

JODIE LEVIN-EPSTEIN
SENIOR STATE POLICY ANALYST

August 5, 1993

Bruce Reed
Deputy Assistant to the
President for Domestic Policy
OEOB, Room 216
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Bruce:

I'm glad that we had a chance to meet at the recent Communitarian Network meeting on "prevention" aspects of welfare reform. Since then, the GAO and CLASP have issued reports on JOBS teen parents. Enclosed you will find a copy of CLASP's report, *Teen Parents and JOBS: 1992 Statistical Snapshot*. We hope that you find it interesting and useful.

Among our findings are that in the 25 states that reported JOBS teen parent data:

- Approximately 32,000 teen parents were participating "in JOBS"; 4 states account for most of these JOBS teen mothers.
- Approximately 23,000 teen parents were actively participating in a JOBS education or training component.
- Only 10 states could report the number of JOBS teen parents who received IV-A (AFDC) child care.

The General Accounting Office report, *Welfare to Work: States Move Unevenly to Serve Teen Parents in JOBS* reviews data collected from 16 states. A GAO finding of tremendous significance for welfare reform efforts is that, "teen parents who were provided an enriched service – including educational alternatives to mainstream public high school, life skills training, or parenting classes – were 1.8 times more likely to complete their secondary education than those not provided such services in the 16 states. Also those who received publicly funded child care were 1.8 times more likely to complete their education than those

who did not receive such child care assistance... The reasons most often cited by caseworkers for a teen not completing her education were a subsequent pregnancy (40 percent of the teens) and personal or family problems, including lack of motivation or family conflict (26 percent). Other reasons included a lack of child care or transportation."

Clearly, successful JOBS teen parents receive a range of support services. As we discussed at the meeting, it would be useful to explore child care services for those teen parents who are not on AFDC – as a means to potentially prevent the need for AFDC.

It is also clear that repeat pregnancy should be a concern. However, the research provides no clear answer as to how to delay a second pregnancy although comprehensive services appear to be helpful:

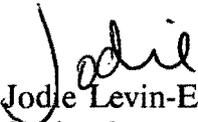
- An evaluation of a multi-site statewide program in Illinois, the Ounce of Prevention Fund (OPF), found that the OPF participants were more likely than a national sample to avoid a subsequent pregnancy 12 months after the baseline period: OPF provided home visits and weekly parent support groups for up to two years after the birth of a child. The national sample were "about 1.4 times more likely to experience a subsequent pregnancy as OPF participants."
- An evaluation of a single-site nurse home visitation program in rural New York state found that during the first four years after delivery of their first child, the nurse visited group had 43 percent fewer subsequent pregnancies and postponed the birth of second children an average of 12 months longer, compared to those who received other, more limited services (free transportation for pre-natal care): the treatment plan included about 9 visits during pregnancy, screening, and transportation services. In addition, after the birth of the child nurse visits continued for two years. Visits lasted over an hour; caseloads ranged from 20-25 families.

As we struggle to identify ways to prevent a first or second teen pregnancy it is important to recall that not only teens but also older adults fail to prevent unintended pregnancy. Further, the teen birthrate in the 50's was significantly higher than today's (90.3/1,000 in 1955 compared to 59.0/1,000 in 1990). While the rate of illegitimate births has climbed substantially (not only for teens but also for older women,

and increasingly for older women "with professions") the teen birthrate is dramatically lower today (in part because of abortion and to a certain extent because of increased contraception).

We should recognize the difficulty in accomplishing change in this arena and avoid inflated expectations as the result of welfare reform.

