



**Title: Being a parent/carer: Preparing for parenthood**

**Level: SENIOR**

**Code: S.8**

**Links to Curriculum for Excellence**

In terms of Curriculum for Excellence this level is concerned with extending or deepening what is described at Fourth Level.

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**

At earlier Curriculum for Excellence Levels the young people have explored the important role of parent and carer, they have also considered the needs and rights of the child from birth. In this activity the young people reflect on the need to plan for parenthood and to consider what they can do before conception to ensure the best start in life for their child and for them as a parent/carer; this is called pre-conception care.  
This activity would benefit from being delivered alongside activity S9 Contraception and Condoms.

**Resources to support this activity**

- Slides
- Props for activity: **What can be happening in a woman’s life that could negatively impact if she was to become pregnant?**
- Prop for activity: **Getting ready for a healthy pregnancy** (blank version)
- Handout: **Getting ready for a healthy pregnancy**
- **Ready Steady Baby:** <http://www.readysteadybaby.org.uk/trying-for-a-baby/gettingready.aspx>

## Activity

1. Introduce the topic along these lines: Often when we talk and learn about parenthood we start with learning about pregnancy, then we think about how to care for and nurture the baby and growing child, because we want the best for our children – but in this session the class/group will be thinking about what comes before pregnancy, it's about planning for a baby.
2. **Babies born in Scotland every year.** Ask the class to make a guess on the number of babies born, and the average age of Mums when their first baby is born. Also ask: *What percentage of conceptions/when women become pregnant do you think are planned or maybe unplanned/unintended?* Then share the slide with the statistics. Once shared, ask: *What might be the circumstances in which a pregnancy might be planned? Alternatively, what circumstances might there be in which a pregnancy is not planned?*

**Slide: Approximately 52,000 babies are born in Scotland every year.**

- The average age of a first time Mum is 28 years old.
  - It is estimated that between one-third and one-half of conceptions/women becoming pregnant are unintended or unplanned.
3. Explain that more research and knowledge about health and wellbeing tells us that we can do a lot to make sure babies are healthy and parents can do the best job of being apparent if we actually plan being a parent, rather than just let it happen. Explain that to do this before getting pregnant is called *pre-conception care*. Share/read the slide and check understanding:

**Pre-conception care** is about the choices a woman and her partner make and the actions they take before being pregnant. We can usually expect that a healthy, thriving woman will give birth to healthy, thriving baby. Pre-conception care is about doing our best to make sure that women and their partners plan for a healthy positive pregnancy.

4. **What can be happening in a woman's life that could negatively impact if she was to become pregnant?** Pose the question on the slide/PROP and ask young people to work in pairs/3s to think of at least 5 things which can get in the way of a healthy pregnancy. They are to imagine a woman isn't yet pregnant, but she may be planning to be, or might become pregnant without necessarily planning it. Use the slide and recording prop and encourage young people to think about the environment, the social situation of the mum/her partner, the woman's health or lifestyle.

**What can be happening in a woman's life that could negatively impact if she was to become pregnant?** Consider:

- Environmental factors
  - Social situation
  - Health
  - Lifestyle
5. After some consideration, ask for feedback. After exploring commonalities and diversity of opinion, ask the young people to work again with their partner/3 to pick one of the things that can get in the way of a healthy pregnancy and think about: **What could the woman and her partner do to end or minimise this negative factor?** Explore ideas as a class/group.

6. **Getting ready for a healthy pregnancy.** Give the young people (working in pairs/3s or small groups) the 'blank' version of the traffic lights prop with the Stop/Check/Start buttons only. Explain that they are to imagine they are advising any woman (and partner) who are planning to get pregnant about the things they should do before conception. They should list as many ideas/bits of advice they can.
7. After some time, review what the young people have suggested, explore why they think these things are important, and how they might help make a pregnancy and early years of a child healthier.
8. Then share the completed traffic lights. (NOTE these come from the *Missed Periods* report described below). Compare and contrast with the young people's work, check understanding.
9. Share the **Ready Steady Baby** site page that also highlights how a mum/couple can plan for pregnancy. Scrolls down and emphasise all the things highlight/reinforced here. Explain that this site is a really helpful one for anyone planning a pregnancy:  
<http://www.readysteadybaby.org.uk/trying-for-a-baby/gettingready.aspx>
10. End with acknowledgement of all the contributions today. Make links to the further learning that young people will do on contraception.

### Additional ideas

This activity is informed by those working on developing Scotland's approach to pre-conception care. For staff, parents or young people interested in exploring the issues further the report by Dr Jonathan Sher called **Missed Periods: Scotland's opportunities for better pregnancies, healthier parents and thriving babies the first time and every time** (commissioned by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde) is available here: <http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/237840/missed-periods-j-sher-may-2016.pdf> a shorter/overview of the main findings is available in the report **Prepared for Pregnancy?** <http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/237841/prepared-for-pregnancy-j-sher-may-2016.pdf>

### Practitioner Notes

