

Preventing Teen Pregnancy in McLennan County, Texas

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“Several states, Texas included, still face the challenge of children having children.”

Over the last several years, significant process has been made in reducing the number of teen births across the United States. While this success should be celebrated, it is not the whole story. Several states, Texas included, still face the challenge of children having children.

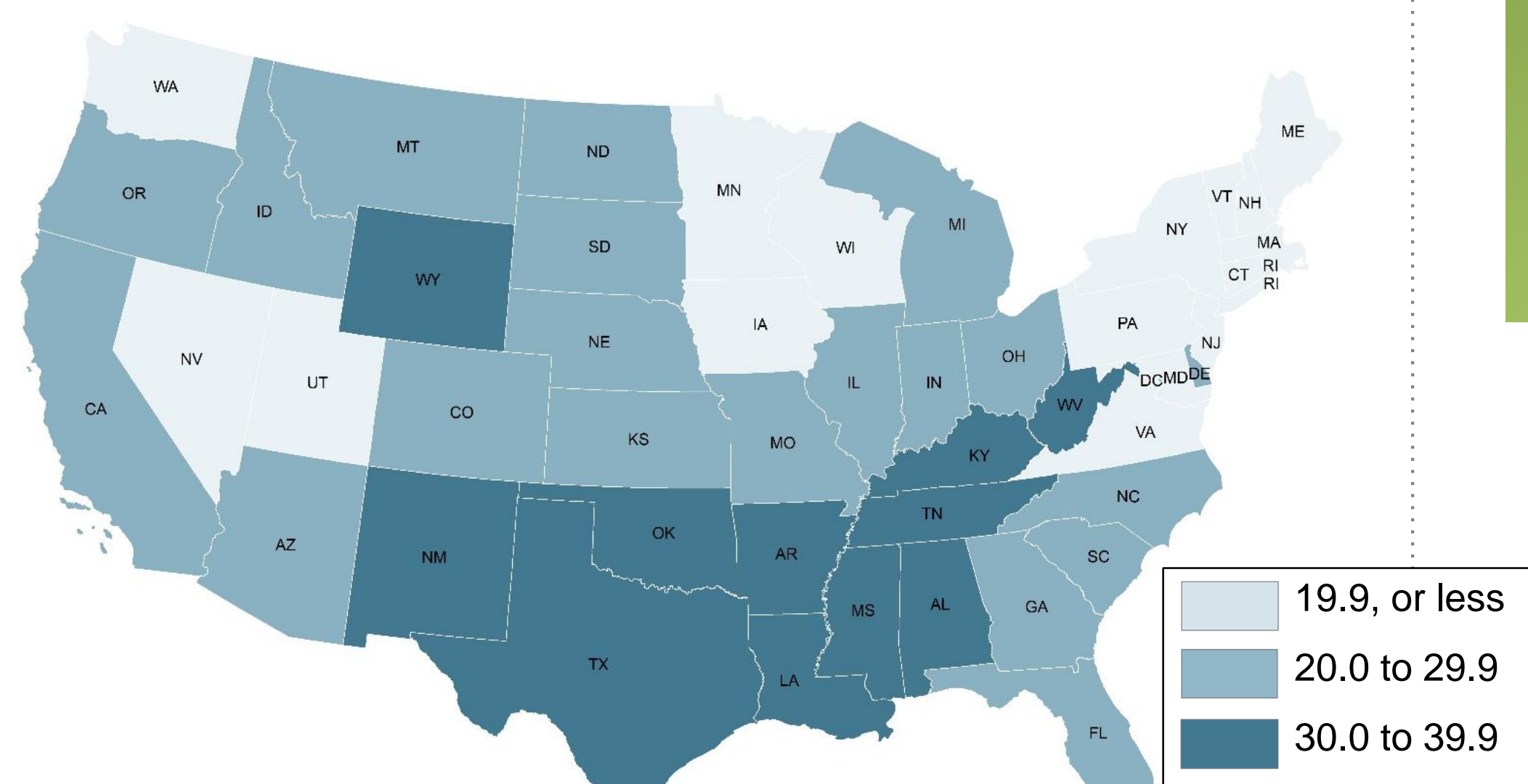


Figure 1. Choropleth map of teen birth rates for 15-19 year-olds by state, 2014 (\bar{x} = 24.2)

In Figure 1, the legend tells us that Texas is one of the states who have not yet solved teen pregnancy.



