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Teen Mothers' Experiences in the New Beginnings Parent Education Program

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**Teen Mothers' Experiences in the New Beginnings Parent Education
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Dedication

I dedicate this paper to my husband Dwain, our Son Miles, and to my Family whose endless support and unconditional love gave me the inspiration and desire to pursue an advance degree in the field of Family and Child Studies.

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Abstract

This study was conducted to gain the personal accounts of teen mothers' experiences as students attending the New Beginnings Parent Education Program. Using a phenomenological perspective, the researcher sought to gain a deeper insight of their lived experience including knowledge of parent education, the existence of significant relationships, and goal setting for themselves, their family, education and career prior to becoming pregnant, and again after they found out they were pregnant or delivered their child. Using participant interviews, observations and field notes it was determined that the parent education program and instructors had a significant impact on participants within this study. The participants recognized that the goals they have set for themselves in various aspects of their life and their child's life can be realized through course work, interaction with their infants and relationships with family and friends. The participants' learned to create healthy relationships, and to embrace their role as the most important person in their child's life.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Sasso and Williams (2002) stated:

Throughout our lives, we undertake few more important responsibilities than those which accompany parenthood. However, in a few areas of life we are so poorly prepared. No test must be passed or license acquired to become a parent. Yet, the responsibility carries with it requirements that are of monumental significance in our lives and the lives of our children (p.2).

Parenting is perhaps the most challenging and daunting responsibility for which parents can never fully prepare. Everyday there is a teenager who has just become aware that she is pregnant, "Estimates are that every minute, another child is born to a teenage mother," unaware that the experiences that lay ahead for them and their children are a reality for many teens in the United States (Suner, Nakamura & Caulfield, 2003, p.71).

According to data reported by Suner, Nakamura, and Caulfield, the rate for teen pregnancy has declined 20% since 1991; even so the United States has by far the highest teen pregnancy rate in the world (2003). "In 1999 (the last year for which data are available), there were 9,049 births among females 14 years old and younger, 163,559 births among females aged 15-17 years, and 312,186 births among adolescents aged 18-19 years" (Montgomery, 2004, p. 27). These astounding numbers raise concern for the welfare of teen mothers and their children, including views that suggest a lack of parenting in any positive likeness is taking place in these new young families.

With the prevalence of absent fathers, teen mothers are taking on the role of primary caregiver for their children, and with this tremendous responsibility comes the daily struggles of single parenting. This brings about an additional host of issues for them and the opinions of numerous community members, who believe the population of teen mothers has contributed greatly to a steady increase in the overwhelming misuse of government resources, and has increased the likelihood that any future for both mom and baby are bleak, therefore contributing to (or more likely perpetuating) the devastating state of child abuse and neglect, poverty and an increase in the likelihood of future pregnancies (Akinbami, Cheng and Kornfeld, 2001; Rowan, Shaw-Perry, & Rager, 2005).

Background of Problem

The parental role is crucial in the ongoing development of children. Studies have shown that teen mothers lack education; financial and social support; and connections to parent-centered resources that are important in parenting (Cothran, 2001). Federal programs established to assist families in becoming more self-sufficient are seen by many as resources that are over used and are exhausting taxpayer dollars. Suner, Nakamura and Caulfield (2003) cite a report by Flinn and Hauser which states "Of the approximate half million children born to teen mothers each year in the United States, the federal government spends over \$40 billion to help teen mothers and their children" (p. 71).

Teenage mother's face several issues that from time to time have them questioning how they will provide food, clothing, and care for themselves as well as for their children, which alter the circumstances of daily life, time and again, ultimately contributing to their success or failure. Britner & Reppucci (1997) reported that the

experience of transitioning into the parental role at a young age, teenagers are exposed to a higher occurrence of living in poverty with support systems that are either fragile or that are non-existent. As a result, teen mothers who face these realities are often influenced in ways that can lead to an increased occurrence of abuse and neglect on their children.

The statistics related to teen pregnancy are startling, though with the ongoing support resources for pregnant and parenting teen mothers, it is comforting to know that the number of teenage pregnancies and live births are decreasing. However, teen pregnancy rates in the United States remain the highest in the world despite the decrease in past years. "Research consistently shows a strong correlation between teen parenting and many adverse outcomes for children born to young mothers" (Levine, Emery, & Pollack, 2007, p. 105).

Do parent education programs adequately assist teen mothers in helping them better prepare for the role of parent? Parenting programs focus on various aspects of parent education to help build knowledge about the multi-faceted areas that are truly life or death matters for teen mothers with little resources. There are several successful parent education programs across the United States that effectively help teen mothers by providing tools to help increase their confidence levels in parenting. The downfall with some of these programs is that many have a specific timeline for which individuals can be enrolled in the program. Additionally, a number of programs neglect becoming involved in multifaceted aspects of the participants' life story, (learning about their enrolled teen mother's backgrounds) so that extra focus can be placed on each teen

parent's individual needs in order to more accurately target services that in the long run will best suit the teens' needs as a parent.

The foundations of pregnancy prevention programs designed to decrease the numbers of sexually active adolescents (as well as educate them on the use of methods to protect them from sexually transmitted disease and pregnancy, if they decide to become sexually active) are found within a variety of curricula that provide educational (as well as practical) materials and exercises to enhance each program, thereby yielding higher success rates.

Abstinence education and teen pregnancy prevention programs are flourishing and have well reported results to validate the success rates of their programs. In a review of 15 abstinence education programs, Kim and Rector (2007, para. 3) reported:

Abstinence education teaches abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage as the expected standard for all school age children and stresses that there are social, psychological, and health benefits to be gained from abstinence.

Abstinence programs also provide youths with valuable life and decision-making skills that lay the foundation for personal responsibility and developing healthy relationships and marriages later in life. The emphasis of these programs is on preparing young people for a successful future.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy seeks to “improve the lives and future prospects of children and families and, in particular, to help ensure that children are born into stable, two-parent families who are committed to and ready for the demanding task of raising the next generation” (www.teenpregnancy.org). Community based programs use developed curricula to encourage the postponement of

sexual activity and to promote the use of contraceptives (if they choose to engage in sexual activity) in order to decrease the number of pregnancies and to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted disease, which in some cases are fatal (www.teenpregnancy.org).

The message for teen pregnancy prevention programs including those that advocate abstinence is being spread on much larger scales than in the past. The success rates of education programs designed to prevent early experiences with sex (and programs designed to educate adolescents on the importance of safety in choosing to engage in sexual behavior) still have not been able to fully prevent the astonishing numbers of teenage pregnancy and the host of issues that accompany pregnancy and parenting.

Nature of the Problem

In a nation where there are nearly a half million children born to teenagers each year, it is devastating to imagine the ongoing struggles that are in store for mothers who are (in many ways) still children themselves (Suner, Nakamura, & Caulfield, 2003). Adding to the daily issues of being a teenager, which can include mood swings, self-image, and peer pressure, to name a few, the task of parenting is often overwhelming.

In a social context, countless reports have found that pregnant and child-rearing teenagers are more likely to drop out of school, obtain low wage employment, and depend on welfare to sustain them. Alone, with the exception of the life that is growing inside of them (or have given birth to), life is lonely and empty, leaving no signs for a happy ending. Without adequate resources and a support system to aid them through this

difficult stage in their life (and the difficulties that lie ahead), the only conclusion left to assume is a life of hopelessness.

Teen pregnancy prevention and abstinence education programs provide ways to prevent early engagement in sexual activity, thereby postponing pregnancy for years beyond adolescents. The shortcoming is that these programs do not address the millions of situations where sexual engagement was not postponed and has resulted in pregnancy or a live birth. Where do these teenage mothers turn to stop the cycle that perhaps has claimed other adolescent females in their family? Where do they turn if they are the first person in their family experiencing pregnancy or parenting as a teen? For many, the opportunity to participate in programs that assist teen mothers in building strong support systems, encourage them in developing positive parenting skills, and enhance each individual in ways that allow them to visualize a better future for both them and their child is the only chance so many will ever receive.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain the personal accounts of teen mothers' experiences as students attending the New Beginnings Parent Education Program, using a phenomenological perspective to gain a deeper insight of their lived experience including knowledge of parent education, the existence of significant relationships, and goal setting for themselves, their family, education and career prior to becoming pregnant, and again after they found out they were pregnant or delivered their child.

The knowledge gained from this study will be helpful to the New Beginnings professional staff working with their teen mother population in enhancing program goals and objectives, and increasing enrollment. Moreover, the knowledge gained from this

study will allow the New Beginnings students who participated in this study to recognize the magnitude of conceiving a child and delivering that child with the intention of parenting. Following the delivery, the role of parent becomes more real as the responsibilities become more defined. There is now a human life that will be influenced by everything he or she is exposed to. To voluntarily enroll in a program that can provide the tools needed to build success as a new parent, is an outstanding accomplishment that not everyone can achieve. It is with great hope that these three participants and the students that enroll in this program in the future will find a renewed hope in themselves for continued success as a teen mom.

Definition of Terms

Teen Parent	A pregnant or parenting adolescent between the ages of 14-18 years old.
Teen Parent Program	Programs designed to educate parents about parenting, child development, self-esteem and enhancement in self-goal fulfillment.
Parenting Skills	Competence in areas related to child rearing which can include, child development, discipline, time management, and relationship development.
Phenomenology	The lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or phenomenon.

Limitations

There are some immediate limitations in this study that are reflective of the small sample size and the teen parent program used to access the participants. Due to the

nature of this study and the desire to capture firsthand experiences of pregnancy and parenting as a teenager, it was important to limit the number of participants to ensure ample time was provided for each participant to share their unique story. Additionally, the participants in this study were recruited using the same teen parenting program (New Beginnings), therefore the small sample size and the use of one teen parenting program in this study are not assorted in size, socioeconomic status, or ethnic diversity to generalize all pregnant and parenting teen mothers. Other programs may focus on a subset of the demographics mentioned and the outcomes would vary when compared with this study.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The Teen Mother

It is reported in the United States that “approximately one million teenagers become pregnant each year, half of which result in live births” (Rowen, Shaw-Perry & Rager, 2005, p. 226). The thought of a teenager conceiving and delivering a child is frightening; because the reality is that a parenting teenager will be raising their child while they are still children themselves. Several researchers on the topic of teen pregnancy suggest that teen mothers are not prepared for parenting because of their age, which in turn is associated with a lack of experience in life and what, at the bare minimum, is required to raise a happy and healthy child (Rowen et al., 2005; Caulfield & Thomson, 1999; Suner, Nakamura & Caulfield, 2003).

