

Teenage Fertility and Sex Education

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What are the trends in teenage pregnancy?

- Increase in teenage fertility
- Decrease in adult fertility
- Effect: exaggerates the effect of teenage increase.

What are the main predictors?

- low self esteem
- lack of future goals (default is to have children young, it is women with career aspirations who *delay* pregnancy. lack of opportunities/resources

What is the relationship between these variables and teenage fertility? Why do these relationships hold?

Question: what are the reasons for this kind of behavior economic incentives (or lack of economic resources) peer behavior, role models, etc.

Important concept: reference group.

- Herbert Hyman 1942
- Robert Merton 1949 [1968] "Social Theory and Social Structure"
- Advanced topics: Akerlof 1997 Social Decisions and Social Distance: Conformity leads to underproduction
- conformity and multiple equilibria

Why Unmarried? What are some of the reasons women wouldn't want to marry fathers?

- Labor market opportunities both parents
- Poor labor market opportunities for men, make marriage less attractive for women.

Steady decline in resources, welfare and services to teens, yet, increasing fertility
abstinence only programs - no reliable evidence that they successful, in fact Kirby et al.

1994 finds evidence of ineffectiveness.

virginity pledges - outcomes

- most women break pledge, and pledge breakers felt worse about themselves. (Bearman
xxxx)

- variation in findings, some studies find that pledgers delay intercourse, have fewer partners.

Sex education:

- debate about relevance of sex education
- publically funded or should it be left to parents?