

Project 3 – Pregnancy Support Centre: Education Development

Located in Stourbridge High Street, the Pregnancy Support Centre offers a drop-in service providing free pregnancy testing and advice alongside sexual health awareness.



The Dudley area has for many years had one of the highest under 18 conception rates in the UK – at just over 49 per 1000 in 2007.

And facts about the challenges faced by babies and their mothers are clear¹:



Babies of teenage mothers:

- are more likely than average to be born prematurely, which is associated with infant death and disability;
- are 25 per cent more likely than babies of older mothers to be born at a low birthweight which is associated with infant death, physical and learning disabilities and future cardiovascular disease;
- have an infantmortality rate 60 per cent higher than babies of older mothers;
- are at increased risk of hospitalisation for accidental injuries, diarrhoea and vomiting, developmental delays and poor nutrition.

Teenage mothers:

- are three times more likely than older mothers to develop postnatal depression, with around 40 per cent of young mothers affected. This not only impacts on the young mother, but can also impair her ability to form a close attachment to her baby and to be an attentive and nurturing parent, which can lead to poor emotional development and behavioural problems for the child;
- are also at increased risk of experiencing isolation and a breakdown of their relationship with the child's father. This increases the risk of the mother experiencing postnatal depression, and can undermine the quality of her mothering.

¹ From page 7 - "Teenage parents: who cares?" Dept for Children, School and Families. Julv 2008

Acutely aware of the pressures, demands and choices many young people face, we want to come alongside them to offer understanding, care, support ... and most of all, hope.

Currently we are able to open the centre for 16 hours each week, but we want to extend these times and also extend the service offered to include visits to schools and colleges to talk about lifestyle issues, as well as to encourage self worth amongst children and young people.

"Children's life chances are still strongly affected by the circumstances of their parents". (From: "Breaking the Cycle – Taking stock of progress and priorities for the future, Social Exclusion Unit)"

We want to play our part in breaking that cycle.

Annual costs:

Double the Centre opening hours to 32 each week	£12,480
Develop materials for educational use	£1,000
Initially provide 10 hours of visits per week to schools and colleges	£7,800

Total

£21,280

