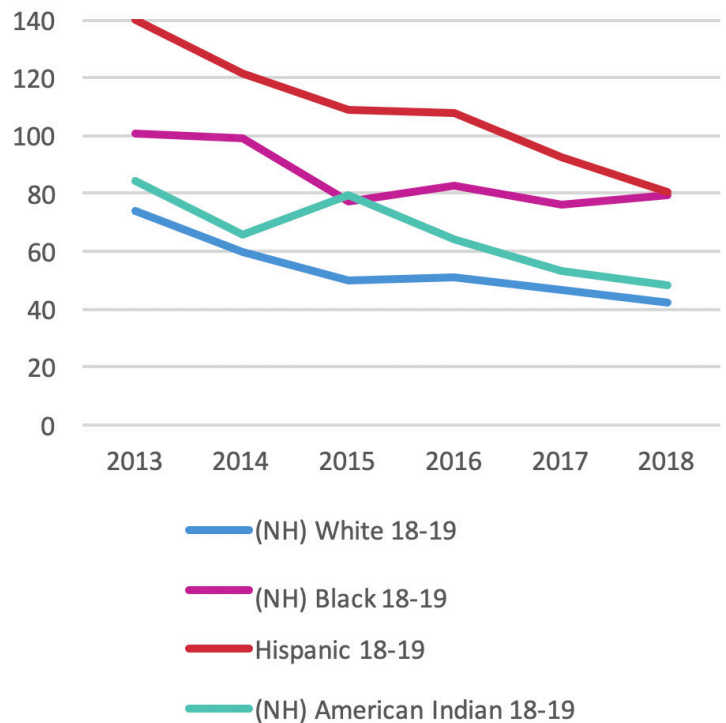
## Oklahoma County Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 females by age, 2012-2018



