

Teenage pregnancy

Support is available

Finding out you're pregnant or your girlfriend is pregnant can be a big surprise if you haven't planned it.

You might feel scared about telling anyone, or worried about the future. It's a good idea to tell someone close to you. If you don't feel ready to talk to your parents yet, confide in a friend.

Dads too might not feel ready to be a father just yet. Having a baby means big changes in your life but it can be really exciting, too.

Taking good care of yourself will help you and your baby stay healthy and it's important to see your GP as soon as possible. Make sure you go to your appointments.

“Smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs are all bad for you and your baby and can have permanent effects on you both.”

If you're still at school, you can get help to continue your education. There's also help to find you a job if you're old enough to leave school. Just because you are a parent doesn't mean your education has to end. Find out about your entitlements and benefits.

If you're pregnant

Don't hide it. The sooner you tell someone, the better. That way you can plan what's going to happen in the future.

“If you think your girlfriend is pregnant, encourage them to talk about how they're feeling. They'll need a lot of support.”

If you're pregnant but not sure what you're going to do, contact your local family planning clinic to discuss your options.

You can still get a good education if you become a parent. There's lots of help out there for you.

See your GP, they will:

- Ask the date of your last period so you know how far along your pregnancy is.
- Encourage you to start taking vitamins to make sure you and your baby are healthy - ask about your free folic acid and vitamin D prescription.
- Help organise an appointment with a midwife who will support you during your pregnancy.