

Spring flings may explain teen pregnancies peak

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Researchers have found that the relative likelihood of conceiving in the month of March is higher if you're a school-aged adolescent than if you're an adult.

"It certainly is an intriguing finding," says Mary Anne Jamieson, an Associate Professor in the Queen's University Departments of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Pediatrics, a practicing obstetrician at Kingston General Hospital, and co-author of the paper. "This adolescent pregnancy peak may be explained by biological reasons such as variations in fertility over the course of a calendar year, but it's also possible that this increased conception rate in March is because of Spring Break."

The researchers examined all 838 adolescent pregnancies that occurred in the Kingston region over a five-year period and compared the conception rates per month with a random sample of 838 adult conceptions that occurred over the same time period. While more adults conceive overall during the month of March, a larger relative percentage of adolescent pregnancies are conceived at this time compared to adult pregnancies.

This peak in adolescent conceptions coincides with the weeklong break given to all Ontario high school students.

"If Spring Break is the reason behind this upswing in adolescent pregnancies then perhaps just before the vacation would be a good time

for a proactive burst of family planning information and access, so teenagers head off for the holiday with contraception awareness and positive sexual health strategies fresh in their minds," notes Dr. Jamieson.

Provided by Queen's University

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