### Teen Birth Rate in Ok County: females ages 15-17

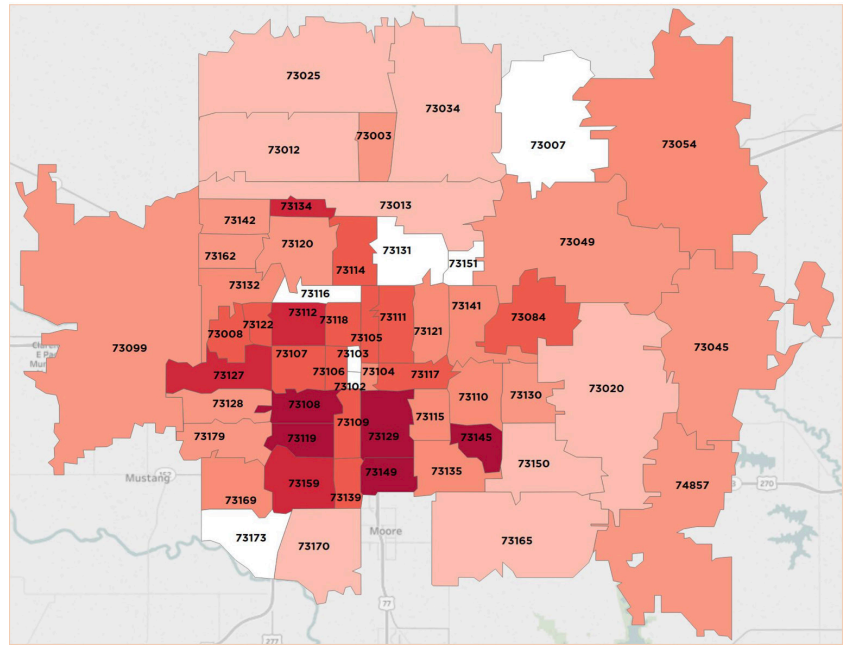


### Teen Birth Rate in Ok County: females ages 18-19



## Disparities by Geography:

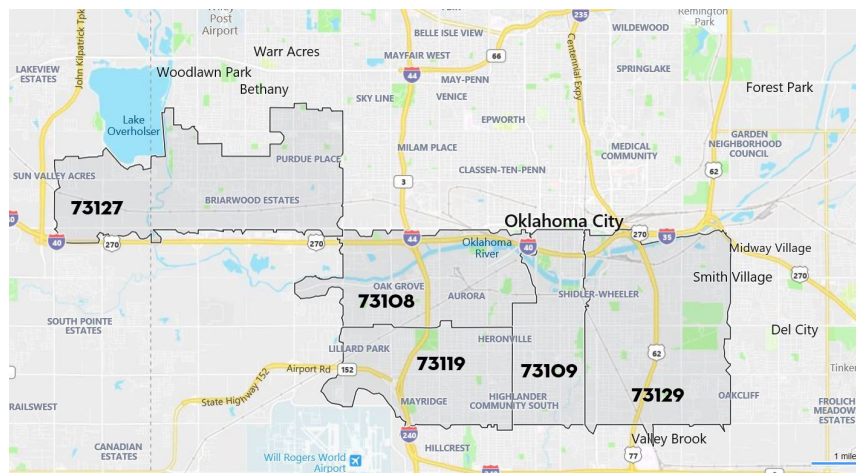
While county and state level data on teen pregnancy and teen birth rates tell an important story, taking a deeper dive into the landscape of Oklahoma County to examine teen birth trends and other social and economic variables by zip code seemed necessary. In some Oklahoma City zip codes, teen birth rates are 2-3 times higher than the national average, highlighting what are undoubtedly systemic issues in those communities. An appropriate starting place for this conversation was to view zip code teen birth rates in a stand-alone way. Members of the collaborative appropriately pointed to challenges with such an image that was limited to teen birth rates, given wide ranging populations across zip codes and the presence of other social factors that may be influencing the teen birth rate. To provide more clarity to the conversation around priority geographies, a three-factor assessment was utilized:



1. Three-year rolling averages of teen birth rates were utilized based on data from the Oklahoma State Department of Health vital records. These are the rates that were used to create the original zip code map (above) but for this more detailed analysis, only the top-15 birth rates in the county were considered.
2. To control for the fact that some zip codes have very small populations of people overall and small populations of 15 – 19 year-old youth specifically, an analysis of population was conducted using Census data. Three variables were evaluated across each of the 15 zip codes: the percentage of the population ages 15-19, the percent of the 15-19 year old population that is female, and finally the number of female residents ages 15-19. A weighted scoring was used to account for differences in populations across zip codes.
3. Eight different socio-economic and demographic factors were selected for analysis to provide a more comprehensive understanding of each of the zip codes in Oklahoma County. Each of the factors selected have been shown by research to be related to high rates of teen births and/or were identified as particularly important to the *honestly* team. Factors included zip code specific data related to demographics (percent Hispanic; percent African American), education (percent 18-24 year olds with less than high school diploma; percent 18-24 year olds not enrolled in college; percent 18-19 year olds not enrolled in school), poverty (percent of families with income below \$35,000; percent of families with children under 18 whose household income was below poverty line last 12 months), and healthcare (percent without health insurance). Again, a weighted scoring system was used to account for differences across zip codes when compared to county averages.

The result of this process was identification of the five priority zip codes shown in the map to the right, each of which:

- ✓ have high teen birth rates, AND
- ✓ score poorly across socio-economic factors, AND
- ✓ have a sufficient population of 15-19-year-old females increasing the likelihood of impact with successful interventions.



It should be noted that a process to identify priority zip codes does not imply that the common agenda abandons work in other locations (especially those with high teen birth rates). It does mean considerable effort should be put into partner recruitment, community engagement, distribution of funding, and ensuring sufficient access to information and resources exist in those areas.

