# We're All Paying to Promote Illegitimate Births

March 3, 1994 *by Phyllis Schlajly*

We might as well face it. Government doesn't have the foggiest idea how to deal with the social problem that is euphemistically labelled "teen pregnancy" but which is more accurately called promiscuity and illegitimacy.

Pretending to deal with this problem, the government has extracted millions of dollars out of our pockets in state taxes and hundreds of millions of dollars in federal taxes. The result is that everybody is worse off than if the government had done nothing at all.

The most recent "teen pregnancy" government spending program to be exposed as a failure is the Illinois program called "Parents Too Soon." Six years ago, it won national acclaim from the Ford Foundation and Harvard University for its innovative programs.

Six years and $17.4 million later, the Peoria (BF)J ournal Star(end BF) now reports that teen births in Illinois have risen nearly 25 percent. How does teen pregnancy money play in Peoria? More government spending produces more pregnant teens.

In 1980, 58 percent of Illinois' teen mothers were unmarried. By 1991, the number had risen to 81 percent - the sixth highest in the nation.

Predictably, the response of the sexuality "professionals" is, "Give us more tax dollars; we need to double the spending." Fortunately, even liberal politicians are now declining to double their money and double their fun.

The "professio na ls" feign surprise at the appalling statistics on illegitimacy, but their judgment is clouded by a conflict of interest. Their pay and promotions increase when social problems get worse, not better.

Two years ago, Adams City High in Commerce City, Colorado, made national news about its soaring birth rate. It was one of the first high schools in the nation to give out condoms and inaugurate other innovative programs, and it was rewarded by having its birth rate climb to 31 percent above the national average.

The sexuality professionals can't explain the unintended result, but those who understand human nature are not surprised at the failure of expensive government programs. They have made promiscuity and illegitimacy socially acceptable and economically profitable.

In the years before the sexuality professionals became dominant in public schools and public health departments, being pregnant at Adams City High was a social death sentence. Then, classes in "safe sex," condom distribution, a teen parenting program, and an on-campus nursery made promiscuity and out-of-wedlock births socially acc eptab le, and children got the message that such behavior is OK.

The major source of information on sex for public school curricula and teacher training over the last 20 years has been a private special-interest group called SIECUS (Sex Information and Education Council of the United States). SIECUS is the fountainhead of the demand that the public schools force instruction on all students that is "comprehensive," very explicit, kindergarten through 12th grade, and totally non-judgmental (that means that no behavior can be identified as wrong).

In a recently issued survey of public school sex instruction, SIECUS bragged that 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have gotten on the sex-ed bandwagon. Most of those giving the instruction were trained with materials published or endorsed by SIECUS.

We can thank Charles Murray of the American Enterprise Institute for daring to report the shocking statistic that 30 percent of all live births in America today are illegitimate, and for emphasizing that it's not just a black problem because, while the rate of out-of-wedlock births to black women is 68 percent, the rate among white women is 22 percent. Murray thinks our nation cannot survive if it gets any higher.

Murray presents many suggestions for dealing with the illegitimacy epidemic, including cutting off the tremendous taxpayer subsidies that have been paid to unmarried mothers over so many years. One of his most important recommendations is to restore marriage as the basic, honored institution of our society - the sole way that a mother can get help to support herself and her child, and the sole way that a father can assert any rights whatsoever regarding his child.

Recognizing the facts of human nature that "boys like to sleep with girls and girls think babies are endearing," he says it is up to society to build thick walls of social and economic rewards and penalties that induce the overwhelming majority of births to take place within marriage. In the years when illegitimacy carried a social stigma and economic penalties, our nation didn't have very many out-of-wedlock births.

Then came SIECUS-directed non-judgmental sexuality instruction, often enhanced by videos and paraphernalia, which was forced on public schoolchildren, followed by the subsidization of illegitimacy by the welfare system, and we got what we paid for - more fatherless children. When are Americans going to wake up and demand that our tax dollars NOT be spent to promote and reward immoral behavior that is now increasing the numbers of fatherless children at the rate of more than one million a year?