

## HIGHLIGHTS

*In St. Louis, between 1990 and 2000:*

- ❖ *Teen childbearing declined 40% (greater than national average)*
- ❖ *Failing economy continued to plague the city*
- ❖ *Youth idleness remained a significant problem*
- ❖ *Collaboration and coordination among youth serving professionals*
- ❖ *Diverse community-based efforts targeted at teen pregnancy and youth development*
- ❖ *Large amounts of funding from foundations and private sources allocated to teen pregnancy prevention*
- ❖ *Most successful prevention strategies included:*
  - *Comprehensive approach focusing on youth development*
  - *Increased out-of-school time programs and identified age-appropriate after-school activities*
  - *Community service activities*
  - *Critical involvement of the community in program planning – key to community empowerment*
  - *Strong social marketing with identified, appropriate messages*



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## TEEN CHILDBEARING

St. Louis experienced significant declines in teen childbearing over the past 10 years (Table 1). The rate of decline in St. Louis, at around 40 percent, was greater than the national average. The most significant gains in this city were made in the early to mid-1990s.

The rate of decline in the latter half of the decade, although still noteworthy, was significantly lower.

City	St. Louis					
	1991	1996	2000	% Change (1991-1996)	% Change (1996-2000)	% Change (1991-2000)
St. Louis, MO	137.1	97.7	82.7	-27.9	-15.4	-39.7

<sup>1</sup> births per 1000 15-19 year olds  
Source: Missouri KIDS Count Data Book

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS<sup>1</sup>

The total population of St. Louis is close to 385,000. Between 1990 and 2000, many people moved out of the city and the population declined 7 percent.

In terms of racial/ethnic composition, St. Louis is mixed, with 51 percent African-American and 44 percent white. The proportion of residents from other racial/ethnic groups is small, but growing. Between 1990 and 2000, the proportion of Asian-Americans doubled in St. Louis.

Youth 10 to 24 make up roughly one-fifth of the total population. The distribution of youth across age groups (10-14, 15-19, 20-24) is fairly even at roughly one-third for each age group.

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING<sup>1</sup>

A failing economy remains a major challenge for St. Louis. The percentage of families in poverty (21 percent) stayed the same for St. Louis between 1990 and 2000. However, concentrated poverty (areas with a poverty rate of 40 percent or more) dropped substantially during the same time period. In St. Louis, the decline in the number of individuals in concentrated poverty was nearly 37 percent.

In 2000, one-fifth of all families in St. Louis were living in poverty, a rate more than twice the national average of 9.2 percent.

The percent of residents living in concentrated poverty is around 13 percent and female-headed families with children make 28 percent of all households.

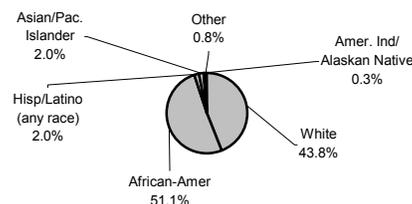
St. Louis witnessed a 5 percent increase in the unemployment rate between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, unemployment was 7 percent in St. Louis, 1.5 times higher than the national unemployment rate of 4 percent.

Youth idleness remains a major problem for St. Louis. In 2000, roughly 15 percent of youth 16-19 were not enrolled in school. More importantly, of those not enrolled in school, over one-quarter was unemployed and 44 percent were neither employed nor actively looking for employment (e.g., not in the labor force).

St. Louis continues to face issues of crime and violence among the youth population. In 2001, St. Louis' juvenile arrest rate for youth 10-17 was 53 per 1000, slightly greater than the national average (47 per 1000).<sup>2,3</sup> The juvenile arrest rate for weapons violations (3 per 1000) was more than 3 times that of the national average for the same year.<sup>2,3</sup>

High school completion and academic progress is another area of concern for St. Louis. In St. Louis, 9 percent of high school students drop out of school sometime between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, compared to the national average of 5 percent.<sup>4,5</sup> Data for on-time graduation were not available for St. Louis.

**Racial/Ethnic Composition of St. Louis, MO for 2000**



**Table 2: Poverty rates for St. Louis (1990 - 2000)**

CITY	ST. LOUIS			
	1990	%	2000	%
<b>INDICATOR</b>				
Poverty				
% families below poverty level	18,872	20.6	16,169	20.8
Concentrated poverty rate	109,516	20.5	70,650	13.0
% Change - concentrated poverty rate (1990-2000)				-36.6

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table 3: Unemployment rates for St. Louis (1990 - 2000)**

CITY	ST. LOUIS				
	1990	%	2000	%	% Change
<b>INDICATOR</b>					
Unemployment					
% unemployed (16+)	19,872	6.5	18,256	6.8	4.6
% in Mgmt/Prof. Occpn	37,672	23.3	42,687	29.7	27.5

Source: US Census Bureau

## RESOURCE ALLOCATION FOR YOUTH

*SafeFutures* is a program designed to help at-risk children and adolescents in the City of St. Louis. The U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funded the project in 1996 at the rate of 1.4 million per year for five years (\$7.2 million in total).<sup>6</sup> Interventions include family support, early childhood and parenting programs, after school enrichment, one-to-one mentoring, and healthy behavioral development programs with a special emphasis on addressing the needs of young women.