According to Rowen, et al. (2005), “teenagers in general, are not mature, responsible decision-makers in society. A majority of teens in school often lack the patience required to work, to go to school, and care for a child” (p. 228). Entering this new world of motherhood and transitioning into what Larson (2004) refers to as an “adult role” has led to an increase in social issues related to school dropout rates, the use of government assistance programs, and the occurrence of child abuse and neglect (p. 458). For many teenage parents, school becomes an interfering entity when there are other mounting priorities in view. As a result, research identified by Caulfield & Thomson (1999) shows that “one quarter of teenagers who drop out of high school name pregnancy as their primary reason, and is the reason why almost half of all teen mothers who drop out never complete high school” (p. 49).

Living in poverty is a consequence that develops from a lack of education or vocational trade and is linked with the low availability of job opportunities existing for uneducated and untrained teenagers, which leaves them trapped in finding ways of supporting themselves and their children (Caulfield & Thomson, 1999). An additional perspective on how poverty among teen parents became prevalent stems from the belief that teenage mothers who grew up in disadvantaged families and communities, and furthermore have been exposed to adverse circumstances, often view having a baby as a good option considering their current lifestyle (National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 1997, p. 18). The inability to obtain profitable employment leaves open the question of how they will support themselves and their children.

Rowen, et al. (2005) report, "eighty percent of pregnant and parenting teens between the ages of 13 and 19 receive governmental assistance" (p. 226). Other research reveals, "The federal government spends over 40 billion dollars to assist teen mothers and their children" (Suner et al., 2003, p.71). With such a high participation rate, for government provided resources for food, clothing, and health care, why are there so many disparities associated with teen mothers and their children?

Across the board, research has shown a strong relationship between teen pregnancy and parenting and adverse outcomes for both teen mothers and their children (Levine, Emery & Pollack, 2007). Multiple reports reflect the health-related risks associated with teen mothers, and go further to discuss the health-issues that many infants experience being born to teenage mothers.

Suner et al. state "the consequences of teen pregnancy are staggering. Pregnant teens are more at risk, experiencing a maternal death rate that is over two times greater

than that of mothers aged 20-24". Teen mothers often have limited prenatal care, which in turn contributes to complications among the pregnant teen population, which include "poor weight gain, anemia, greater risk of obesity and hypertension" (Suner et al., 2003, p. 71). Further findings go on to explain that children born to adolescent mothers are more likely to begin school more unprepared to learn than those born to mothers who are older (Suner et al., 2003). Other researchers note "even with adequate prenatal care, the incidence of behavioral disturbances, developmental delays and mild mental retardation is unusually high among the offspring of adolescent mothers" (Nath, Borkowski, Whitman & Schellenbach, 1991, p. 411). Children born to teen parents are at a higher risk of suffering from symptoms because of low birth weights, including "infant death, blindness, deafness, chronic respiratory illness, mental retardation, and cerebral palsy; moreover, low birth weight doubles a child's chances of being diagnosed with dyslexia, hyperactivity, or some other disabilities in later childhood" (Suner et al., 2003, p. 71).

The reports of pregnancy and post-pregnancy outcomes for teen mothers and their babies are sad enough. The heartbreaking reports that the stress teen parents are under, caused by taking on new roles with different levels of health issues related to either themselves or their child, when combined with lack of knowledge in parenting and development, can be seen as a trigger for an increased occurrence of child abuse. According to Thomas & Looney (2004), "the incidence of child abuse and neglect is substantially higher among teenage mothers, where approximately 11% of the children of adolescent mothers are victims of reported child abuse, compared with only 5% of children born to 20-21 year old mothers" (p. 66).

The rise in teenage pregnancy and single parenting, partnered with social issues related to economic stability and established community outreach programs, play a part in the occurrence of child abuse and neglect. The ever-changing faces of the family and the challenges that come with each change have posed obstacles that can sometimes hinder positive parenting. Raising healthy, confident children can be difficult when teen parents are frustrated with life choices that will affect themselves as well as their child. The lack of knowledge and experience in parenting can cause decisions to be made that are not in the best interest of the child; having to face stressful social conditions only increases these concerns, especially where necessary resources are unavailable.

Parent Education Defined

A common belief of parenting is that in order to become a parent, you must first be prepared. Being prepared can include being financially stable to reading every available book on parenting from birth to adulthood. Parenting demands that priorities in every aspect of life be rearranged to accommodate the varying hats that are worn on a daily basis. In reality, no one really knows how to parent until their child is born and the journey begins, and even then questions on a variety of topics related to parenting are ever-present.

The term family has changed, and has led to the need for education programs that address a variety of issues involving grandparents, parents, and single parents in raising children. Parent education can be broken down into several areas that define the target population in which a program is focused. Parent education is the term used to describe the countless ways knowledge is transmitted from educator to parent in order to increase parent/child interaction and to promote healthy parenting. More formally, Mahoney,

Kaiser, Girolametto, MacDonald, Robinson, Safford, and Spiker (1999) define parent education as “the process of providing parents and other primary caregivers with specific knowledge and childrearing skills with the goal of promoting the development and competence of their children” (p. 131). Mahoney et al. (2003) state that interaction between parent and child, as a part of early intervention, can be interpreted as educational, whereas professionals trained on the subject matter with specific outlined goals for both the parent and child implement parent education.

History of Parent Education

Parent education, though revamped over time to include multiple avenues for educational opportunities, is not a new concept. The term parent education dates back to the early 1800s when information regarding childcare became available to American mothers by way of Europe (Croke & Glover, 1977). The first recorded group meeting was documented in 1815 in Portland, Maine. During this period, it was common for groups to meet to discuss issues with raising children. Maternal organizations, as they were referred to in the 1800s, met on a regular basis to discuss problems they were concerned with related to “the religious and moral improvement of their children” (p. 151).

In the mid 1800s (1840–1850), magazines were published that focused on mothers and parenting. Following print of this media source, the federal government became focused on the study of children and parent education (Croke & Glover, 1977; Sherrets et al., 1980). Between the years 1909 and 1914, the first White House Conference on Child Welfare was held and the Children’s Bureau was formed. By 1918,

the United States Public Health Service initiated support for programs that were health oriented, and that focused on parent education (Croke & Glover, 1977).

A questionnaire mailed from the Office of Education resulted in finding that 378 organizations reported having various forms of parent education during the 1930s. The Works Progress Administration, using teachers and group leaders, offered presentations on child behavior, which led to the development of parent education as well as an evaluation component to assess effectiveness, within several universities. Despite what seemed to be a rising popularity in parent education, in the late 1930s a steady decline in the interest of parent oriented education programs occurred, and was not revived until the 1960s into the 1970s (Sherrets et al., 1980).

In the 1960s, state intervention became popular in intervention efforts where the best interest of the child was concerned, when parents fell short in their parenting roles. Since that time, parent education has been used as an intervention for parents whose children are at risk or are more exposed to child maltreatment (abuse), and to improve family functioning overall (Britner & Reppucci, 1997).

Parent education has grown into a variety of areas affecting children and families, including, mental health, schools, and predominately public health, and is a well covered topic in several areas of both federal and local government agendas (Sherrets et al., 1980).

The Need for Teen Parent Education

The ongoing transformation in the delivery of parent education has taken on new challenges due to the change in family dynamics that have led to social problems within the family as a unit. According to Sherrets et al., (1980) parent education is viewed as

both the “primary and secondary prevention we have to offer for a variety of social ills” (p. 35).

Though the number of teen pregnancies has decreased, the need for parent education programs that focus on pregnant and parenting teenagers has not (Philliber, Brooks, Lehrer, Oakley & Waggoner, 2003). Teen mothers and their children are at an increased risk of poverty, and both have increased risks of health issues. Amid the frustrations of trying to find employment and feed and clothe their children, they are learning to handle new responsibilities associated with parenting. These adjustments can cause an overwhelming amount of stress for any parent, let alone a parent who is still a child. The adjustments can lead to reoccurring abnormal parenting practices that can ultimately lead to child abuse. For instance, Sasso and Williams (2002) state that “Adolescent mothers are sometimes less sensitive, less responsive, provide less verbal stimulation, and demonstrate less acceptance of infant behavior” (p. 1). For these reasons, it is crucial that teen mothers are taught skills that help them to understand the development of different ages, techniques for handling stages that are frustrating, and appropriate ways of interacting with their children. The population of teen mothers is a target for social ills to flourish if there are no easily accessed avenues of intervention set in place.

According to Sasso and Williams (2002), by 18 years of age “24 percent of all adolescent females will become pregnant at least once.” Additionally, “nearly one in five teenagers who experience a pregnancy for the first time become pregnant again within a year” (p. 1). Sasso and Williams (2002) state that effective parenting is no matter of coincidence; it takes hard work and the willingness to prioritize and balance all

components in one's life, and at times the readiness to make sacrifices in order to make a better life for children born to teen mothers. These factors alone can impart established successful outcomes.

Finally, education classes and trainings for teenage mothers are essential programs that provide a wealth of information as well as practical knowledge and application. Most importantly, in many cases parent education opportunities that are offered through various agencies and organizations are the only avenues that provide positive preparation techniques and skills before the child's birth and in the postpartum years (Rowen et al., 2005).

Delivery and Outcomes of Teen Parent Education Programs

The small decline in teen pregnancy rates does not elude the fact that there is still a great need for parent education programs that focus on teen parents. The programs designed to address the needs of teen mothers take on many forms, and use a variety of techniques to provide an understanding of child rearing skills and to build teens' overall confidence in parenting.

Akinbami, Cheng and Kornfeld (2001) reviewed the Teen-tot programs, which were created to prevent detrimental outcomes for teenage parents and their children. The Teen-tot programs are clinic based and serve their clientele individually, providing healthcare, family planning, counseling and encouragement for teenage mothers to move forward in pursuing educational goals. Additionally, referral services are provided to assist in accessing social services beyond what the program can offer. Essentially, this program is a "one stop shop for this high risk population. The teen-tot model is designed to remove barriers in receiving care that exist in traditional care models, such as

transportation difficulties, lack of continuity of care, and lack of case management” (p.382). The innermost goal for the Teen-tot programs is to prevent repeat pregnancies through components that improve the health and parenting practices for both teen mothers and their children, such as “simplifying access to contraception, discouraging school dropout and encouraging the pursuit of careers that provide economic security” (p.382).

Parent education programs that allow for home visitation of participants have also been a widely accepted method to approaching high risk, low income parents, which include the teen parent population. During the routine home visits, trained staff teach parents how to interact, recognize cues and engage in stimulating play with their child. The benefits of home visitation parent education programs include the convenient accessibility for teen mothers who may not have transportation to their appointment, as well as providing the participant with a sense of added comfort by allowing her to remain in an environment that is familiar to her (Authier, Sherrets & Tramontan, 1980).

