

*Remarks for the
“Just Wait” Abstinence Rally
May 3, 2002*

Thank you, Janice.

Statistics can be difficult things, especially when they apply to our children. Some of the statistics here in Mississippi can be very troubling.

For example, we have one of the highest percentages of births to teens in the nation. Too many young girls are dropping out of school because of pregnancy.

Too many children are being born to children.

This cycle must end.

Our children – our sons and daughters – represent the promise and potential for our state. They are the living message we send to a time we won't be around to see – and that message needs to be positive, healthy and full of hope.

I have great faith in the children of Mississippi. I am confident that if we provide them with the facts, the education, and a whole lot of love and support – they will make the right decisions.

They need to know we're there for them.
They need to know that if they're heading in the wrong direction, God allows U-turns.
They need to know we care deeply about them and the choices they make in life.

That's the message I want them to hear today, this month, and all year-round. That message will be voiced a little louder this month, as we focus on the issue of teen pregnancy and its affect on our children.

I have issued a proclamation I want to read to you at this time.

(read proclamation)