Figure 2. Location of McLennan County, Texas

McLennan County (see Figure 2), located in the Heart of Texas, has some of the worst birth outcomes for mothers and their children, including one of the highest teen birth rates in the state! In this poster, we document the journey of the Prosper Waco Women's Health Working Group to gain a stronger understanding of teen pregnancy in the community.

Study examines approaches to address Waco's high teen pregnancy rate
The Waco Tribune-Herald - Shelly Conlon (2017)

“In Waco, we have failed our youth of color. African American and Hispanic youth have teen birth rates significantly higher than their white peers. The community is going to have to be willing to say that out loud and say, ‘We really need to have this conversation about teen pregnancy with a health equity lens.’”

- President Forrest Alton
1000 Feathers

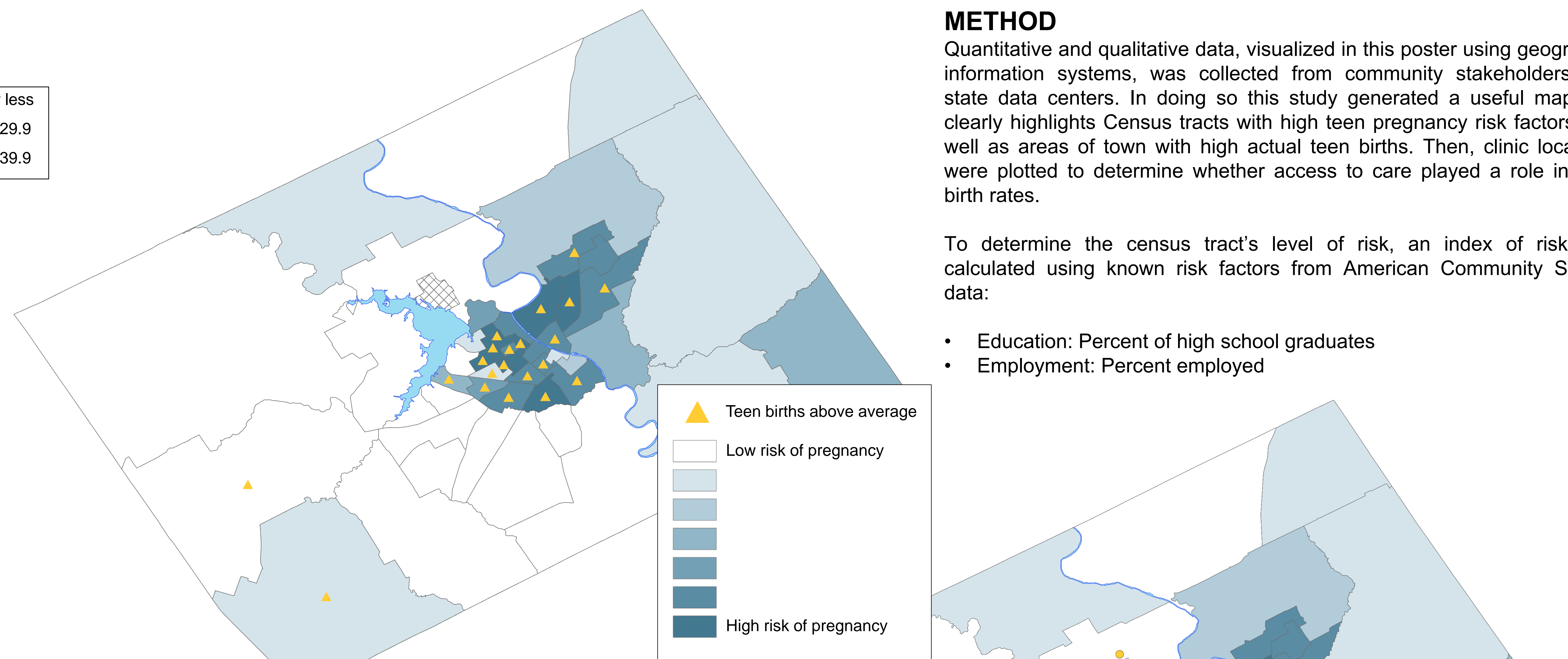


Figure 4. Choropleth map of high teen pregnancy risk factors, overlaid with identifiers for above-average teen birth rates.