Noller & Taylor (1989) found that “early research on parent education programs were generally methodologically weak” (p. 196). More recent research has indicated that outcomes of parent education programs targeting teens have been successful. A study on early parenthood, which tracked parenting teens after high school graduation and discussed the effects of the on- campus child care center and the repeated contact with the staff in relation to their effectiveness as parents, confirmed the fact that the parenting classes, in addition to child care and interaction with staff, did make a difference in increasing teen parents’ ability to care for their children (Caulfield & Thomson, 1999).

Teen Mothers' Perspectives

There is little data that describes the experiences and perspectives of parenting from the teenage mother. With the high number of teenage pregnancies, it is troubling to know there is a significant lack of research available regarding teen mothers' perspectives of teenage pregnancy, and experiences.

According to one recent study, "...there has been little research about the teaching and learning at schools for pregnant and parenting teens or how these teens' identity is considered at such schools" (Hallman, 2007, p. 82). Qualitative research is needed to gather pertinent information from teen mothers perspectives to more accurately describe the phenomenon, which in turn can provide the insight necessary for creating programs that target more specifically the needs of the teen parent (Rodier, 1991).

Some available studies have identified comments from teenage mothers that incorporate their views of available programs and offer their opinions of what portions of these programs were beneficial to them. Dieterich (1997) explains how one teen spoke of the use of peer groups:

My favorite part was getting to meet other people and talk about the labor process; I do think the classes could have been longer, over a few more weeks; they seemed to end just when everyone started to become friends; I needed the support ... gave myself a chance to see how other people [teens] deal with being pregnant. The group experience that is most valued by participants is the return of a teen mom with her baby to discuss labor, birth and the postpartum period (p.7).

Furstenberg et al., as cited by Higginson (1998) noted that "teen mothers feel

proud of the job they are doing as parents and put a tremendous amount of energy into their parenting, but we know little about what good parenting means to adolescents” (p.136). This is the area of significance that is missing in the evaluation of programs for teen mothers. Until meaning is associated with concepts that are delivered, there will be a dwindled effectiveness among outcomes for the participants enrolled in the programs that have been designed to help them excel in parenting.

For many, having someone to identify feelings and experiences with is a great help in restoring hope in the life of a teen mother. In the New Life focus group “pregnant and parenting teens expressed the need for parenting classes to be included in a mentoring program” (p. 229). Peer groups provide both emotional and social support, and are often motivators to their counterparts. Participants in the focus group stated, “you need somebody to talk to, that’s in the same situation with you, and it’s a lot more comforting if you have somebody who’s a teen parent than [to] go to talk to an adult” (Rowen et al., 2005, p. 231).

Overall, the research available based on teen mothers’ perspectives of parenting and parenting classes reveals that returning to school after the birth of their child had a significant impact on them. The classes provide a feeling of success and increased self-worth. The mothers went on to explain how the staff and their peers played an integral part in keeping them motivated to achieve more (Zachry, 2005). The return to school was also prompted by the desire to be good role models for their children, with hopes that they too will grow up wanting to finish school and achieve other goals in life.

Chapter III

Methods

Introduction

The methodology of this study was of a qualitative nature. Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research as “an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting” (p.15). In connection with Creswell’s definition, my goal was to gain a deeper insight of each student’s lived experience of being a teen mother enrolled in the New Beginnings Parent Education Program. I sought to gain knowledge of the participants comfort and understanding of parent education, the relationships that are significant to them and their child, and goals they have set for themselves, their family, education and career prior to becoming pregnant, and again after they found out they were pregnant or delivered their child. This chapter describes the program used as a model in this study, the procedures for gaining approval to conduct the study, a description of the participants, as well as information on how data was collected and quality issues encountered within this study.

New Beginnings Program

The New Beginnings parenting program is a onetime alternative education program for pregnant teens. The program was started over 19 years ago by Marion Matlock, and in that time has supported around 670 teenage mothers in completing their educational goals while renewing confidence in themselves to effectively parent their child at a young age. The program serves up to 15 students in a school district in a Midwestern state during their last trimester of pregnancy. Once enrolled, students are

required to meet a minimum of four academic credits in addition to four child care credits to successfully complete the program. The course work is self-paced (allowing time for doctors' appointments and maternity leave), and follows the school district's curriculum. In addition to the course work required to complete the program, the students receive education in areas of prenatal care, labor and delivery, parenting and decision-making. The students attend both individual and group counseling sessions to help build their self esteem (Sonja Fox, personal communication, May 2008).

The students are provided use of a child care facility for their newborn. The center is a - two-star Department of Human Service licensed nursery located on campus. Students are required to spend their lunch time in the nursery with their child where they can feed and spend time with them before returning to their coursework. Though the child care is free of charge, there are expectations that must be followed to continue the use of the facility beyond the semester. First, they must complete the New Beginnings child care curriculum, including laboratory assignments, and second, they must continue their education by enrolling in a vocational class once they have completed the New Beginnings program. The New Beginnings program provides transportation to the enrolled students and their babies, and facilitates job shadowing opportunities for teen mothers (Sonja Fox, personal communication, May 2008).

Pregnancy brings a new life, which creates a newfound dimension to relationships with family and friends, and the reality of adult life. These core areas address risk factors for the teen mother, and include providing opportunities to be exposed to several different community agencies that can aid in their individual success as well as their success in parenting in an effort to meet core program objectives which include, increasing the odds

that teen mothers will graduate from high school, providing information and resources that will ensure a healthy pregnancy and delivery, providing knowledge and skill of appropriate parenting practices, developing positive self esteem and positive goal setting and decision-making skills (consequently reducing the possibility of reoccurring pregnancies during adolescence), and providing avenues for mentoring to be positive influences (Sonja Fox, personal communication, May 2008).

Phenomenology

This is a phenomenological inquiry attempting to develop a more meaningful consciousness of the experiences of teen mothers in the New Beginnings Parent Education Program. van Manen (1990) states “lived experience is the starting point and end point of phenomenological research, and that the aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence” (p. 36). Based on van Manen’s definition, as cited by McClelland (1995) phenomenology is defined as the “study of everyday, lived experiences and the meanings we construct from them” (p.178). An additional element in phenomenology is that the researcher or phenomenologist, as they are sometimes referred, makes every effort to understand a participant’s perspective without bias, being conscious not to let personal opinions or knowledge of the phenomena interfere with the participant’s expressions and the phenomenologist being open to learn from the participant’s story (McClelland, 1995). There are diverse opinions held by community members, state and federal agencies, schools, and other groups within these entities regarding teen pregnancy. These opinions are what aid in the initiation of programs that serve the teen population that become pregnant.

Taking into account both mom and baby, views of larger society coupled with research studies helped in forming my own opinions of teen pregnancy and parenting. Teen pregnancy is a phenomenon; an observable fact and experience. It is this phenomenon that I attempt to understand, releasing all set notions of what will be discovered. Being aware of my own views, I made conscious efforts not to relate the participant's story to elements for which I had preconceived ideas. I remained free of my own views, and was therefore able to focus on the participants' words, her story, and her experience.

Having participants share their views and experiences of parenting, relationships and goals allowed me to envision their lives through the changes they have encountered as a result of being pregnant at their young age. It was important for me to be attentive to verbal as well as physical cues to be able to associate words and physical actions with the true intended meanings of each participant.

Procedure

The process of locating participants was initiated by inquiring about teenage parent education programs within this study using the internet and making telephone calls to various organizations that had parent education programs. I became most interested in The New Beginnings program, and contacted the director to inquire about the availability and willingness of the school, the program and the students for their involvement in this study. Upon verbal approval from the school principal, followed by verbal approval from the program director, a formal letter of consent to conduct the study was written and submitted to the Institutional Review Board (See Appendix A). Final approval to conduct the study was granted by the IRB following a full board review to discuss in

greater detail guidelines in recruiting minor participants, and interview questions related to relationships that had the potential of creating stressful circumstances for the participants. As a result of this meeting, a question was raised regarding what necessary steps would be taken in the event the interview revealed abuse related to the student or her child. In response, I drafted a protocol which outlined measures that would be taken in the event this was to occur. The protocol specifically stated that the interview would be stopped immediately and that the director of the New Beginnings program as well as the onsite counselor would be notified immediately. Additionally, the protocol stated that a report would be made using the child abuse reporting hotline affiliated with the state's Department of Human Services.

The initial step towards data collection was done by contacting the program director and scheduling a time to meet with the students for recruiting purposes. I had consent forms available for the participants who were 18 years-old and for the parents or guardian of the minor participants (under 18 years old). Additionally, I prepared assent forms for the students who were minors. A few of the students appeared eager and inquired about the study before I had a chance to give details. After visiting with the students about the study, which included explaining the purpose of the research, potential risks and discomforts, potential benefits, confidentiality, and assurance of voluntary participation, I asked if any of the students were interested in participating. Three of the four students signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the study (See Appendix B). I left a consent form with the fourth student in the event she changed her mind.

Selection of Participants

The design strategy used in the selection of participants for this study was purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling targets the direct group of participants that will be able to share firsthand their experiences of the phenomena (Patton, 2002). The participants in this study were selected for the reason that the information they had to share was rich, with useful expression of the phenomena.

To be a participant in the study, the teenager had to be between the ages of 14-18, pregnant or newly parenting their child (within the first 2 years of age), and be active participants in the New Beginnings program. At the time of the interviews, two of the participants had delivered their child and the third was pregnant. The participants consisted of three voluntary females who were each given a pseudonym as a way of ensuring confidentiality and increasing comfort in sharing their story with me.

Participant 1-Angela is an 18 year-old senior in high school who graduated a few days after the interview was conducted. She was pregnant at the time of the interview and is expecting the birth of her first child, a girl. Angela is American Indian and currently lives with her mother and three younger sisters.

Participant 2-Natalee is an 18 year-old junior in high school and will graduate next school year. Natalee is Black and American Indian, and has a two month old son; they currently live with her mother and baby sister.

Participant 3-Olivia is an 18 year-old senior in high school who graduated a few days after the interview was conducted. Olivia is Black, with a six week-old daughter; they currently live with her boyfriend (her daughter's father) and his sister.

Based on the content of the interviews the income levels of each of the participants is low, though their current household income may be considered lower to middle as induced by comments made within the context of the interviews.

Data Collection

Data collection in this study was attained through semi open-ended questions within a two-part individual interview process. I developed a proposed list of questions (See Appendix C) to help guide the interviews, however, I also allowed the conversation between me and the participants to lead us to additional questions. An example of the questions used during the first and second interview sessions include:

1. How much do you think that you positively affect your baby's development?
2. Overall, how has this program helped you in building meaningful relationships that can create a strong support system for you and your child?
3. How stressful do you see your life being with a young baby and having other things to deal with?