### Disparities among Priority Populations:

The Office of Adolescent Health has also identified a number of populations of youth who may need special support and attention to their health and overall care.<sup>6</sup> These include:

- » youth who are the children of immigrants or refugees:
- » homeless youth
- » youth in foster care
- » youth in the juvenile justice system
- » lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ) youth
- » youth with disabilities

Youth in the foster care and juvenile justice systems deserve particular mention given the intensive local interest that already exists for these populations. There are more than 1,700 youth under 18 currently in foster care in Oklahoma County<sup>7</sup> and many more in the juvenile justice system. Those in foster care are more than twice as likely to become pregnant by age 19 and many of those who become pregnant experience a repeat pregnancy before they reach age 19.<sup>8,9</sup> Nearly one-in-three girls in the juvenile justice system has been or is currently pregnant. Further, the connections are reciprocal and multigenerational as children born to teen parents are more likely to enter the child welfare or juvenile justice system and to become teen parents themselves.<sup>10</sup> When compared to older mothers, teen mothers are more likely to have placed a child in foster care and more likely to have a reported case of abuse or neglect.

## PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE

One of the reasons teen pregnancy garners so much attention is because practical solutions exist to the challenge. People are noticing both the progress that has been made and the high cost of failing to take further action.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified teen pregnancy as a “winnable battle”: a public health priority with large-scale impact on health and known effective strategies to address it.<sup>11</sup>
- Urban Institute’s report describes 13 building blocks for developing effective strategies to promote mobility from poverty including “Family Formation and Stability: Increases in stable, healthy marriage and relationships for parents; reductions in [teen] pregnancies.”<sup>12</sup>
- The Bridgespan Group has listed reducing unintended pregnancies as one of their “billion dollar bets”: 15 high-potential bets through which philanthropists could have a significant impact on increasing upward mobility.<sup>13</sup>



**When you really look at health disparities and challenges around lack of opportunity, it's always falling into these same zip codes.**

*- Key Stakeholder Interview*



## WHY IT MATTERS

Such progress is critically important to the well-being of communities because of the significant impact that the issue has on other social issues. High teen birth rates contribute to a broad array of socioeconomic and health risks to mothers and their children and place a substantial burden on entire communities. **If all unplanned pregnancies among teens were avoided, an annual public savings of nearly \$7 million could be realized each year by Oklahoma County taxpayers.**<sup>14</sup> This, in addition to the numerous other impacts on education, poverty, and health. According to Robert Wood Johnson's County Health Rankings<sup>15</sup>, a number of related indicators of the county's health and well-being are troubling and worse than state averages:

### Graduation rate

(77% Oklahoma County, 83% statewide)

### Children in poverty

(23% Oklahoma County, 21% statewide)

### Children in single-parent homes

(37% Oklahoma County, 34% statewide)



**I think education and poverty; those two things are linked very tightly to teen pregnancy. I mean, this is about workforce development..."**

*- OKC Key Leader*

## EDUCATION

Only 40% of teen mothers will ever finish high school and less than 2% will finish college by age 30. Nearly one-third of young mothers who dropped out of high school cite pregnancy or parenting as a reason.<sup>16</sup> Among female community college students, nearly one in 10 dropouts is related to an unplanned birth. **In Oklahoma County, more than 50% of teen mothers had not completed high school or obtained a GED prior to giving birth.**

## POVERTY

Forty-one percent of mothers who give birth before age 20 are living in poverty within the first year of their child's birth. Nearly two-thirds of mothers receive public assistance in that same time frame.<sup>17</sup> Roughly half of all teen mothers are currently living below the poverty line. **In Oklahoma County, 90% of all teen births are paid for by Medicaid or other public sources.**<sup>18</sup>

**In Oklahoma County, for adults who have not finished high school, their poverty rate is nearly double that of those who did, and more than 600% higher than those with a college degree.**<sup>19</sup>

## HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Babies born to teen mothers are more likely to be preterm, low birthweight, and experience infant mortality.<sup>20</sup> Teen and unplanned pregnancy are also closely linked with mental health issues, increased levels of physical abuse for mothers and their children, and less stable romantic relationships. There are also generational and quality of life implications. Girls in foster care are 2.5 times more likely than their peers to get pregnant and the daughters of teen mothers are three times more likely to become teen moms themselves.<sup>1</sup>

