



Title: Being a parent/carer: Would having a baby change my life? What do parents and carers need?

Level: FOURTH

Code: 4.7.1

Links to Curriculum for Excellence

Experiences and outcomes	Benchmarks
I can explain the importance and the enduring and complex responsibility of being a parent/carer, and the impact on life choices and options. HWB 4-51a Through investigation I can explain the support available for parents and carers looking after babies and bringing up children. HWB 4-51b	Explains how to access support for parents and carers.

About this activity

This is the first of three sessions at Fourth Level where young people will be talking and learning about the role of parents and carers. Young people will consider how having a baby might change their life and what parents need in order to parent positively. In the second activity the class/group will look at the importance of connecting with the child and nurture. In the third session they explore the importance of play to child development and wellbeing, and find out about the Babybox initiative.

Resources to support this activity

- Slides
- Baby Borrowers <https://youtu.be/uBFG-OeRwh4> (duration 19 minutes 16 seconds)
- What’s it like being a young parent? (1 minute 33) <https://young.scot/ping/campaign-articles/video-whats-it-like/>
- What’s it like being a young Dad? Watch the interview with Stephen (3 minutes 17) <https://young.scot/ping/campaign-articles/an-interview-with-a-young-dad/>
- The Highs and Lows of being a parent – 3 short films of around 1 minute: <https://young.scot/ping/campaign-articles/video-highs-lows-1/>
- Young Scot are working with young parents to share their experiences and develop good information and support. More here: <https://young.scot/ping>

Activity

1. Explain that in this session, and two that follow, the young people will be thinking about being a parent or carer. Acknowledge that in some families the main parent or carer will be Mum or Dad, and that in many families caring for and bringing up a child might be done by grandparents or other relatives, by Mum or Dads new partner, and that some children grow up with adoptive or foster parents. In short – any adult can have a role as a child’s parent or carer.
2. Acknowledge that we are talking about this now (state age of the young people) because being a parent is something that takes a lot of consideration and thinking about long before it becomes a reality. Also explain that is very much about everyone – not just women as mums and carers, but men as dads and carers too.
3. Pose the question to the class/group: *Do you think having a baby would change your life?* Get some feedback and discussion. Draw young men into the conversation if this isn’t happening. Then ask: *What kind of parent do you think you would be?* Again, for some initial conversation.
4. Introduce the film **Baby Borrowers** <https://youtu.be/uBFG-OeRwh4> (duration 19 minutes 16 seconds) Before viewing explain that it’s a TV programme and experiment where some teenage couples are given a toddler to be parent/carer to and how that goes. After viewing get some feedback and comments on what the young people have watched. Some questions could include: *What were the different experiences of the couples? What impact did the experience seem to have on their relationships? What were the experiences of young women compared to young men – or did gender not matter?*
5. **Being a young parent.** Acknowledge that some young people become parents as teenagers or soon after. Explain that Young Scot have been working with some young parents to find out what being a young parent is like, and also to develop good information and support for young people. Watch some/all of the short films
 - What’s it like being a young parent? (1 minute 33) <https://young.scot/ping/campaign-articles/video-whats-it-like/>
 - What’s it like being a young Dad? Watch the interview with Stephen (3 minutes 17) <https://young.scot/ping/campaign-articles/an-interview-with-a-young-dad/>
 - The Highs and Lows of being a parent – 3 short films of around 1 minute: <https://young.scot/ping/campaign-articles/video-highs-lows-1/>Have some discussion after each or continue after viewing all. One possible thing to explore: *The young parents talk about people being negative and ‘stigma’ what do you think they mean? Why would people be mean about someone being a young parent?*
End the conversation with an affirmation that if a young person becomes a parent they can (and it’s important that they feel able to) continue with education either at school or college.
6. **What is good parenting?** Use the slide ‘Good parenting’. In the final film Kerry says “You try so hard to be the perfect parent only to realise there is no perfect parent”. Ask the young people to work in small groups and think about the question: *No parent is perfect, but apart from providing the basics of good diet and basic care, what do you think the rules or foundations for being a good parent should be?* After some small group discussion get some feedback. Share the final set of slides **10 basic principles of good parenting**. As you go, check whether young people agree with, disagree with or question the suggestions .

SLIDES/In a recent book Dr Laurence Steinberg says there are **10 basic principles of good parenting**.

What do you agree or disagree with?

What seem most important to you?

1. **What you do matters:** The children watch you and learn from you.
2. **You cannot be too loving:** A child can never have too much love.
3. **Be involved in your child's life.** This might mean missing out or giving up things you want to do, just to be available for your child.
4. **Adapt your parenting as your child grows and they change.** You can't parent an 8 year old and a 14 year old the same way.
5. **Make rules and keep to them.** Remember these change as your child grows.
6. **Help your child be independent.** Always care and pay attention but give your child space.
7. **Be consistent.** Otherwise children get confused and too much is up for negotiation.
8. **Avoid harsh discipline.** Never be unfair or cruel. Never hit a child.
9. **Explain rules and decisions.** Questions are good, but the adult needs to be clear why a rule is a rule, and why a decision has been made.
10. **Treat your child with respect.** Kindness and respect will be returned.

7. End with an acknowledgment that parenting and caring for children is a complex and demanding thing to do. Tell the class/group that the next sessions will explore further the importance of parents and carers.

Additional ideas

The resources to support Parenthood Education as part of this RSHP resource have drawn on the work published by the WAVE Trust called **Parenthood and Relationship Education Project: Raising the best generation of Scottish Parents**, funded by Scottish Government. The full resource is published at this link and can be used to extend learning in this area, particularly useful for work with small groups and older pupils: <http://wavetrust.org/prep-scotland>

Connecting with home

The text below could be used to communicate with home about this group of learning activities.

In the next few sessions the focus of our learning as part of the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood curriculum will be on Parenthood. Young people will begin with some consideration of how having a baby might change their life and what parents need in order to parent positively. In the second activity the class/group will look at communication, nurture and resilience. In the third session they explore the importance of play to child development and wellbeing, and find out about the Babybox initiative.

As a class we will watch this BBC programme where young people fulfil the role of parents: **Baby Borrowers** <https://youtu.be/uBFG-OeRwh4>

As a parent/carer these sites might be helpful to you:

Communicating with Teens: a practical guide and support to talking with your teenage child:

https://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-family-life-and-parenting/parenting-teenagers/communicating-teens?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIw5nxveHO3AIVSbftCh2nHA7aEAMYAiAAEgK0jFD_BwE

Parent Line Scotland offer a free telephone, email and online chat service with confidential help and support available for any parent or carer <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

Parentzone provides information about schools and education: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Further learning activities are available that connect to this RSHP curriculum content

- 4.7.2 Being a parent: Connecting with and nurturing your child
- 4.7.3 Being a parent: The importance of play/The Babybox

Practitioner Notes