The interviews were conducted on school grounds, in a room that is adjoined with the nursery the participants use. In an effort to abide by the University of Central Oklahoma IRB policy, and the policy established by the school district, the interview location was in a private space that was easily accessible to the director of the program as well as the counselor on site. The interviews were scheduled the last week of classes to allow the participants to meet their deadlines for completing the program coursework required and for graduation (for two of the teens).

The first interviews were conducted to gain an understanding of the participants' background, and their reason for choosing to parent as opposed to other available

alternatives, such as abortion or adoption. Parent education can increase parent's knowledge on a variety of topics, thereby having a positive impact on parenting skills and the relationships that exists between parent and child. This initial interview allowed me to learn more about each teen mother's knowledge of various parent education topics, an essential part of parenting, as well as establish a relationship with the participant.

The second session of interviews in this study allowed the participants to share the relationships they have renewed during this change in their life, reflective of how teens depend heavily on their support systems. Additionally, this session opened the door for the participants to share their goals. The goals were related to their child as well as to themselves in the transformation of goals during this change in their life.

I collected data from the interviews using a mini audio cassette recorder. This allowed the detailed transcripts to be extracted at the completion of the interviews (Appendix D). Additionally, I was able to capture field notes that further defined the depth of the study by highlighting the phenomenon, allowing additional questions to be generated and rephrased for accuracy.

Following the final interviews, I was able to observe two of the teen mothers with their infant. Though the third teen mother had not delivered her baby at the time of the interview, I was able to observe her behavior throughout the interview-as she interacted with her daughter in a different way than the other two mothers. On several occasions, she took time to place her hand over her stomach as if to caress her daughter. I found myself fortunate to be able to witness these interactions, as they added to the experience of the study.

Data Analysis

Creswell (1998) describes the protocols of data analysis as being divided into statements, and then transformed into groups with the same significance. These meanings are then joined together to describe what the experience was and how it was experienced by the participants. The overall goal is for readers to come away “understanding better what it is like for someone to experience that” [That, being the phenomenon] (Creswell, 1998, p. 55).

Phenomenological data analysis transpires through reviewing the participants' statements and observations from interviews and field notes to search for common themes (Creswell, 1998). In this study, common themes were identifiable through first transcribing the audio tapes of the participant interviews. Then, by carefully reading the statements provided and, identifying the areas that focused in on the phenomenon.

I used the data from this study seeking to understand the participants' experience as a teen mother enrolled in parent education that is specifically designed to address the needs that fit her demographic population.

Quality Issues

Conducting two separate interviews to collect the data for this study created a series in the process of interviewing. The prolonged engagement provided the participant with more than one encounter in which to share her story and more time to be able to answer the interview questions with thought and honesty, thereby adding to the quality and validity of the study. Each participant was able to build a basic trust, allowing them to feel comfortable and more open in sharing their story (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Chapter IV

Findings

Introduction

Research has shown the stigma attached to teenage mothers, with negative outcomes for young women who give birth as well as for their children. Programs that focus on teen pregnancy prevention and abstinence education discussed earlier have been implemented in an effort to decrease the large number of teen pregnancies, however, teen pregnancy remains prevalent.

Angela, Natalee, and Olivia are 18 year-old students at a high school in a mid western state. Every morning they awake to face another day as they head off to school like most teenagers, and something else they have in common; they are all new mothers at the age of 18. These teenagers opened up with me and shared their experiences as new mothers, relating their knowledge in parenting, the relationships that have endured through pregnancy, birthing a child, and now being actual parents, plus the goals they have for themselves as well as for their children.

Angela

Angela was surprised when she found out she was pregnant. She called the father- to- be immediately to tell him, but had to sleep on it before she was able to tell anyone else. She was pregnant at the time of the interview and is expecting the birth of her first child, a girl, in the next month. Though her pregnancy was a surprise, Angela never considered abortion or adoption as options for handling her pregnancy: “well I couldn’t give up my kid... that just wasn’t a choice for me.”

Angela expressed early on in her pregnancy she had doubts about whether or not

she would be able to do this [parenting]. I asked her what some of her concerns were, to which she replied, "if I'm going to be any good at it...I'm going to be by myself, so, am I going to be able to support my child the way she needs to be supported?" Now, at the end of the program, Angela feels a greater sense of comfort, stating "I see a lot of other people doing it, so, I think, if they can do it I can do it."

The father of Angela's daughter is on probation, and does not have the freedom to be able to see his daughter after she is born. Early on in the pregnancy he attended one doctor appointment, but Angela is insisting that he has to be worthy of seeing her before she will allow that opportunity again. When I asked what she meant by this she said, "he has to become reliable, he can't smoke or be doing drugs...I don't want any of that around my child."

Angela will be graduating this month from high school and plans on looking for a job where she can "move up the ladder." She currently has two prospects, as a teller at a local bank and at Southwest Airlines as a reservations agent.

Natalee

Natalee and the father of her son were good friends, and when they found out she was pregnant she was already four months along. According to Natalee, they thought about having a child, but did not talk about it happening so soon.

Natalee thought about abortion in the beginning, an idea suggested by her mother, however, she was too far along to have the medical procedure. She also thought about placing him for adoption around two weeks before he was born, but could not follow through. In the end she said "I figured it was my responsibility, and that I shouldn't just throw him at somebody else, because I brought him into this world and I can take care of

him.” I asked her if responsibility was ultimately what caused her to make the decision to parent; she replied, “No, it was just the fact that someone would love me unconditionally, no matter what I did, and they would always be there for me when I need them.”

The father of her child was involved in his son’s life for around the first month before making the decision not to be involved, according to Natalee, because of her new boyfriend. Natalee says that she calls frequently for him and receives no returned calls from the messages she leaves, and cannot understand why he is behaving this way with her and not with the mother of his other son, who is one-year-old. She stated that she and her current boyfriend have discussed marriage, and if her son’s father wants to relinquish his parental rights, her boyfriend will gladly adopt him.

Natalee expressed that prior to this program she had concerns about being a parent and how she was going to be able to stay in school, who was going to take care of her baby and if she would be able to financially take care of him. She now has plans of graduating from high school next year and is hoping that she can graduate early so that she can start college early. Natalee also expressed that she would like to join the Army or Navy.

Olivia

According to a multitude of statistics, Olivia’s story is rare. Her father is the first person she confided in that she was pregnant. Her father was supportive and took her to the doctor to confirm the pregnancy. Even more, the father of her child was excited when he found out she was pregnant. He attended many doctor’s appointments, but also missed a lot of appointments because he was working. He is involved in parenting his daughter and supports Olivia in her educational endeavors by working to support the

three of them. When Olivia is in school or is doing homework, he takes care of their daughter. Olivia puts it “he supports her, he’s there with her every day so, pretty much he does everything.” She also expressed that she feels good about him taking an active role in both of their lives.

Olivia shared that there were no other options for her other than to have her daughter; she never had a thought of wanting to place her daughter for adoption or to have an abortion. When I asked her about the options she said “I feel it was my decision to have her, and she deserved a chance to live...I just thought for her to be with me would be the best option.”

Olivia’s main concern about becoming a parent in the beginning was about being a single mother, though the father of her child was actively involved in both their lives. She admits that she no longer feels that way because he is very instrumental in their daughter’s life, and that those feelings were due to pregnancy hormones and minor disagreements.

Olivia has already been accepted into a local college, and will begin classes in the fall to pursue a degree in Psychology. She and the father of her child look forward to getting married next year and have considered moving to his home state when she has graduated from college.

Themes

This research sought to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of teen motherhood, from students in a parent education program designed for teen mothers. Following transcription of the interview, I read through the interviews, field notes, and observation notes searching for related themes among the participants. I was able to

identify related themes across several areas including: 1) Parenting styles 2) Change in relationships 3) Outcomes of the New Beginnings experience and; 4) Future plans and goals. What the teen mothers learned about themselves and about parenting over the course of the program has given them the desire to take their situation and excel in spite of negative stigmas that have been assigned to teen mothers.

Parenting Styles

Parent education is an essential part of parenting. It can increase knowledge on a variety of topics thereby having a positive impact on parenting skills and the relationship that exists between parent and child. The participants in this study were asked if they were familiar with Diana Baumrind's four parenting styles, questions regarding parenting, how they were raised, if they will follow in their parent's footsteps and parent the same, and what they have learned from the program (Niolon, 2000).

The participants were not familiar with the parenting styles, so I proceeded in explaining the four (Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive, and Neglectful) to each of the participants. When asked which style was used by their parents, Olivia responded that she was raised by authoritarian parents and was quick to say she would not parent in all the same ways, though she did express the ways that she would parent the same: "um...probably just having high expectations for my child in school, hobbies, and things that they're interested in, that would be the main thing." Natalee commented that her parent was authoritative in nature, further saying: "My mom was more of the first one (authoritative). Yeah, I think I would parent the same way, I think I turned out pretty good." She added that she would incorporate her mother's style of discipline into her parenting style by using time outs.

Angela felt like her mother fell into the first two categories (authoritative and authoritarian):

I got spanked, and my mom has very strict boundaries, some of them I don't agree with...Mom would try to get on to us but then she'd stop to ask –you know why you're getting in trouble right? But then other times she'd say you know you're not supposed to do that.

Angela commented that she would like to be involved in her daughter's life, stating “I like how involved my mom was. If I wanted to stay the night somewhere, she always had to meet the person and she always wanted to know where they lived and how they lived before she'd let me stay the night, and I really agree with that.”

Each participant felt that they would parent in an authoritative manner with the exception of Angela, who thinks she will incorporate elements from three of the parenting styles, authoritarian, authoritative and permissive:

I don't want to be constantly telling her you're in trouble, you're in trouble, I want to be more laid back. When it is time for discipline, I will explain to her why she is getting in trouble and let her know that I love her.

There was consistency across all participants in that they will not use corporal punishment as a discipline tactic with their children. Instead, they all opted for communicating, setting boundaries and expectations, and being firm and attentive with their children.

Each of the participants expressed what they learned about their child's growth and development. They were all in agreement in appropriate ways to engage their child in play and stimulation in order to increase healthy development while creating a stronger

bond by interacting with their child. Angela shared the following regarding physical growth and development:

We had a couple of tapes we watched, like rolling their arm in between your hands, pushing against their feet to see if they can push off, and massaging their feet. Grabbing their hands and rubbing their hands against your face. Reading is very important and singing –they may not want to hear me (laugh). Peek a boo I learned is very important, I mean at first I thought that it was just a silly game to make them laugh and now I know that it is important for development as well.

When I asked Natalee if she thought that physical activity is important for her son's development, she replied, "yes, it will help him learn, and to walk, crawl, touch, and grab, explore, and just learn more."