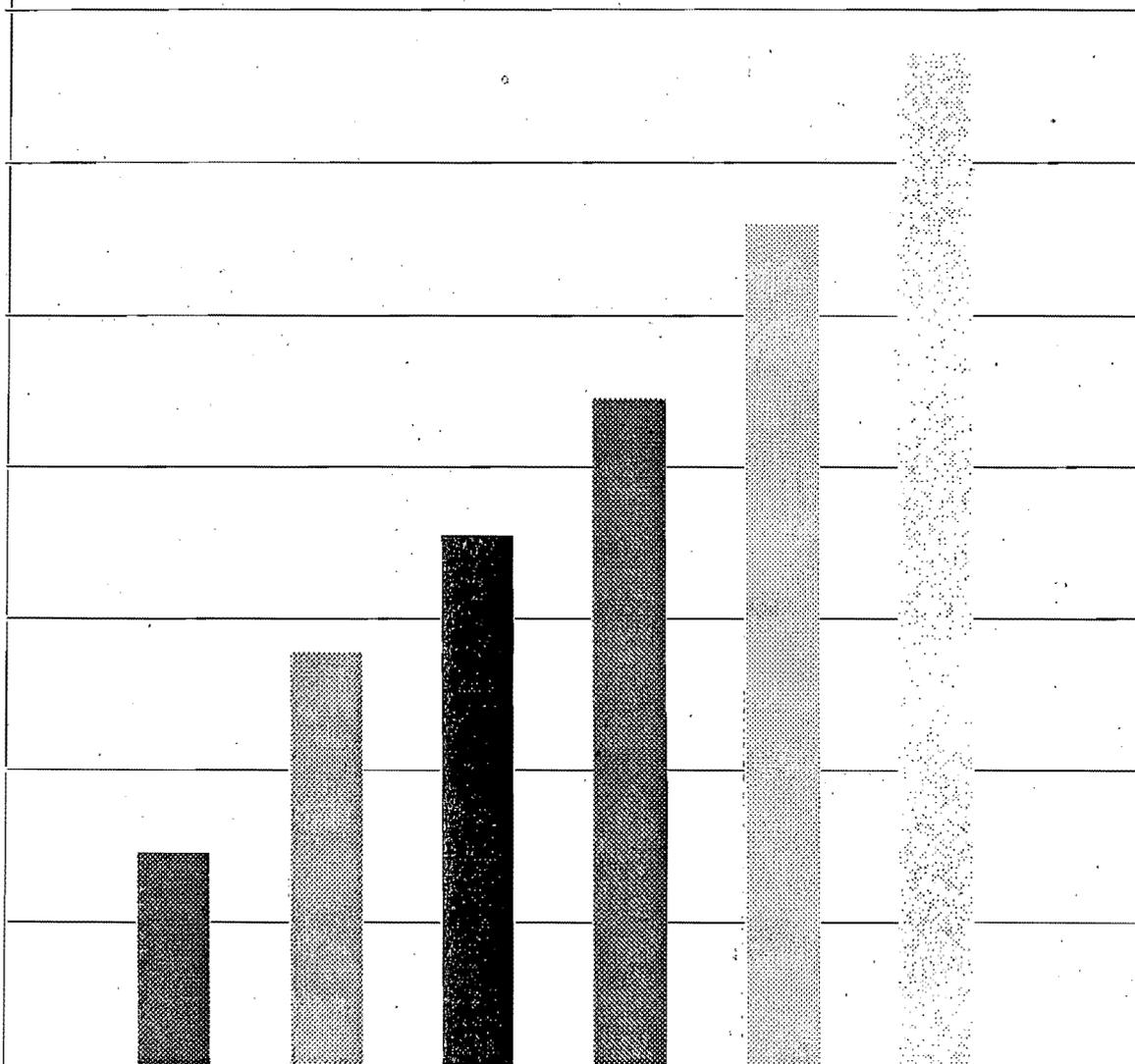
Sincerely,


Jodie Levin-Epstein
Senior State Policy Analyst

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Teen Parents and JOBS

1992 Statistical Snapshot



JODIE LEVIN-EPSTEIN

Center for Law and Social Policy

CLASP

MAY 1993

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THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

**Key Questions in the Effort to
"End Welfare as We Know It"**

Mark Greenberg

**Center for Law and Social Policy
Washington, DC**

July 1993

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