



Title: Being a parent/carer: Preparing for parenthood (V2)

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. |

Learning intentions

- Young people reflect on the need to plan for parenthood.
- Young people understand what choices and actions can be taken before conception to ensure the best start in life for a child and parent/carer.
- Young people understand the term pre-conception care.

Success criteria

- I can reflect on the need to plan for parenthood.
- I can talk about the value of pre-conception care.
- I can discuss the choices and actions a potential parent can take to ensure the best start in life for the child.

NOTE: This activity would benefit from being delivered alongside activity **S9 Contraception and Condoms**.

Resources to support this activity

- PowerPoint slides
- Prop for activity: Traffic lights/Getting ready for a healthy pregnancy (blank version)
- Handout: Traffic lights/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 unpanned/unintended?* Then share the slide with the statistics.

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.

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*?

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 a parent if we actually *plan to be* 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 have a negative impact if she was to become pregnant?** Pose the question on the slide 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.

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

- 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.

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.

Then share the completed traffic lights (handout). (Acknowledgement: these come from the *Missed Periods* report described below). Compare and contrast with the young people's work, check understanding.

7. **Alcohol:** This will likely have come up in discussion, the slide emphasises the important message about alcohol (and drug) free pregnancy. (For young people interested in this topic, further links are provided below.)
8. 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>
9. 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>

More about Foetal Alcohol Syndrome:

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome UK – a national organisation with information and helpline www.nofas-uk.org/
NHS information: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/foetal-alcohol-syndrome/>

Practitioner Notes

