

# Educational and Social Challenges of Teenage Pregnancy

## Abstract

Teenage parenting is a serious social problem. While many of these pregnancies end in abortion or adoption, teen girls who do decide to keep their babies face many challenges. Although less is known about teen fathers, research indicates that they, too, face problems associated with being parents. Teen parents faces many educational and social problems. In this article these problems were considered.

**Keywords:** Teenage Pregnancy.

## Introduction

Our society claims to be modern and following the western culture. But, are we able to change our thought process accordingly or are we still facing doubts on whether to accept certain issues or not. One such issue that I am going to talk about today is Teenage Pregnancy. A topic which is certainly not acceptable in the society and I don't think will ever be. But can teenage pregnancy be termed as a "Social Evil". Shouldn't we as citizens understand the issue and help curb it rather than calling it an ill culture.

Becoming a parent, at any age, can be a life-altering experience. Regardless of race, education, and socio-economic status, motherhood—and fatherhood—uniformly places demands on one's life that was non-existent prior to the birth of a child. When school-aged students become parents, the new responsibilities can be overwhelming. For teenage parents who lack support from their own parents, this experience can be even more daunting as they seek support in adult-oriented systems, which even older parents may find challenging. Teenage parents—or students with children, as they are also referred to in the literature—are parents between the ages of 13 and 19. Often these students drop out of school because of the pressures they experience, including stigmatization associated with early parenting; isolation from peers; and lack of needed support from family, friends, schools, social service agencies, and other organizations.

## Some Facts

1. Every day, 20,000 girls below age 18 give birth in developing countries. Births to girls also occur in developed countries but on a much smaller scale.
2. Girls under 15 account for 2 million of the 7.3 million births that occur to adolescent girls under 18 every year in developing countries.
3. About 70,000 adolescents in developing countries die annually of causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death for older adolescent females in developing countries.

## There are Many Factors Which Lead to Teen Pregnancy

### Lack of Proper Sex Education

Though we claim to be a modern country, talking about sex still remains a taboo. So, yes, schools are now providing sex education but they do it just for the sake of doing and not with the aim to counsel properly.

### Poverty

Teens don't even get the chance to get educated

### Child Marriages

This social evil just refuses to fade away in India. Young girls are married off and they get pregnant at a tender age of 15 or 16.

Nuclear families: Lack of guidance from elders of the family.

### Peer Pressure

Teens hear their friends doing it without getting pregnant and they want to try it too otherwise their friends will call them cowards of not having the courage to take risks



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### **Exposure to Media**

There is no filtration of the obscene contents. They see the heroes and heroines do it and so they want to do it too

### **Drinking and Smoking**

Abuse of drugs makes them loose conscious of what's right and wrong.

### **Lack of Supportive Parents and Family**

A child deprived of love will look for pleasure and happiness elsewhere.

### **Exposure to Sexual Violence**

Sexual abuse at home. Unhealthy environment at home.

### **Stressful Lifestyle**

A depressive lifestyle can always lead and individual; to look out for something which in which they will find momentary pleasures another huge problem is awareness. There is no awareness in our teens. A study showed that most of the sexually active girls even consider using a contraceptive after indulging in 6 months of sexual activity.

### **Effect of Teenage Pregnancy on Education**

In an economy that increasingly demands higher levels of educational achievement; teen pregnancy can interrupt or derail education, with lasting consequences. Nationally, only about half of teen mothers earn a high school diploma by age 22, compared to 89 percent of women who do not give birth in their teen years. Teens who have a child before age 18 is even less likely to graduate; only 38 percent earn a diploma and another 19 percent get a degree. Less than 2 percent of teen moms finish college by the time. Even if teens complete high school, unplanned pregnancy can still disrupt higher education goals. Teenagers getting pregnant at an early age cannot pursue their higher education due to extra responsibility, which increases the rate of literacy in society. The education of the teen mother remains on hold during pregnancy, and some teens even decide to drop out of their high school and find a job to supplement themselves. Teens that plan to attend college have to bear taunts, acidic remarks, and arrogant discourses from their peers about their pregnancy and baby. In such circumstances, teen moms decide to focus on the baby or plan to get married rather than pursuing a higher education. Researchers conclude that most teenage pregnancies end with education dropouts because of the fear of embarrassment, humiliation, and harassment from the fellow friends and college mates. Teenage pregnancy statistics states that only one-third of teen moms can even acquire the high school diploma, and a few also get a college degree.

### **Effects of Teenage Pregnancy on Society**

#### **Lack of Financial Support**

A teen mother who does not get proper financial support from her parents or friends has to face a severe financial crunch. She has to face extreme difficulty to buy basic items for her newborn baby like, clothing and baby care products

#### **Emotional Crisis**

After getting pregnancy at an early age, the teen mother may suffer from huge emotional crisis due to lack of social support from family. Severe emotional and mental breakdown triggers the onset of evil behavior like suicide attempts or attempting to

self-abort the baby. The teen mother experiences severe depression while facing the negative feedback about the pregnancy from the society.

### **Higher Suicide Rates**

Teenage moms are more prone to committing suicides, as the humiliations and embarrassment, and the lack of social support can trigger depression. Emotional stress, financial crisis, and societal alienation are some of the main contributing factors that trigger suicide among teen mothers. A good support system is extremely crucial for the young mother, to help rid her of suicidal thoughts.

### **Bad Reputation in Society**

Teenage pregnancy is viewed as social stigma and teen parents have to bear bad reputation as the society treats them as outcasts and strangers.

### **Social Problem**

The entire social life of the teen mother gets ruined due to her early and unexpected pregnancy, and she has to spend her life in emotional trauma.

The high social and economic costs of teen pregnancy and childbearing can have short- and long-term negative consequences for teen parents, their children, and their community. These immediate and long-lasting effects continue for teen parents and their children even after adjusting for the factors that increased the teen's risk for pregnancy—e.g., growing up in poverty, having parents with low levels of education, growing up in a single-parent family, and having low attachment to and performance in school.

### **Conclusion**

One of the most effective measures to prevent teenage pregnancy amongst the young generation is through proper sex education and by promoting abstinence. As a responsible parent, you should try instilling moral or religious values in your teen. With proper guidance, it becomes easy for them to lead a successful life and not commit mistakes at their impressionable age. Society should guide teens down the right path, rather than passing negative remarks and discouraging them.

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