

## Remember:

- ☞ We're not saying that you shouldn't have sex, but that you should think carefully about your reasons for having it.
- ☞ Don't have sex just because it seems like everyone else is.
- ☞ Make sure you're ready to face all the responsibilities that come with having sex. Find out about birth control.
- ☞ If you do get pregnant, you're not a bad person. But be prepared - others may think you are.
- ☞ Don't let people pressure you into doing what they think is best for you. Make the decisions that *you* think are best for you because you'll have to live with them.

## A wonderful experience but...

Having a baby can be a wonderful experience. But we needed to know more about what we were getting ourselves into. Think about waiting until:

- ☞ you're sure the time is right for you.
- ☞ you're in a secure relationship in which you both want children, or you're well prepared, emotionally and financially, to be a single mother.
- ☞ you have fulfilled your own needs and desires (for instance, gone to university, travelled, got a job). It's a lot harder to achieve these things while trying to look after someone else.
- ☞ you're independent, economically secure, and have a safe place for you and your baby to live.

## Birth Control Information

Sexual Health Centre 527-2868  
Teen Place (New Germany) 644-3430  
Your doctor

## Pre and Post Natal Care & Information

Public Health: 543-0850 (prenatal classes, breast feeding, support)  
South Shore Regional Hospital: 543-4603  
E'pit Nuji Ilmuet - Native Council NS Prenatal Program:  
902-895-1738 or [www.ncns.ca](http://www.ncns.ca)  
Sexual Health Centre: 527-2868

## Abortion Information

Sexual Health Centre: 527-2868  
Teen Health Centre New Germany: 644-3430  
Your doctor

## Adoption Information & Arrangements

Family & Children's Services: 541-1275  
Sexual Health Centre (info only): 527-2868

## SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRE

Lunenburg County

4 Hillcrest Street, Unit 8  
Bridgewater, NS B4V 1S9  
902-527-2868  
[LunCo@NSSexualHealth.ca](mailto:LunCo@NSSexualHealth.ca)  
[www.LunCo.cfsh.info](http://www.LunCo.cfsh.info)

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# What's it *really* like to be a teenage mother?

## Answers from teen moms

*We got pregnant when we were teens.  
We decided to continue our pregnancies.  
We're proud to be moms but having a  
child isn't easy. It changes everything. If  
you're a young woman who's having  
sexual intercourse, or who's thinking  
about it, here are some myths and  
realities to think about.*

## SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRE

Lunenburg County

*The experts in sexual and reproductive health*

# Myth #1

**I won't get pregnant. It will never happen to me!**

## Reality

 **It can happen to you.**

In Canada each year, 1 in 20 teenage girls gets pregnant. In some communities the rate is much higher. Any young woman having intercourse can get pregnant. If you aren't using birth control, chances are high you'll get pregnant. It happened to us. It can happen to you.










# Myth #3

**I wish I had a baby!**

## Reality

**Having a baby takes away your freedom and your youth. Some girls think babies are cute and want to get pregnant and have one of their own. Babies are cute but they mean you have to grow up fast.**

### Having a baby means:




-  Having little time for yourself. For a long time. Being a mom is forever.
-  Not being able to go out and party or take off with your friends because someone has to babysit. Sometimes you'll be so tired you won't even want to go out.
-  Waking up at 2 a.m., 3 a.m., 4 a.m., etc. to a screaming baby.
-  Changing diapers.
-  Feeling scared or frustrated. You won't always know what to do.
-  Losing old friends. You won't always be able to relate to your friends anymore and they might not understand your life either.
-  You might have difficulty getting a job or going to school because some people might not be willing to accommodate your needs, or might assume you're not responsible.

# Myth #2

**Some young women might think having sex will make guys like them. They might even think that getting pregnant and having a baby will make their boyfriends love them or make the relationship better.**

## Reality

**Having a baby changes a relationship, but it doesn't always make it better.**







-  Most teenage mothers don't marry their babies' fathers.
-  Some couples break up during the pregnancy or after the baby is born.
-  If your boyfriend sticks around, he might be supportive but he'll likely expect you to look after the baby most of the time.

# Myth #4

**Being pregnant is a wonderful and beautiful experience.**

## Reality

**Being pregnant can be great, but it can also be a pain.**




-  When you're pregnant, you gain weight. Your feet swell. You might be very uncomfortable.
-  Morning sickness can last all day.
-  You might get stretch marks on your stomach, arms, legs, hips, and breasts.
-  You might cry a lot and your self-esteem can be really low.
-  You don't always feel attractive. Guys might not look at you in the same way any more.
-  For a long time after you get pregnant and have a baby, you or your partner might not want to have sex.



**Being a teen mom is no big deal. I can look after myself.**

# Myth #5

**Reality Being a single mother is a tremendous responsibility.**

-  Having a baby is expensive. You might end up dependent on your parents or on Social Assistance.
-  As a young mother your education and employment opportunities are limited. You might not be able to afford to move near a school or where the jobs are.
-  Affordable, safe housing that allows children is hard to find. You might not be able to find a decent place to live.