

A Black Perspective

You & Your Health



Brenda

Adolescent Pregnancy

Reproduction in the adolescent has become a very serious problem in the United States. The number of live births to girls 17 years of age and under has been increasing. Statistics show that the ages of teenage mothers are decreasing while the rate of teenage mothers is increasing.

Pregnancy in the adolescent is not only a serious health problem, but also a social problem, with important psychological, educational, nutritional and vocational overtones. Frequently, this teenage mother may be forced to leave school and discontinue her education. This increases the chances of dependency—someone else will be responsible for the care of her and her child.

The adolescent herself is still growing and developing, both physically and psychologically. Is she then mature enough for childbearing? Frequently, the nutritional status of the teenage girl is basically unsatisfactory without the added burden of being pregnant. The teenage pregnancy has a significance in family planning, including family life education, sex education, making contraceptive services available, etc. She must be considered more vulnerable because so often her life and the life of her baby are in jeopardy.

Some information will lead you to believe that the rate of adolescent mothers is higher among Blacks. We must look at the rate of abortions and adoptions among Blacks, this rate is usually lower. It

appears that more Black girls are having and keeping their babies.

Young teenage mothers have an increased incidence of complications. For these mothers there is also an increased incidence of low birth weight babies. Infant mortality rates both, before and after birth, are higher in babies born to teenagers. Complications include anemia, prematurity, prolonged labor, toxemia, etc. Many of the complications are not necessarily related to age. This is shown through studies, the rate of complications have been decreasing in the past few years. This is believed to be due to the fact that the social stigma and social pressures are decreasing. People accept pregnant teenagers more than they did a few years ago. With the pressures being less, the adolescent is more likely to seek medical attention early and return for follow-up visits. Therefore, they receive better prenatal care.

These pregnant teenagers should be given personalized health care whether in clinics or by private physicians. Family members and friends should also give them special attention. They need to be made aware of the different forms of contraceptives after the baby is born. If they choose to have and keep their babies, as a parent or an adult, make sure they are involved in education programs to learn about family planning. Improving their self-image and self-esteem is very important at this time.

According To Fact Book

Auto Repair Costs Almost

Doubled In Last Five Years

Special To The Post
NEW YORK—The cost of repairing the most frequently damaged parts of a popular family car has nearly doubled during the last five years, according to the 1978 edition of Insurance Facts.

The 80-page booklet, published annually by the Insurance Information Institute, is an authoritative source of statistics and information concerning the property and casualty insurance business for use by editors, writers, speakers, teachers, students and insurance people.

The fact book reports that from January 1973 to January 1978 the cost of replacement parts for the front bumper, grill, hood and front fender of a 1972 model car rose from \$526.34 to \$1,058.63—an increase of 101 per cent.

The cost of labor to repair or replace these parts was \$126.34 in January 1973, five years later the mechanic would have presented a bill for \$173.29, a 37 per cent increase.

The fact book points out that economic inflation in 1977 continued to have a significant impact on the costs of goods and services for which insurance pays.

"While the overall cost of living increased 6.8 percent during 1977, increases in costs covered by auto insurance included: auto repair and maintenance, 8.2 percent; medical care, 8.8 percent; semi-private hospital rooms, 10.8 percent; physicians' fees, 9.2 percent. Auto insurance premiums were up 7.5 percent."

"Increases in costs for which property insurance

pays included: house maintenance and repairs, 7.2 percent; reroofing roofs, 7.5 percent; residing houses, 8.6 percent. Property insurance premiums were up 6.4 percent."

The publication points out that insurers, together with government officials, businessmen, professional people and consumers, continued to study ways of coping with the problems of social inflation—the phenomenon of expanding liability. "Reforms in state laws governing lawsuits are among the proposed solutions to this problem, which is manifested by the public's continuing propensity to sue, high jury awards and liberal court decisions," the fact book observes.

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