Olivia shared some of the activities both she and her boyfriend do with their daughter to increase the development of her senses as well as overall learning: "Well, I talk to her a lot, and her dad talks to her a lot, and sings to her. But, usually it's just talking and singing, and then once a week we take her to the park and that's fun.

Change in Relationships

Relationships are extremely influential in the success and failures of daily life, especially for teenagers, who look to their peers for support and guidance. The participants in this study were asked about how relationships changed when they became pregnant. Each of the teen mothers openly shared how some of their relationships changed throughout their pregnancy. Sadly, some of the teen mothers I interviewed had lost at least one friendship (sometimes more) during their pregnancy, while other relationships seemed to form stronger bonds.

Each of the participants expressed that they have a very close relationship with their father (one of which is a stepfather). Additionally, two of the teen moms affectionately refer to themselves as a “daddy’s girl.” Angela shared that she felt she had a good relationship with her dad, and that they have always been pretty open with one another. She also mentioned that her relationship with her mother has grown stronger since giving birth to her daughter. Similar to Angela’s experience with her parents, Natalee expressed that she has a good relationship with her parents as well and can talk with them about anything, though the relationship weakened a little with her mother after finding out about the pregnancy. When I asked why she felt that the significance decreased, she commented that her grandmother, mother and her sisters all had babies at a young age and as a result did not complete school: “she saw that they had to struggle and she didn’t want me to struggle, I think that’s what it was.”

Olivia expressed a different interaction between her and her parents. Olivia has a close-knit relationship with her father, but the relationship with her mother has decreased, especially since the birth of her daughter. Boundaries of trust were crossed during her pregnancy when her mother went out and bought items for the baby; thinking they were gifts, Olivia graciously accepted them. When she received her tax returns, her mother took a large portion of the refund as repayment for the items she purchased. Olivia indicated that she was very upset by this and it was not long after that she moved out of her mother’s and in with her boyfriend and his sister. Their relationship is healing, with time.

Some of the participants found that friendships they thought were genuine were not, and their pregnancy brought a mix of emotions from extended family as well as

friends. Angela experienced this early on in her pregnancy among her friends, and remembers:

Some were surprised, and some didn't like it [that she was pregnant] they didn't say that they didn't like it but the fact that I'm going to have to grow up and they want me to be able to still have fun is a problem...they don't understand that I can't just drop the baby off somewhere.

When I asked Natalee about the relationships with her friends, she indicated that all of her friends were happy to hear she was pregnant, and went further to comment that they were already labeling themselves "aunts." According to what Natalee shared about her extended family, they expressed disappointment in her pregnancy, she thinks because everyone had high hopes for her to go to college. Her uncle in particular was disappointed because his daughter gave birth to her first child when she was a freshman in high school and two years later gave birth to her second child; she never finished high school. Though it has taken some time, her family is coming around. They see how she is taking care of her son while still attending school, and they seem to be adjusting.

Olivia expressed that her entire circle of female friends (all between the ages of 18-19) have children so it was not something new to them. On the other hand, she expressed that her male friends thought that she should have an abortion. I asked her why she thought they would feel that way and she responded that she felt it was because that is what their girlfriends did. Her extended family was supportive for the most part, but there were certain family members that made comments about her, saying "she's never going to finish school, and she's not going to be a good mother." Olivia feels proud to know that she has proved them wrong on both accounts.

Future Plans and Goals

Many times the goals that are set prior to pregnancy do not feel realistic after finding out and a new set of priorities have to be established. Participants were asked questions about the goals they had set for themselves prior to pregnancy, and how those goals have changed or been replaced by new goals that have a better fit with their current situation.

Prior to becoming pregnant, the participants expressed that they were able to sleep in and go through a day at their leisure. The most profound commonality among the two participants who were seniors was the desire to attend college, furthermore both were interested in out- of -state colleges and received scholarships to attend their chosen schools. In listening to the participants explain this portion of their story, I observed a change in facial expression and body language from what had been apparent during other parts of the interview. I sensed a bit of regret that due to the birth of their child, the offered educational opportunities would not be taken.

Angela explained:

I was really into art and didn't have many goals, but I had an art scholarship to a school in Texas, but with daycare and a baby...but now I have goals for a job, and I will graduate. I also want to be on my own, that's my next goal. I want to provide something for my kid, so that she can be happy in the safest way possible. If it's college she wants to do, then that's great! But if she doesn't want to go to college then I'm ok with that too.

Olivia was granted a scholarship to attend Howard University in Washington, D.C. She always wanted to attend an out-of state-university; however the opportunity fell

through when she became pregnant. I asked Olivia what she wants in life for herself: "I want to be able to have my career and to be a good mother, and eventually get married. I would like to wait at least two years to have another child...I want a boy."

As for her daughter:

I want her to be able to make the right decisions for herself, and just to have a decent life, to have the opportunity to go to an out of state college if she wants to or get as many scholarships as she can or be in as many sports as she wants to-- you know have a nice family, I prefer for her to wait to have a child at least until after high school or wait until she's married or something like that.

Olivia would never regret having her daughter, but expressed that she feels like she missed a lot of college opportunities, out- of-state, by getting pregnant at such a young age.

Natalee is a junior and has one year remaining of high school. She expressed that before she got pregnant she wanted to become a math teacher or a math professor at a college, and had an interest in enlisting into a branch of the military. Natalee remains interested in going to college after she graduates, but she thinks that she will enlist in the military first because she has heard that they will pay for college.

Prior to becoming pregnant she was not interested in anything beyond a committed relationship, because she had witnessed too many failed marriages in her family. Since the birth of her child, Natalee stated that she is open to more than a committed relationship and identified more specifically that she meant marriage. During our interview, I asked Natalee what she wants in life for her son; she expressed: "the best". I asked her to elaborate on what she meant by that and she responded:

Make sure that he is set up financially, a loving wife that will love him no matter what, a good education, the best things that I can give him, make sure he's okay, good health, that's all I can ask for. Just believe in God and he'll have all that.

Outcomes of the New Beginnings Experience

When providing a service that aims at helping a particular population, an important aspect is to be able to gather an idea of how helpful the service offered actually is. In most cases, evaluations are administered at the end of such programs to determine these outcomes. In this study I asked the participants to share their opinions of how the New Beginnings program prepared each of them for their parent-child interactions.

Angela shared that initially she thought she knew a lot about parenting, especially with younger siblings at home, further stating:

I thought I knew everything. Then, I come in here and it's just opened my eyes to how much I didn't know. To think that there is actually 30 LAPS over learning about a kid, it just amazed me. I didn't think it would be anything like this, actual school work to learn how. Now, after finishing all that work it really amazes me how much I didn't know and how much there is to know, and I think it helped me out a lot. Like the first day in the hospital, I didn't know how short it could be or how long it could be, and how many medicines, and procedures. Now, I'm more aware of what could happen when I go into labor and it will just hit me when I get in there. I'll be able to ask the right questions, and know more about what my doctor's doing and saying. When the baby gets here, I just know more wrongs and rights, and how to keep my baby safe and not to overfeed my baby, a lot more safety than I ever knew about.

Natalee had some reservations about starting this program, with initial thoughts that she would rather spend time with her friends than attend. In spite of these thoughts Natalee stated, "it's been good because a lot of stuff I didn't know I learned here. I'm glad I got in here...I'm glad that I did because I know more and it's always good to know more."

Finally, Olivia shared this about the program in relation to her daughter: "The main thing it's taught me is the positive things to help her with her development."

As a follow up question, I asked the participants to express how the New Beginnings program has helped them in setting goals for themselves and their child, and in the relationships they hope to establish or may have already established. Natalee acknowledged:

This program taught me that even if you do have a baby, you don't have to stop your life; you just have to think about somebody else's life including yours. It taught me that if they were your friends before you had your baby and they're not now, they weren't good friends, because a friend will be by you through anything...with all of the girls over there, they're all great and I love all of them as a sister.

Natalee also added that she hopes to keep in touch with the instructors and notes that: "The instructors have been an inspiration, they told me to keep my head up in rain, snow, thunder, and hail and tornado, always keep my head up."

Angela shared that she thought the program gave her a better outlook on parenting, stating "I was in a tiny little box and it opened up a lot more, there are a lot more options. They opened me up to different things I didn't know about."

Lastly, Olivia felt that this program kept her going and motivated “to know that we can even though we do have children. We can accomplish our goals and our dreams. It has taught us ways to keep good relationships with co-workers and things to help you keep your job by having a positive attitude don’t gossip and to be professionals.”

As the researcher in this study, I was able to gain a glimpse of what the participants in this study have experienced with this new lifestyle and alterations they have made in their lives for the sake of their child. I heard it in their words and I saw it in their eyes and in their touch as each related to her baby in a special way. The excitement that Natalee had when she asked the director of the program if after our interview she could go to see her baby in the nursery, the way that she held him and gazed into his eyes enthralled me. She very gently touched every one of his fingers as she rested the end of her nose against his face. In another observation, Olivia was at ease at the end of our interview, as she gently held her daughter in her arms with great care. Finally, Angela, though her daughter had not been born at the time of the interview, found a way to be close with her daughter and to let her know she was there. Throughout our interviews, Angela touched her stomach and at times let her hands rest there to feel her daughter move. These observations made me aware that for these young mothers their age did not take anything away from the amount of love they were able express to their child.

Chapter V

*Discussion**Introduction*

The purpose of this phenomenological study was not to go into the study with expectations, but rather with the goal of trying to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of teen mothers who are enrolled in a parent education program. I sought to discover the reality of being a teen parent from each participant's own perspectives of what it is like for her.

Discussion

Historically, parenting programs were more domiciled than institutional (Croke & Glover, 1977). With the rise in teen pregnancy, prevention became a large focus. Teen pregnancy prevention and abstinence education programs provided services that on one hand helped to decrease the occurrence of sexual encounters among teens, and on the other hand helped in preventing sexual encounters from occurring. Over time, the increase in pregnancies among unmarried teenagers became more recognized, and with growing numbers the need for programs able to provide services directed at helping young inexperienced pregnant teenagers learn how to parent effectively increased. Do parent education programs adequately assist teen mothers in helping them better prepare for the role of parent? The knowledge gained in this study suggests that parent education is as successful as the program and participant make it. There must be an element of interest on behalf of the teen mother, but there also must be a devoted group of individuals working together with the participant for any benefits to be reaped.

In recounting the literature that documents outcomes of teen mothers and their children, I was concerned with the statistics that describe teen mothers as having an increased risk of living in poverty, and having higher vulnerability for health issues ranging in severity. Other research explained that the amount of responsibility involved in parenting (providing food, clothing and shelter) can be challenging, and can cause an overwhelming amount of stress which can lead to abusive behavior. Furthermore, teen mothers have been labeled as uneducated, financially unstable and a burden on available government resources.