**740** births 2018 in Oklahoma County to youth under 20.

**90%** of all teen births in Oklahoma County are paid for by Medicaid or other public sources.

**\$6.85** millions of dollars in annual savings to Oklahoma County taxpayers if births to teens were avoided.<sup>21</sup>

**83%** of adults in the south say that teen pregnancy is an important problem compared to other social and economic problems in their community.<sup>22</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup>Continued Declines in Teen Births in the United States, 2015. Hamilton, B.E., Mathews, T.J. 259, Atlanta, GA : US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016, NCHS Data Brief.
- <sup>2</sup>Power to Decide (online). <https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/national-state-data/national>
- <sup>3</sup>Livingston, G., Thomas, D. (2019). Why is the teen birth rate falling? <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/08/02/why-is-the-teen-birth-rate-falling/>
- <sup>4</sup>Martin JA, Hamilton BE, Osterman MJK. Births in the United States, 2018. NCHS Data Brief, no 346. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2019.
- <sup>5</sup>All teen birth and associated data for Oklahoma and Oklahoma County accessed online via OK2SHARE ([https://www.health.state.ok.us/stats/Vital\\_Statistics/Birth/Final/Statistics\\_2010up.shtml](https://www.health.state.ok.us/stats/Vital_Statistics/Birth/Final/Statistics_2010up.shtml)) unless otherwise indicated.
- <sup>6</sup>US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health, Adolescent Health: Think, Act, Grow Playbook. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, updated February 2018.
- <sup>7</sup>KIDS COUNT Data Center (2017). The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- <sup>8</sup>Boonstra, H. D. (2011). Teen Pregnancy Among Young Women In Foster Care: A Primer. Guttmacher Policy Review. Volume 14, Issue 2.
- <sup>9</sup>Preventing Teen Pregnancy Through Outreach and Engagement: Tips for Working with Foster Care and Juvenile Justice. <https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/preventing-teen-pregnancy-through-outreach-and-engagement>
- <sup>10</sup>NCSL State Update. Mississippi: Teen Pregnancy (January 2015). <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=6&ved=2a-hUKEwj13rLH54zkAhXtc98KHU99AtsQFjAFegQIBxAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncsl.org%2Fdocuments%2Fhealth%2FPreMSCWJJ115.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3qcZ-YMQWF0bRLtSVER3nb>
- <sup>11</sup>US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC: Winnable Battles Final Report (2010). <https://www.cdc.gov/winnablebattles/report/docs/winnable-battles-final-report.pdf>
- <sup>12</sup>Bogle, M., Acs, G., Loprest, P., Mikelson, K., Popkin, S. Building Blocks and Strategies for Helping Americans Move Out of Poverty. s.l. : US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty, 2016.
- <sup>13</sup>Boyd, M., Murphy, D., Bielak, D. "Billion Dollar Bets" to Reduce Unintended Pregnancies. Creating Opportunity for Every American. s.l. : The Bridespan Group, 2016.
- <sup>14</sup>Power to Decide. Progress Pays Off. <https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/why-it-matters/progress-pays>
- <sup>15</sup>2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps: Building a Culture of Health, County by County. A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/oklahoma/2019/rankings/oklahoma/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>
- <sup>16</sup>Shuger, L. (2012). Teen Pregnancy and High School Dropout: What Communities are Doing to Address These Issues. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and America's Promise Alliance.
- <sup>17</sup>National Conference of State Legislatures. Teen Pregnancy Prevention. <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/teen-pregnancy-prevention.aspx>
- <sup>18</sup>OK2SHARE
- <sup>19</sup>World Population Review: Oklahoma County. <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/ok/oklahoma-county-population/>
- <sup>20</sup>Kaye, K. Why it Matters: Teen Childbearing and Infant Health. [Online] October 2012. [www.thenationalcampaign.org](http://www.thenationalcampaign.org).
- <sup>21</sup>SOURCE
- <sup>22</sup>Survey Says: Mission Not Accomplished (2017). Power to Decide. <https://powertodecide.org/sites/default/files/resources/primary-download/survey-says-may-2017.pdf>