The St. Louis Health Department created a Youth Division in 1999 to address the specific needs of adolescent health, with a focus on increasing youth's access to health information – such as on substance abuse, teen pregnancy prevention, sexually transmitted disease and physical injuries. In addition, The Adolescent Health Program received state funding to support an abstinence-only education program in several St. Louis public schools in zip codes with high rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Another program receiving support is *Safe Passages for St. Louis Teens*, a program aimed at African-American and Latino teens to prevent pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and violence.

Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant Programs are used to fund literacy programs, tutoring and mentoring activities, multi-systemic therapy and in-home follow-up services, job readiness, and job placement.

### ❖ *City Budget Allocation*<sup>7</sup>

Currently, the city spends the following approximate figures from the General Fund towards services that include youth (Fiscal Year 2000):

○ SLATE/Office of Youth Development	\$ 171,000
○ Human Services/Youth & Family Services	\$ 73,000
○ Recreation (entire budget)	\$2,403,000

## PROGRAM & POLICY EFFORTS

The programmatic picture in St. Louis is also diverse, although collaboration and cooperation between local government and private organizations and youth serving agencies is fairly modest.

Strategies include outreach programs to engage non-school youth; youth development; after-school activities; juvenile justice and life skills development; and male involvement/mentoring programs. Because of ongoing challenges in the city, funding from the St. Louis government and the state is limited. Most programs receive support from foundations and private sources.

The loss of more moderate and working-class residents has created an inner city, deeply entrenched in poverty and all its associated challenges, including drugs, crime, violence and urban blight.

Because of the failing economy in the early and mid-1990s, local government had less direct involvement in prevention efforts, at least at the level similar to that in other community development and remediation efforts.

As a result, in 1996 The St. Louis Teen Pregnancy Prevention Partnership emerged, when clinical and social service agencies began to talk to and support each other on a variety of prevention efforts as a way to reduce isolation and fragmentation of services. The Partnership invited Dr. Michael Carrera to their first conference to outline prevention strategies and to understand how best to combat the multitude of social, economic, and personal challenges confronting St. Louis' young people. Due to limited resources, the Partnership was not able to participate in a replication of the Carrera model. However, they gathered a great deal of information about best practices and were committed to implementing effective and best practice strategies in the St. Louis area. The Partnership also provides training and technical assistance to youth service agencies on best practice models and program evaluation and convenes conferences for networking across service delivery sectors. Currently, there are over 100 organizations in the partnership from across health and social service sectors.

## MOST EFFECTIVE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Key informants in St. Louis identified several strategies that enabled them to be effective in reducing teen pregnancy rates in their city:

- ❖ Comprehensive approach, focusing on youth development and helping youth build assets.
- ❖ Increased out-of-school time programs for younger youth, and identified age-appropriate after-school activities for older teens connected with school.
- ❖ Community service activities.
- ❖ Critical involvement of the community in program planning – leads to community ownership and empowerment.
- ❖ Strong social marketing in poor, isolated communities, with identified, appropriate messages.

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- *Service Learning Programs: Teen Outreach Program (National Best Practices)* –The St. Louis Partnership for Children & Youth implements the Teen Outreach Program in the South Side of St. Louis. The collaboration adapted the model to meet the needs of the neighborhood, accommodate for and build community trust and participation and promote the value of civic involvement. In addition, there is a community advisory board that decides what services the neighborhood needs and how best to engage youth around civic activities. Funding for this program is from private sources.
- *Street Outreach* -- Youth In Need Program focuses on out-of-school youth. It includes drop-in centers around the city with one-stop GED classes; life skills/job training; case management and other services. Funding is primarily from private donations.

### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau
- <sup>2</sup> Calculated rates from Missouri Crime Reporting Program data using US Census (population estimates). NOTE: This was used with 2001 data.
- <sup>3</sup> Calculated rates from Uniform Crime Report, FBI using US Census (population estimates).
- <sup>4</sup> Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- <sup>5</sup> National Center for Education Statistics
- <sup>6</sup> <<http://www.stlouis.missouri.org/safefutures/info.html>> Accessed on July 1, 2003.
- <sup>7</sup> <[http://stlouis.missouri.org/5yearstrategy/ch3\\_yout.html](http://stlouis.missouri.org/5yearstrategy/ch3_yout.html)> Accessed on November 21, 2003. Note: St. Louis is not one of Robert Wood Johnson's Urban Health Initiative cities. Only limited budget information available.

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