Sasso and Williams, (2002) state “adolescent mothers are sometimes less sensitive, less responsive, provide less verbal stimulation, and demonstrate less acceptance of infant behavior” (p. 1). For these reasons, it is crucial that teen mothers are taught skills that help them to understand the development of different ages, techniques for handling stages that are frustrating, and appropriate ways of interacting with their children.

These outcomes are inconsistent with findings in this study. The participants shared the programs they are currently receiving assistance through, which include: the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which provides services to low-income women, infants, and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk. WIC provides nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care (www.fns.usda.gov/wic/aboutwic). The participants also receive medical coverage through Medicaid which provides health care to children under the age of 19, adults with children under the age of 18, pregnant women and people who are older than 65 or have blindness or another disability

(www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/health/med). When I questioned use of the Food Stamp program, the participants were quick in responding “no”, going on to say that they are not interested in receiving food stamps and that they would do their best to keep from using this program. When I reached further asking if they had to begin receiving food stamps if it would be on a temporary basis, each participant responded that again they would do everything in their ability not to get on food stamps, and if they had to, it would be on a temporary basis until they could regain a sense of financial security.

Supportive relationships are the key to many successful outcomes for teen mothers. Through questioning the participants in this study about their relationships, they all have key family members and advisors within the New Beginnings program who support them wholeheartedly and are eager to see them succeed. The support they have been offered is emotional, which includes listening to them when they have concerns or need to talk. The support also extends to the education and coaching they receive through the parent education program, and finally financial support. The financial support has allowed the participants to begin saving money to take care of their child and themselves for whatever needs they may have; moving into their own place, diapers and formula, and money in the event of an emergency were some of the ideas mentioned in the interviews.

The knowledge of parenting skills and development came across in the interview as if the participants had been parenting for years. Each participant spoke confidently in their knowledge of appropriate discipline methods, which included time outs and redirection. Each participant was opposed to spanking as a means of disciplining their child and preferred communication to ease tense situations. The teen mothers were quick

to explain the parent-child interactions they have experienced (and in Angela's case look forward to experiencing), which include tummy time, reading, and singing to their child.

Finally, each participant acknowledged that they will experience difficult times in parenting and expressed that when those times occur, it is best to place their child in a safe area and step away to regain composure. This approach can be used to decrease the incidence of abuse when they are frustrated and are feeling out of control.

The participants in this study are clear examples of what successful outcomes among teen parents can bear a resemblance to. Natalee, Olivia and Angela had every opportunity to fall into the stereotypes that larger society has placed on teen mothers. After all, when viewed as a gouger of government resources and labeled as irresponsible, uncaring, and inexperienced, the stereotypes in many cases are easy to fall into. All too often the term inexperienced is not broadened in an effort to provide adequate programs which strive to turn the inexperienced to experienced. After all, no one is born to be a parent; it takes hard work, flexibility and practice to figure out what works for parents and their child. Parenting requires dedication and giving of oneself. For teen mothers, these components along with supportive relationships that encourage mother and child development are a must. I learned that as individuals, we must be careful of the ways in which we use the term teen mother with underlying negative connotations. As individuals, we have the tendency to pass on views to others one by one until it has infected an entire society who believe the same distortion of truth for all teen mothers but fail to step forward to make a change in ways that can help the mothers.

Recommendations

Parenting demands a major commitment and often requires support from a variety of resources to achieve goals and a sense of accomplishment. Populations lacking resources look to the relationships they have with parents, siblings, extended family and friends. Where these relationships are lacking in significance or are from time to time nonexistent, there are community resources that are available to step in and provide programs for assistance in providing teen parents' education.

In this study, the participants expressed a sincere interest in this parenting program lasting longer than one semester. These expressions are why programs with a longer engagement time are needed. Concerns regarding the availability of funding are always prevalent, the question that must be asked is, would we rather spend the money now on prevention, or later on rehabilitation for the teen mothers and their child? Training for teenage mothers is essential and provide a wealth of information as well as practical knowledge and application. The successes of these programs are beginning to be more documented as program evaluation continues. It is evident that there is a continued need for services that reach this population specifically and go beyond by tying in components that target teen fathers as well. Furthermore, it would serve communities well to capitalize on the availability of establishing teen parent programs within established schools to provide easy accessibility to young parents in need of services, specifically where their children are concerned.

Conclusion

Families are the context in which children grow and develop. The exceptional educational services that are offered by the teen pregnancy prevention and abstinence

programs have proven results in success of their goals. However, there are still teenage mothers singlehandedly raising children who are in desperate need for assistance in helping them become the best parents they can be.

The participants in this study expressed a deep sense of empowerment as a result of being a student in the New Beginnings program. The notion that having a child at a young age should somehow put an end to life was quite obviously dispelled, as these teen mothers now know.

To be effective in this study, it was necessary for the researcher to be open to understanding the background of the participants and to listen to their stories without being biased. From the interviews, observations and field notes, I came away from this study believing the New Beginnings program and instructors had a significant impact on these three teen mothers. Through the course work, interaction with their infants and relationships with family and friends, these teen parents have recognized that their dreams can be realized with time and determination. They have learned to create healthy relationships and to embrace their role as the most important person in their child's life.

Finally, as a result of this program these mothers will move on in life to other things where the foundations they have drawn from this program will be evident, allowing them the potential to achieve success in everything they set out to accomplish.

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Appendix A



April 29, 2008

Jill A. Devenport, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Grants, Academic Affairs
Campus Box 159
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma 73034

Subject: UCO IRB# 08083

Dear Ms. Devenport:

This letter serves as formal approval for Persephone Starks, Graduate Student to conduct thesis research that will form an essential part of her master's degree requirements in Family and Child Studies in the Department of Human Environmental Sciences at the University of Central Oklahoma.

The New Beginnings Program agrees to be the site for the study and students enrolled in this program will be recruited as participants in the study titled Teen Mother's Experiences in the New Beginnings Parent Education Program. It is my understanding that consent forms and assent forms will be provided by Persephone Starks and will be given to the students to sign and have their parent(s) sign if they are less than 18 years old. Additionally, the New Beginnings Teen Parent directors and instructors will not be physically present during the recruitment or data collection phase of this study in order to prevent any influence that may develop as a result. However, New Beginnings staff will be outside of the room in which the recruitment or interview is taking place.

If you have additional questions I can be reached at 405-739-1707 ext. 331

Sincerely,



Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

INFORMED CONSENT FORM PARTICIPANTS 18 YEARS OLD

Research Project Title: Teen Mother's Experiences in the New Beginnings Parent Education Program.

Researcher (s): Persephone Starks and LaDonna Atkins, Ed.D.

A. Purpose of this research: The purpose of this study is to obtain your experiences from your involvement in parent education classes in the New Beginnings parenting program and how this program has effected your experiences with parenting, significant relationships and goal setting, from conception into the first two years of your child's life.

B. Procedures/treatments involved: For this study, you will be asked to complete two interviews surrounding the following topics; Parenting, Significant Relationships, and Goal Outlook. The type of questions that will be asked will be semi-open ended and in interview format. Some questions may begin as a yes/no question and may lead to a more open-ended question that would provide more detailed information. For accuracy in what will be written in the final report, your responses will be audio taped as well as documented in handwritten notes. Examples of the questions that will be asked are listed below.

1. *How much do you think that you positively affect your baby's development?*
2. Overall, how is this program helping you in building meaningful relationships that can create a strong support system for you and your child?
3. *On the whole, how stressful do you see your life being with a young baby*

and perhaps having other things to deal with?

C. Expected length of participation: The minimum and maximum time limit of each interview will depend on the length of each response received from the participant. Each interview session will be scheduled for one hour and a half.

D. Potential benefits: Information obtained from this study can be used by professionals working with teenage mothers to assess their parenting programs for teens in order to determine how they can improve or implement additional services. It will also be of use to the teenage mothers enrolled in the parent education program to assess their own parenting success. Additionally, they will be able to determine the degree to which they have achieved any of the goals they may have set for their future or encouraged them to set future goals.

E. Potential risks or discomforts: There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study beyond those present in routine daily life. For some participants, the questions may be sensitive in nature, and therefore may cause some discomfort. The participants will be made aware of the type of questions and will be given the opportunity to decline answering any questions or participating in this study. The States Statutes O.S. §, 1071 outline the States Child Abuse Reporting and Prevention Act that is based on "The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) which is the Federal legislation that provides minimum standards for the definition of child abuse and neglect that States must incorporate in their statutory definitions (www.childwelfare.gov).” The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act defines

child abuse and neglect as: “At a minimum, any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk

of serious harm (www.childwelfare.gov).” As a researcher working with children and families in the interest of this study it is mandatory for me to report anything I suspect may be considered child abuse. Therefore, please be aware that while the interview is being conducted if you share any information that is viewed as abuse according to the definition I previously read whether it involves you personally or your infant/child, the interview will be stopped immediately and I will contact Staff, Coordinator of the New Beginnings Program and Staff, Counselor to notify them of the circumstances. Additionally, it is mandatory that I file a report using the Child Abuse Reporting Hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.

F. Medical/mental health contact information (if required): Some support services that may be available for you to access include:

New Beginnings ([REDACTED])
 [REDACTED] Onsite Counseling services
 provided by Staff.

States City County Health Department [REDACTED]: Counseling services and referrals for ongoing care provided by the Counselor on Duty.

G. Contact information for researchers: If you have questions about this study you can contact Persephone Starks (phone: 405-535-3286; or email: pletcher1@ucok.edu) or LaDonna Atkins, Ed.D. (phone: 405-974-5354; or email: latkins@ucok.edu). If you have

questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Central States Institutional Review Board, Office of Research & Grants, Academic Affairs, Campus Box 159, University of Central States, Edmond, States 73034-5029 phone: 405-974-5479.

H. Explanation of confidentiality and privacy: This is a qualitative phenomenological study, which means that the information will be collected through interview as opposed to completing a survey in order to capture the first hand individual account of your experiences as a teenage parent in the New Beginnings parenting program. Due to the type of study, your full response to some questions will be included in the final report. You will be assigned a pseudonym in order to keep your identity confidential.

I. Assurance of voluntary participation: As a participant in this study, you will not be compensated as participation is voluntary. You can choose to stop the interview at anytime or decline to answer individual questions. There is no penalty for non-participation.

AFFIRMATION BY RESEARCH SUBJECT

I hereby voluntarily agree to participate in the above listed research project and further understand the above listed explanations and descriptions of the research project. I also understand that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty. I have read and fully understand this Informed Consent Form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. I acknowledge that copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me to keep.

Research Subject's Name:

Signature: _____

Date

Appendix C
Sample Questions

Section I

***REMINDER:** Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS

What is your age & grade level?