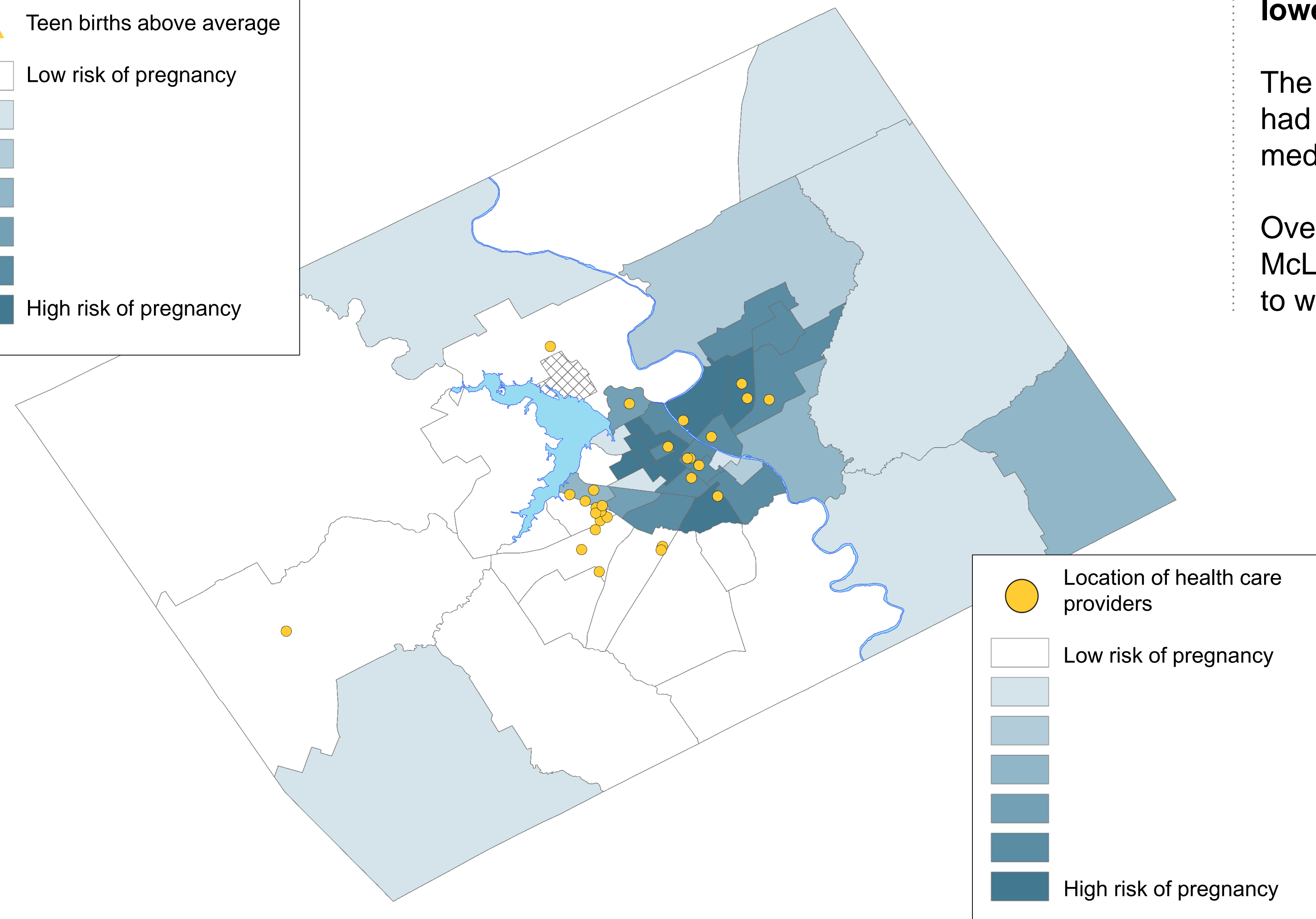


Figure 5. Choropleth map of high teen pregnancy risk factors, overlaid with locations of health care providers.

