

Cal-SAFE Pregnant & Parenting Teen Program Achieves Positive Outcomes Despite Frozen Funds

California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program -- KEY FACTS

- The Cal-SAFE Program became operational July 2000.
- The Cal-SAFE Program has served over 120,000 expectant and parenting students, along with over 77,000 of their young children. [Some students and children were served for multiple years.]
- The Cal-SAFE Program serves both female and male students, with over 90% of the Cal-SAFE students being female.
- The typical Cal-SAFE Program student is Hispanic, age 16 or 17, and in the 12th grade.
- Over 60% of the Cal-SAFE Program attended classes in a mainstreamed educational setting.
- Nearly 70% of the 12th grade Cal-SAFE students (from 2009 to 2012) passed the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).
- Nearly 40% of the students who exited the Cal-SAFE Program said they planned to enroll in a local community college.
- The vast majority of Cal-SAFE student received parenting and life skills training as part of their instructional schedules.

Since 2000, the **California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program** has worked to keep expectant and parenting students in school so that they graduate and stay on track towards becoming productive members of society.

Over 73% of the students who exited the Cal-SAFE Program successfully completed their high school education. Even with funding levels frozen at 2008 levels, numbers for the 2011-12 school year show that teens served by Cal-SAFE agencies continue to graduate at this high rate. This graduation rate for teen mothers far exceeds the 38% graduation rate for teen mothers cited by Perper, Peterson, and Manlove in their 2010 report titled *Diploma Attainment Among Teen Mothers*.

Furthermore, the 2011-12 numbers continue the positive trend on the following outcomes:

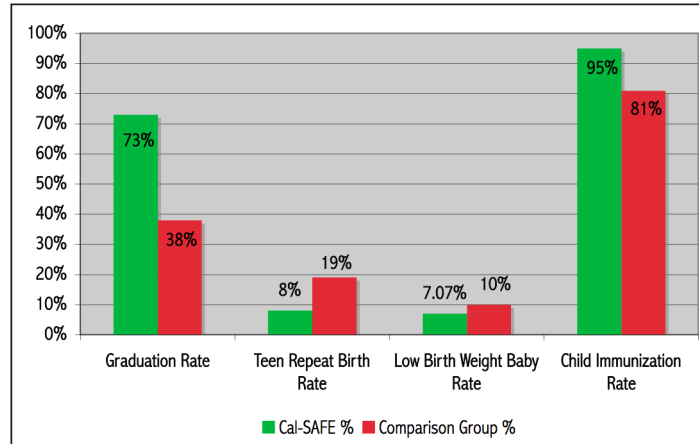
- Only 8% of the babies born while their parents were enrolled in the program represented repeat births. This percentage falls considerably below the 19% repeat birth rate in 2008 for the nation.¹
- Only 7.07% of children born while their parents were enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program weighed less than 2,500 grams at birth (the definition of low birth weight). This percentage is lower than the national low birth weight rate of 13.4% for mothers under 15, and 10% for mothers aged fifteen to nineteen.²
- Almost 60% of the children of Cal-SAFE students attended a child care center funded by the Cal-SAFE Program and received services based on assessed developmental needs. 95% of the children enrolled in the program were up-to-date on their immunizations. This substantially exceeds the immunization rates for children 19 to 35 months nationally (82%) and in California (81%)³.

¹ Hamilton, B. E., Martin, J. A. , & Ventura, S. J. (2010). *Births: Preliminary Data for 2008*. Retrieved April 21, 2011 from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr58/nvsr58_16.pdf

² Center for Disease Control. (January 7, 2009). From *National vital statistics reports*, Volume 57, Number 7. Retrieved February 15, 2010 from www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr57/nvsr57_07.pdf. See Table 35: Number and percentage low birth weight and number of live births by low birth weight, by, age, and race and Hispanic origin of mother: United States, each state and territory, 2006 on page 78.

³ Center for Disease Control. (July 30, 2004) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. Retrieved January 30, 2005 from <http://www.immunofacts.com/statistical.asp> See the section on Childhood Immunization Delivery by State and Major Cities: 2003 Levels Among Children 19-35 Months, Table 2: Estimated vaccination coverage levels with 4:3:1*, 4:3:1:3†, 4:3:1:3:3‡, and 4:3:1:3:3:1¶ series among children aged 19-35 months, by state and selected urban area – National Immunization Survey, United States, 2003.

Graph 1: Cal-SAFE Program Outcomes Compared to National and State Groups, 2000-12



However, funding cuts have had a dramatic negative affect on the number of pregnant and parenting teens served by Cal-SAFE agencies. From a peak of 13,270 enrolled students during 2007-08, the number of students served has dropped 47% to 6,865 students receiving services during the 2011-12 school year.

This means that fewer and fewer expectant and parenting teens in California have the support they need to graduate high school, birth a healthy baby, or avoid a second birth during their teen years.

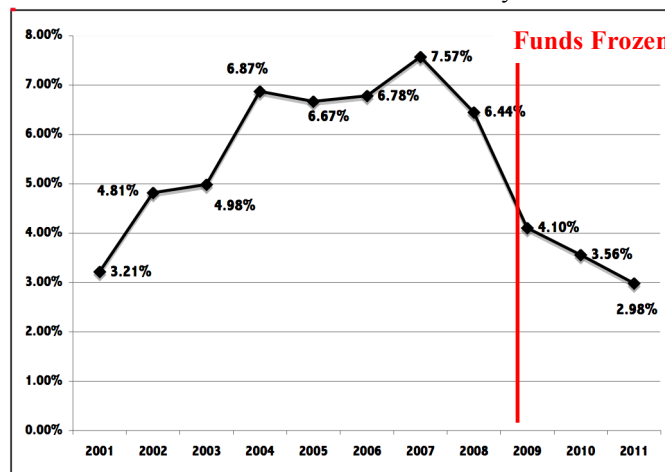
In 1998, when they created the Cal-SAFE Program, the State Legislators set the following major goal for the program:

A significant number of eligible female and male students in need of targeted supportive services related to school success will be served.

Years of progress towards meeting this goal came to a halt in February 2009 when the Legislature froze the Cal-SAFE Program funds at 2008 levels and allowed school districts flexibility in using the funds. Schools were no longer required to target the money towards serving teen parents. The funds could be swept into the district's general coffers to pay for any legitimate educational costs for any group of students.

This move has resulted in a smaller and smaller proportion of California's teen mothers and fathers being served by the Cal-SAFE Program.

Graph 2: Percentage of California's Teen Moms Who Were Served by the Cal-SAFE Program, 2001-11*



* The number of Cal-SAFE new teen mothers for 2011 comes from the July 3, 2012 download of GradStar Pregnancy Outcome Form data, while the projected total teen births statewide is taken from an October 2011 California Department of Finance report available at <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/projections/births/>.