

Teen pregnancy on the rise in QC

More and more teens are getting pregnant in the Quad Cities.

Teen birth rates in Rock Island and Scott County are actually higher than the state average. The Illinois average is 10.1 percent, but in Rock Island county 13.3 percent of teens are having babies. In Iowa, the average birthrate is 8.7 percent, but in Scott County that number jumps to 11.5 percent.

Tuesday more than a dozen teens, parents, and educators got together at Bethany for Children and Families for a teen pregnancy forum. They brainstormed ways to educate teens about sex, love, and pregnancy.

Teen Mom Brittany Kipp said teens to understand how tough being a parent really is.

"I don't sleep in on weekends anymore because I have to get up with my son, I can't stay out late anymore and had to get a job to help pay for him," Kipp said.

Kipp said while she doesn't regret having her son, it has made life a whole lot tougher. She said it's so important for teens and their parents to talk about sex.

"Don't be afraid to talk with your parents, the number one thing to do is talk to your parents," Kipp said.

Many agreed talking to kids while they're young is also important.

"The age our children are sexualized is younger and younger....the amount of messages that our children receive that have a sexual innuendo or sexual intention is incredible," Edgerton Health Center Health Educator Libbet Brooke said.

She said the world is changing so educators and parents need to adapt.

"The message before has always been don't have sex or if your going to have sex use birth control. We want to make that a bigger message."

She said teens need to learn how to deal with relationships and their emotions and set goals.

