

From WSET:

Teen Pregnancies Drop

Location: Across Virginia

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Across Virginia - In 2004, the most recent year for these statistics, teen mothers gave birth to 10 percent of the babies born in Virginia, that's according to the Virginia Department of Health. That's a total of more than 13,000 teenage parents. But here's the good news.

Those numbers are down more than 30 percent from ten years before. There are several reasons why. Move over textbooks and diagrams, 7th graders at Linkhorne Middle School get to take home this little one for the weekend.

Terry Waddell, Linkhorne Middle School - "Sometimes the baby's a nice baby, it only cries twice a night and some babies it wakes them up four times a night."

He's called a "Think It Over Baby".

Waddell - "They remember waking up in the middle of the night and not liking the experience and so it's just one component in teaching the kids, ya know, maybe you want to postpone this."

And it's one reason, family life teachers say, students are saying no to sex and babies. Another reason, the "I AM" program, Individuals Abstaining 'till Marriage.

Mary Hutcherson, IAM Program - "We want these kids to think about themselves, to build up their self esteem, know that you're worth waiting for."

The Alliance for Families and Children bring the program into schools for ten days. It's been a hit!

Hutcherson - "Students are feeling more comfortable, I think, talking about abstinence. Teacher's want us there."

And, teachers say, the simply talking about sex makes the biggest impact.

Waddell, "There's more communication, there's more education, it's not a secret anymore, it's not something you hide."

There are similar programs throughout the state. The Virginia Department of Health hopes to have the teen pregnancy rate under 22 percent by the year 2015.

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