What is your race?

- Caucasian
- Black
- Asian
- Latino/Latina
- American Indian
- Other (please indicate _____)

Do you currently live by yourself?

- I live by myself
- I live with my parents
- I live with a friend
- I live with a family member
- Other

What made you decide to parent your child as opposed to abortion or adoption?

What did you do during your pregnancy to prepare for the arrival of your child?

Did you know what items you would need for your baby in the first few months?

What did you think labor and delivery would be like?

What are some concerns you had about becoming a parent?

Are you involved in any other parent education/home visitation programs?

How are you supporting yourself and your baby?

Are you currently or do you plan to receive any assistance such as Food Stamps, WIC, Medicaid/Sooner care, TANF?

- IF YES-Do you plan on using this assistance temporarily until you can get on your feet or long term as a main source of support?

What do you think the first year will be like with your baby?

PARENT EDUCATION

Parent Education is an essential part of parenting. It can increase parent's knowledge on a variety of topics thereby having a positive impact on parenting skills and the relationship that exists between parent and child. The following questions ask your perception about the knowledge you had about parenting before you became pregnant, and how it has changed since you have enrolled in a parent education program.

Parenting Styles Explain Briefly

There are 4 types of parenting styles ([Diana Baumrind](#)):

1. Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parents, encourage the child to be independent. Authoritative parents are not usually controlling allowing the child to explore more freely. Authoritative parents set limits, demand maturity, but when punishing a child, the parent will always explain his or her motive for their punishment. Authoritative parents typically forgive instead of punishing if a child falls short. As a result children have a higher self esteem, and are more independent.

2. Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents expect much of their child but do not explain the rules at all, unlike the Authoritative parent. Authoritarian parents are most likely to hit a child as a form of punishment instead of grounding a child. As a result children from this type of parenting lack social competence as the parent generally predicts what the child should do instead of allowing the child to choose by him or herself. The children also rarely take initiative; they are socially withdrawn and look to others to decide what's right.

3. Permissive Parenting

Permissive are nurturing and accepting, but non-demanding. This type of parent simply wants the child to like him or her at the end of the day and will do anything the child requests to do. As a result the children are rarely (if ever) punished and are generally immature. The children cannot control their impulses and do not accept the responsibility for their own actions. When the child gets in trouble, the child will simply blame someone else even if it was his or her own fault.

4. Neglectful Parenting

Neglectful parents are similar to permissive parenting but the parent does not care much about the child. The parents are generally not involved in their child's life, but will provide basic needs for the child.

Tell me about the parenting style you were raised with.

Do you see yourself parenting the same way that your parents did?

In what ways would you parent the same?

In what way would you parent differently?

Which parenting style do you think you will adopt?

Discipline

What is your plan for disciplining your child?

- *Using the word "No"*
- *Tapping on the back of the hand (demonstrate)*
- **Time-outs –How long –designated place**
- *Removing privileges*
- *Yelling*
- *Spanking*

Do you expect this plan/method of discipline to change as your child grows?

- **How?**
- **Why?**

Will you allow others to discipline your child?

- Who will you allow to discipline your child?
- How will you allow them to discipline him/her?

Growth and Development

Physical

Food/Good Nutrition

Are you breastfeeding?

-If No-are you aware of bottle safety procedures?

-If Yes- what are the reasons you chose to breastfeed?

Tell me what you know about introducing food to your baby.

-How would you introduce new foods to your baby?

Physical Activity

Do you think that physical activity with your infant is important for his/her development? Why?

What types of activities have you learned about that can help your baby with healthy physical development?

Infant Safety

Can you tell me about child proofing in your home and what you expect will need to be done in order to keep your baby safe?

- At what age will you begin childproofing?

How do you make sure that your infant is safe while traveling by car?

Sleep

How does your baby sleep at night /naptime?

- On restless nights how will you comfort your child?

How will you handle uncontrollable crying?

What types of bedtime rituals have you established with your baby?

Cognitive (Thinking/Learning)

Prior to enrolling in the New Beginnings Program did you think that talking and interacting with your infant would be important for his/her development?

How do you feel now about positive interaction with your infant and his/her development?

Tell me about the types of activities you do with your child to increase their learning and sense development?

- Singing
- Reading (colorful books with pictures)
- Age appropriate toys (variety of bright colors and textures)
- Talking to him/her with expression and tone variations

Socio Emotional

Tell me about what you've learned about temperaments and how you as a new parent will be flexible whether your baby is relaxed or laid back as opposed to being slow to warm (Explain to the participant)

How will you help your baby feel less anxiety as he or she grows when you have to leave him/her with a caregiver for school or work?

How much do you think that the environment that you expose your child to will affect your baby's development in each of these areas?

Tell me some of the ways you interact with your child to encourage healthy growth and development?

Overall, how has this program prepared you for the interaction you have with your child?

****END OF SECTION I****

Section II

***REMINDER:** Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.*

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships can be extremely influential in the success and failures that make up daily life. The following set of questions is designed to find out what relationships you have established throughout your pregnancy. I would like to know how your previous relationships may have changed due to your pregnancy and how the parenting program you are currently enrolled in has helped or hindered existing relationships and have in some way had an impact on you as a new mother.

Tell me about the relationship you have with your Father.

Tell me about the relationship you have with your Mother.

Do you have any siblings?

How many brothers –sisters?

How much did your relationships change with members of your family when you became pregnant?

Do you have any extended family members you feel close to? Why do you feel close to them?

Was the Father of your child involved in your pregnancy?

Is the father of your child involved in parenting your child now?

- NO—do you know why?
- How does that make you feel?

What do you feel like your child is missing out on not having his/her father in the picture?

What were your friend's reactions when they find out that you were pregnant?

How did this make you feel?

How are you feeling emotionally with all of these changes?

How are you feeling physically?

Do you have a church support system?

What kind of support do you receive through any church programs?

Tell me in your opinion how the New Beginnings program has helped you in building meaningful relationships that can create a strong support system for you and your child?

GOALS, EDUCATION/CAREER, RELATIONSHIP, PARENTING, CHILD

Many times the goals that you had set prior to pregnancy don't feel realistic to you after you find out your pregnant and there is a new set of priorities. The following questions are designed to find out what goals you had set for yourself prior to pregnancy, and how those goals have changed or been replaced by new goals. Also, how your plans for each day has changed with pregnancy or birth or your child. Another portion of this sections questions are to look at the goals you have for your child as well as the relationships that your will establish as a new parent.

Prior to pregnancy-

What did an average day look like for you?

- School
- Work
- Home

Where did you see yourself in terms of

- school
- career
- family

During pregnancy-

What did an average day look like for you?

- School
- Work
- Home

Where did you see yourself in terms of

- School
- Career
- Family

Do you currently work?

Did you work after the baby was born?

Who watches your baby when you work?

What do you want in life for your child?

What do you want in life for yourself?

What types of relationships do you consider valuable?

- What goals have you set for yourself at this point in your life?
- Do you feel that these goals are realistic?
- How will you go about achieving these goals?
-what is your plan?

On the whole, how stressful did you see your life being with a young baby and perhaps having other things to deal with?

- How do you view your life now?

Overall, how has New Beginnings helped you in setting goals for yourself and your child and in the relationships you hope to establish or may have already established?

General closing questions

What advice would you give another pregnant/parenting teen?

In what way(s) has this program helped you the most?

If the program was more than a semester would you enroll again?

Have you been provided a referral to other parent education classes or programs?

Will you seek out additional parent education programs?

In what ways could this program work better for you?

Is there anything that you feel is important for me to know about being pregnant teen that you felt I missed exploring?

Thank you!

Appendix D

Transcript

Pregnant Teen -Angela

Section I

REMINDER: Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS

What is your age & grade level? 18 / 12th grade

What is your race?

- Caucasian
- Black
- Asian
- Latino/Latina
- American Indian
- Other (please indicate _____)

Do you currently live by yourself?

- I live by myself
- I live with my parents
- I live with a friend
- I live with a family member

X Other- Mother

Researcher: What made you decide to parent your child as opposed to abortion or adoption?

Participant: Well I couldn't give up my kid. That just wasn't a choice for me.

Researcher: Was that thought immediate?
Well yeah, I didn't see any other options –at least any that I could take.

Researcher: What have you done during your pregnancy to prepare for the arrival of your child?

Participant: I bought lots of clothes, made my room a baby room. I've worked really hard to get my education to support my child.

- Researcher: Do you know what items you will need for your baby the first year?
- Participant: Diapers, wipes and clothes bottles
- Researcher: What do you think labor and delivery will be like?
- Participant: What do I think or what do I hope?
- Researcher: Both-feel free to elaborate on both
- Participant: I hope it goes fast and easy, but I know it wo...
Well talking to family they, it hasn't been easy for them, it's kind of scary
- Researcher: Are there concerns that you have that you have addressed with your doctor that perhaps he or she has put you at ease about?
- Participant: Um –kind of, it's more this class that has put me at ease with a lot of stuff cause I've learned a lot more than I ever thought was even possible.
- Researcher: Even in one semester?
- Participant: Yeah, it's only one semester but we go over a lot, like be for and after. I hope it will be easy –I 'm not planning on getting an epidural-so it probably won't be that easy.
- Researcher: What are some concerns you have about parenting?
- Participant: If I'm going to be any good at it—I'm going to be by myself so – if I'm going to be able to support my child the way that she needs to be supported. I'm more sure now, but at the beginning it was scary thinking of yourself alone.
- Researcher: Now that you have completed the program has it added any additional comfort to the way you were feeling before?
- Participant: Yeah, I see a lot of other people doing it, so I think if they can do it I can do it.
- Researcher: Are you involved in any other parent education/home visitation programs?
- Participant: NO
- Researcher: How do you plan to support yourself and your baby?
- Participant: I'm either going to be a bank teller and work my way up a little—I have another job offer with SW airlines where I would plan all of the flights but I would have to go to class and get trained to do that but I don't know.
- Researcher: Are you currently or do you plan to receive any assistance such as Food Stamps,
WIC, Medicaid/Sooner care, TANF?
- IF YES-Do you plan on using this assistance temporarily until you can get on your feet or long term as a main source of support?
- Participant: I know WIC at the beginning and maybe food stamps if I really need it.
- Researcher: Have you been on WIC throughout your pregnancy?
- Participant: Yes
- Researcher: If you get assistance will it be temporary?
- Participant: I'll do it for as long as I need it and then get off of it that would be nice to be on my feet.
- Researcher: What do you think the first year will be like with your baby?
- Participant: I know this is going to be the hardest just because I'm still living with my mom and I'll be starting a new job and trying to get into a new pattern is going to be rough, especially with the baby being new to me it will be hard to

- Researcher: You mentioned housing, once she born do you plan on moving out of your mom's house?
- Participant: A couple months later, after I get on my feet with my job.
- Researcher: Just going back to the medical question –Do you have Medicaid? Or are you insured –how?
- Participant: I have blue cross blue shield (stepdad) and Medicaid.