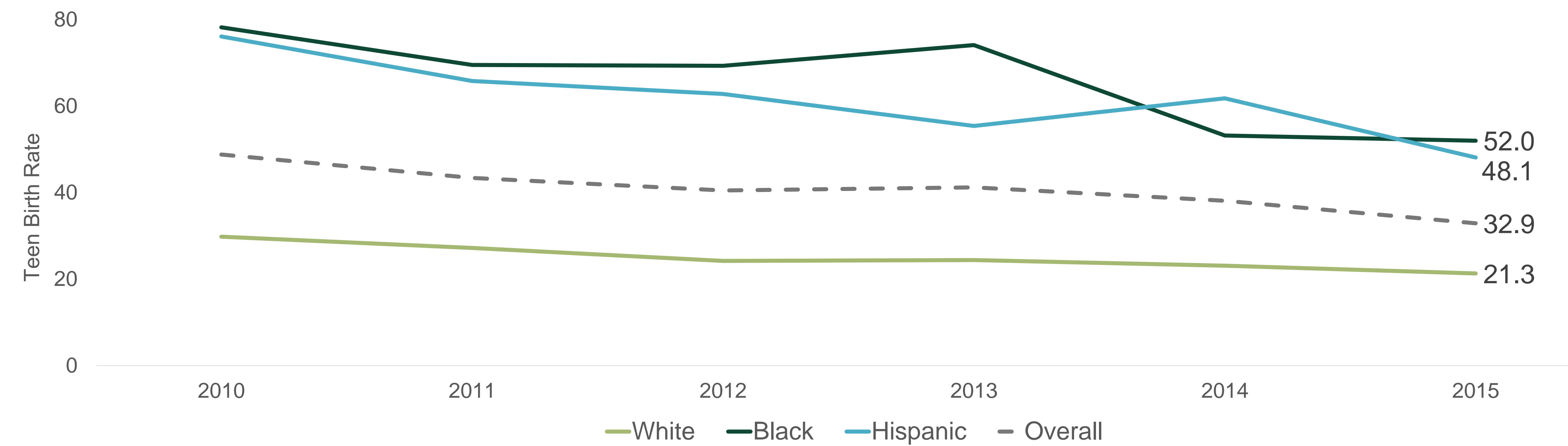


Figure 3. Teen birth rates for 15-19 year olds, per 1,000 females
Data Source: Texas Vital Statistics, Population & Demographics and Birth Outcomes

METHOD

Quantitative and qualitative data, visualized in this poster using geographic information systems, was collected from community stakeholders and state data centers. In doing so this study generated a useful map that clearly highlights Census tracts with high teen pregnancy risk factors-- as well as areas of town with high actual teen births. Then, clinic locations were plotted to determine whether access to care played a role in teen birth rates.

To determine the census tract's level of risk, an index of risk was calculated using known risk factors from American Community Survey data:

- Education: Percent of high school graduates
- Employment: Percent employed

- Food Stamps: Percent on food stamps
- Healthcare: Percent without healthcare
- Income: Median household income
- Poverty: Percent in poverty

If the census tract scored above the county average, they were given a score of 1. The totals were added to create the index.

RESULTS

This method allows the researchers to identify several areas with high risk and high teen births. This suggests three areas where further research will be conducted and targeted action should be taken. **We also note that in these areas of need, level of access to health clinics is lower.**

The map also illustrated areas of town where high risk factors existed, but had low teen births. This suggests further research to determine what mediating factors exist in the Census tracts.

Overall, this study allowed for an in-depth review of teen pregnancy in McLennan County. We presented the data in a clear, translatable fashion to warrant feedback and dialogue from community stakeholders.



This project was completed in collaboration with Prosper Waco and the Waco Foundation, both of Waco, Texas. The mission of the Prosper Waco initiative is to build an environment in which all members of our Waco community are able to measurably improve their education, health, and financial security. The Waco Foundation provides a wide-range of charitable services to the community through their roles as a convener, grantmaker, listener, resource organizer, and philanthropic promoter.