

# Teen pregnancies decreasing

WASHINGTON (AP) — American teen-agers are having fewer babies, including a dramatic decrease among black girls to the lowest rate on record, the government said Thursday.

Teen birth rates are down in every state. The reasons: less sex and more birth control, statistics indicate.

Black teen birth rates fell by 21 percent between 1991 and 1996. In 1996, 9.2 percent of black teen-age girls gave birth, the lowest since the government began keeping that statistic.

"The African-American community has done a wonderful job with their own young people," said Donna Shalala, the secretary of health and human services. "Their strategy of parents, community leaders, religious leaders and schools all sending the same consistent message that young blacks are cutting off their future if they have children is working."

Hispanic teens are now most likely to give birth, though their rates also fell, from 10.7 percent in 1995 to 10.2 percent in 1996, the first significant drop since 1991.

Despite the decreases, teen birth rates among both minority groups remain more than double that of white teen-agers, which have been steadily declining since 1991. In 1995, the latest year available for non-Hispanic whites, 3.9

percent of those teens had babies.

## Conception of problems

Shalala noted that the problems go deep into the socioeconomic landscape of minority communities, where too many teen-agers feel little hope for the future.

"If you think you have a future, you put off having babies," she said in an interview.

Nearly half a million American teen-agers give birth each year. In 1996, there was about one birth for every 20 girls ages 15 to 19, down 11.9 percent since 1991, according to the analysis released Thursday by the National Center for Health Statistics.

Most teen mothers are 18 or 19, but the rates dropped most dramatically among girls 15 to 17.

Experts attribute the decline to less sexual activity among boys and girls and greater use of birth control in the age of AIDS.

In 1995, sexual activity among American teens dropped for the first time since the government began tracking information in 1970. Fifty percent of girls had sex in 1995, down from 55 percent in 1990. The rate for boys dropped from 60 percent in 1988 to 55 percent in 1995.

At the same time, teen-agers who have sex are more likely to use contraceptives, particularly con-

## State divisions

Thursday's report comes amid intense efforts to reduce teen sex and pregnancy.

States are competing to see which can most dramatically reduce out-of-wedlock births, with winners sharing \$100 million each year. And the 1996 welfare reform law gives states \$50 million each year for programs to promote abstinence.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy is working with television networks to promote anti-pregnancy messages while it aids communities with their own programs.

On Thursday, the organization released a brochure to help parents become closer to their teen-agers, arguing that research shows teens are less likely to have sex — and more likely to use birth control if they do — if their parents are involved in their lives.

The highest teen birth rate was recorded in 1957, when nearly one in 10 girls gave birth. The rate was significantly higher throughout the 1950s and 1960s, but in those days the mothers were much more likely to be married. In 1950, just 23 percent of mothers 15 to 17 were unmarried; in 1996, it was 84 percent.

# Political science professor resigns

## RESIGN from page 1

Theiss-Morse, and other political science professors, point to a review completed by Omaha attorney Amy Longo, which they say exonerated Forsythe and the department.

Though Theiss-Morse said she has not read the Longo report, from what she's heard the report said there was not a "chilly" climate for women.

Schwebach's attorney, Thom Cope, said there was a second investigation conducted by the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission after the complaint was filed.

The commission's study, Cope said, relied on information provided by the university, and did not "go into detail."

"The problems within that department would be something that would take a lot more analysis than what the NEOC gave it," Cope told the Daily Nebraskan last week.

Despite what some political science professors said, Schwebach and her attorney insist the NEOC and Longo reports are flawed. He said the department ignored problems with sexual harassment instead of dealing with them.

Through discussions about the reports and her resignation, Schwebach said she hoped the university would be more sensitive to sexual harassment and its impact on women.

"(Schwebach is) a good researcher and a good teacher. It will be a loss to the department."

**ELIZABETH THEISS-MORSE**  
political science professor

Schwebach said she was so disheartened by the university's lack of response to her complaints, that she plans to leave academia altogether.

Even those who disagree with her claims say that Schwebach's teaching will be missed at UNL.

"She's a good researcher and a good teacher," Theiss-Morse said. "It will be a loss to the department."

Schwebach said she would miss teaching students and researching. She said because of her childhood in Iran and other experiences abroad, it was her destiny to teach international relations.

But she just couldn't withstand the hostile climate, she said.

"I filed the complaint last June," Schwebach said, "and hoped to improve the climate. Now I don't know what to think."

"I doubt that anything will ever change."

# Kerrey: Spending practices of Democrats must change

BOSTON (AP) — Democratic National Committee spending practices are hindering chances of the party gaining any seats in the Senate in November, said U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey.

The committee cannot afford national ads to help Senate candidates because it spent so much getting President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore re-elected, and on later legal bills, he told The Boston Globe.

Kerrey, who heads the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, and Gore could compete for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2000.

Since 1996, the Democratic National Committee has been the political arm of the White House, Kerrey said.

"It's not even an arm," he said. "It is two arms, two legs and the whole body, all the moving parts. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the White House."

Steve Jarding, Kerrey's national political director, said the senator's

statements should not be construed to mean that Kerrey is trying to distance himself from Gore for a possible run for president.

Kerrey was in committee hearings Thursday and did not immediately return a call from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Democrats hold only 45 of the Senate's 100 seats, and observers told the Globe the party could lose one or more of them.

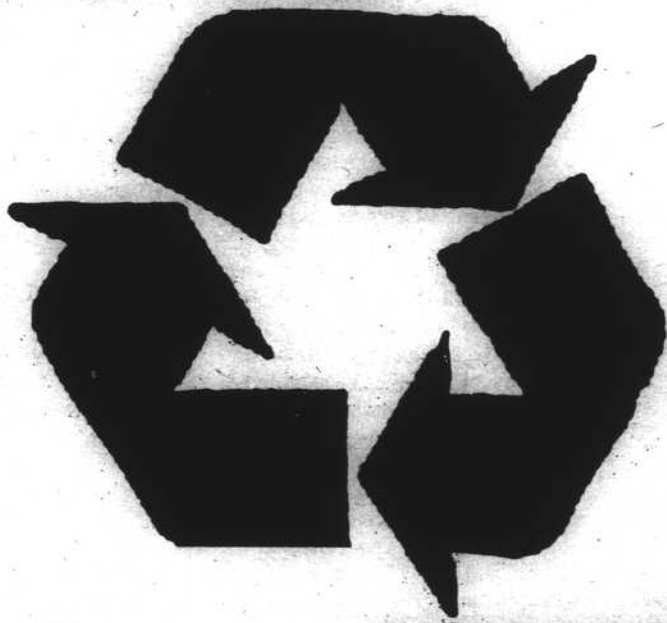
There will be 34 Senate races in November. Democrats now hold 18 of those seats, and three Democrats will not seek re-election. Republicans have 16 of the seats and two of their senators will retire.

Kerrey wants the party's national committee to pay for advertising in the Senate contests to make it more of a national campaign highlighting Democrats' accomplishments.

"If I had generic advertisements running through the DNC, like we did in '95 and '96 to support the president by telling people what Democratic policies had produced, I'd be more optimistic," Kerrey said.

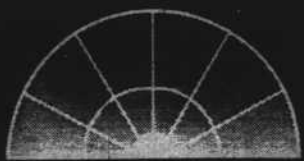
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