



Title: Being a parent/carer (2)

Part 1: Would having a baby change my life? What do parents and carers need?

Level: THIRD/FOURTH

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. |

Learning Intentions

- Young people understand the role of a parent/carer.
- Young people understand the challenges of being a parent/carer.
- Young people understand how having a child would impact on their life.
- Young people understand the importance of nurture and play in a child’s development.
- Young people learn about the importance of finding and seeking help and support as a parent.

Success Criteria

- I can discuss the skills and qualities of a parent/carer.
- I can talk about what a parent/carer does to make sure their child is healthy, happy and safe.
- I can discuss some of the challenges of being a parent/carer and how to seek help and support.
- I talk about the kind of parent or carer I would be.

Resources to support this activity

- PowerPoint 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/>
- 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>

Whenever you use content on a platform like YouTube please cue the film you intend to play in advance, check it is the film you want to view, and skip adverts.

NOTE: When discussing family and home life the teacher/educator will have some knowledge of the personal circumstances of children. Sensitivity may need to be shown to young people who are currently experiencing some stress or distress at home.

Activity

1. Begin with an explanation that in this session, and two that follow, the young people will be thinking about being a parent or carer. Acknowledge this list of things:
 - 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 dad's new partner, and that some children grow up with adoptive or foster parents. In short – any adult in the child's family can have a role as a carer.
 - That young people may already feel strongly that they don't want to be a parent, that too is okay. The likelihood is though that we are all likely to have children in our lives in some way.
 - That we are talking about this now (state age of the young people) because however young people feel about the prospect of parenthood now, being a parent is something that takes a lot of consideration and thinking about long before it becomes a reality.
 - And finally - that is very much about everyone, not just women as mums and carers, but men as dads and carers too.
2. 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.
3. 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 (heterosexual) 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 - did gender matter?*
4. **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/>
 - 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. You could ask: *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.
5. **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.

6. Share the final set of slides **10 basic principles of good parenting**. As you go, check whether young people agree with (thumbs up), disagree with (thumbs down) or question the suggestions.

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 that 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.

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 consider how having a baby might change their life and what parents need in order to parent positively. The young people will look at communication, nurture and resilience. Finally, they explore the importance of play to child development and wellbeing and find out about the Babybox.

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-teenagers?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

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

Practitioner Notes