PARENT EDUCATION

Parent Education is an essential part of parenting. It can increase parent's knowledge on a variety of topics thereby having a positive impact on parenting skills and the relationship that exists between parent and child. The following questions ask your perception about the knowledge you had about parenting before you became pregnant, and how it has changed since you have enrolled in a parent education program.

Parenting Styles

Explain Briefly

There are 4 types of parenting styles ([Diana Baumrind](#)):

1. Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parents, encourage the child to be independent. Authoritative parents are not usually controlling allowing the child to explore more freely. Authoritative parents set limits, demand maturity, but when punishing a child, the parent will always explain his or her motive for their punishment. Authoritative parents typically forgive instead of punishing if a child falls short. As a result children have a higher self esteem, and are more independent.

2. Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents expect much of their child but do not explain the rules at all, unlike the Authoritative parent. Authoritarian parents are most likely to hit a child as a form of punishment instead of grounding a child. As a result children from this type of parenting lack social competence as the parent generally predicts what the child should do instead of allowing the child to choose by him or herself. The children also rarely take initiative; they are socially withdrawn and look to others to decide what's right.

3. Permissive Parenting

Permissive are nurturing and accepting, but non-demanding. This type of parent simply wants the child to like him or her at the end of the day and will do anything the child requests to do. As a result the children are rarely (if ever) punished and are generally immature. The children cannot control their impulses and do not accept the responsibility for their own actions. When the child gets in trouble, the child will simply blame someone else even if it was his or her own fault.

4. Neglectful Parenting

Neglectful parents are similar to permissive parenting but the parent does not care much about the child. The parents are generally not involved in their child's life, but will provide basic needs for the child.

Researcher: Did you learn about these parenting styles?

Participant: No

Researcher: Tell me about the parenting style you were raised with.

Participant: A little of the first two –mom would try to get on to us but then she'd stop to ask –you know why you're getting in trouble right? But other times you know you're not supposed to do that?

Researcher: Do you see yourself parenting the same way that your parents did?

Participant: In a way, maybe a little less strict, because my parents were really strict. I'm not going to say that I would let them do whatever they want but just the boundaries would be different.

Researcher: In what ways would you parent the same?

Participant: I liked how involved my mom was. If I wanted to stay the night somewhere, she always had to meet the person and she always wanted to know where they lived and how they lived before she'd let me stay the night and I really agree with that. Involved in sports and stuff like that.

Researcher: In what way would you parent differently?

Participant: I got spanked, and my mom has very strict boundaries, and some of them I don't agree with, let's just put it that way.

Researcher: Which parenting style do you think you will adopt?

Participant: In between the 1st and the 3rd

Researcher: What aspect do you like about each?

Participant: I don't want to be constantly telling them "you're in trouble, you're in trouble –I want to be more laid back. When it is time for discipline I would explain to them why they are getting in trouble and let them know that I love them.

Discipline

Researcher: What is your plan for disciplining your child?

Participant: I don't know if you've ever watched the super nanny?

My mom uses on are of the rug and tells them why there sitting on the rug and have them say sorry then I would probably spank them but I really do agree with the rug method, like you set limits on the rug depending on how old they are.

Researcher: So is the rug kind of like a time out?

Participant: Yes.

Researcher: Do you expect this plan/method of discipline to change as your child grows?

Participant: I hope she doesn't need it as much. I hope that when she's 8 or 9, I hope that I won't have to keep the rug an issue. I may send her to her room

- Researcher: Will you allow others to discipline your child?
 Participant: Yes.
 Researcher: Who will you allow to discipline your child?
 Participant: My mother, because she will be watching her and with most of her discipline I agree with. My friends I'm not going to let them discipline my child.
 Researcher: How will you allow them to discipline him/her?
 Participant: The way that she disciplines seems to be effective with my sisters. The only thing I don't agree with is the way she handles naptime. If they don't go to sleep they can't sit up in their bed and I don't agree with that. Kids need a nap sometimes, but sometimes it's hard for me I can't even take a nap so how am I going to tell my kid to going to their room and take a nap? We just see differently on that.
 Researcher: Have you talked with her that you would prefer something other than her current method during naptime to be used when it comes to your daughter?
 Participant: Yes -I mean I've told her but not as far as her watching her. She knows how I feel.

Growth and Development

Physical

Food/Good Nutrition

- Researcher: Do you plan on breastfeeding? Why?
 Participant: Yes-I learned a lot in class - it helps your kid out a lot, especially with getting sick and the price of formula, healthy for me as well as the baby so if it is good for me and the baby and it's cheaper then that's just three wins together.
 Researcher: If for one reason or another you are not able to breast feed you will bottle feed -are you aware of proper bottle-feeding and washing procedures and safety?
 Participant: Yes, my mom bottle fed, so I learned a lot with my little sisters like no propped bottles, hold them while feeding
 Researcher: Tell me what you know about introducing food to your baby.
 -How would you introduce new foods to your baby?
 Participant: I know a little bit at a time. Nothing big obviously, my family is big on feeding their kids mashed potatoes I don't know why.
 Researcher: So they feed their infant mashed potatoes?
 Participant: Whenever they're smaller-they say oh they're ready for their mashed potatoes.
 Researcher: How do you feel about mashed potatoes at that age?
 Participant: It's ok because we're all ok.
 Participant: I'm going to keep my kid on milk as long as I can and then I'll get help from my mom for feeding.

Researcher: Did you know prior to starting this class how to introduce new foods to your baby?

Participant: A little bit –I mean I knew it needed to wait at least until 3 months. Baby food comes next, but I did learn more about it here.

Physical Activity

Researcher: Do you think that physical activity with your infant is important for his/her development? Why?

Participant: Yes, helps them develop a lot –just activities and it helps them to build a relationship with you.

Researcher: What types of activities have you learned about that can help your baby with healthy physical development?

Participant: We had a couple of tapes we watched like rolling their arm in between your hands, pushing against their feet to see if they can push off and massaging their feet. Grabbing their hands and rubbing their hands against you face. Reading is very important and singing –they may not want to hear me (laugh). Peek a boo I learned is very important, I mean at first I thought that it was just a silly game to make them laugh and now I know that it is important for development as well. Tummy time, helping them to stand, and...Inaudible

Infant Safety

Researcher: Can you tell me about child proofing in your home and what you expect will need to be done in order to keep your baby safe?

Participant: Our house now is very outlet safe and cabinets and doors to rooms. I have it on my room now because of my baby sisters. Edges are very important to cover.

Researcher: How will you make sure that your infant is safe while traveling by car?

Participant: Make sure that the sun doesn't overheat them and make sure that the car seat is very well attached to the seat correctly.

Researcher: Did you already know how to install an infant car seat?

Participant: I did know how because of my younger sisters. I'm practically a pro.

Sleep

Researcher: How will you comfort your child on restless nights?

Participant: I might try to rock her but I won't allow her to sleep with me out of fear. I am restless I toss and turn and I just couldn't trust myself. I would try to figure out what's wrong before I just start rocking her. I will have a pacifier.

Researcher: How will you handle uncontrollable crying?

Participant: Check everything and if everything is ok then you just have to talk with them and rock them to calm them down.

Researcher: If this does not work and you feel that you really just can't take anymore what will you do? Do you have a plan?

Participant: If it does start to get frustrating then I know you're supposed to sit them down for a minute and try to cool yourself down because you being

frustrated isn't going to help the baby at all. But the best way I know is to just try and talk to them and calm them.

Researcher: What types of bedtime rituals will you establish with your baby?

Participant: Reading a book especially because reading to your baby is great.

I don't want it to be anytime –I want it to be a little bit planned out but you can't really plan a baby sleeping.

Cognitive (Thinking/Learning)

Researcher: Prior to enrolling in the New Beginnings Program did you think that talking and interacting with your infant would be important for his/her development?

Participant: I really didn't think it would be important. I knew that your baby needed to know you were there but I didn't know how important it was.

Researcher: How do you feel now about positive interaction with your infant and his/her development?

Participant: I feel that it's very important now.

Researcher: Tell me about the types of activities you will do with your child to increase their learning and sense development?

- Singing
- Reading (colorful books with pictures)
- Age appropriate toys (variety of bright colors and textures)
- Talking to him/her with expression and tone variations

Participant: Mirror play, they say that babies when they're newborn they can only see black and white. Thick black lines and faces are really important. Putting a picture of a face in the babies' bed is good for their sight. My sister has a lot of sensitivity problems so we have a lot of different toys with different sounds and feels. Knowing about my sister's sensitivity issues helped me pick out good toys for my daughter.

Socio Emotional

Researcher: Tell me about what you've learned about temperaments and how you as a new parent will be flexible whether your baby is relaxed or laid back as opposed to being slow to warm

(Explain to the participant)

Participant: I was not aware of temperaments after explaining of course you have to adjust to how your baby is acting. IF they're relaxed then everything's great, but you just can't ignore a kid who'd screaming cause obviously they're needing something and you can't just ignore them. You've got to make time around that.

Researcher: Do you think that your temperament as it is right now will mesh if you are not the same temperament?

Participant: I'm slower to warm –iffy about things

Researcher: How will you help your baby feel less anxiety as he or she grows when you have to leave him/her with a caregiver for school or work?

Participant: Building trust can't lie to a kid. Tell her that you be back after work. Honesty, I can't lie to my kid. Just being honest with them by saying I'll

- be back, you have to stay here, but I'll be back after work to come and get you. that way she'll know that I'm going to be back to get her.
- Researcher: How much do you think that the environment that you expose your child to will affect your baby's development in each of these areas?
- Participant: Yes I believe it is very important positive and negative environments. Right now that's a big part of why I haven't moved out yet because if I moved out now it would probably be harder on my kid at first –being at home with my mom is more positive, there are more resources to give to my kid, I am more happy which I think makes my kid more happy. The environment is pretty good. She is a stay at home mom so she dealt with 3 kids so she knows how to work with children a little better so if I wasn't here my mom knows about how to work with the kids.
- Researcher: Tell me some of the ways you plan on interacting with your child to encourage healthy growth and development?
- Researcher: Overall, how has this program prepared you for the interaction you will have with your child?
- Participant: Before I started this class I thought, "You know ... okay parenting is easy, because I thought I knew everything. Then I come in here and it's just opened my eyes to how much I didn't know –to think that there is actually 30 LAPS over learning about a kid –it just amazed me. I didn't think it would be anything like this actually school work to learn how. Now, after finishing all that work it really amazes me how much I didn't know and how much there is to know and I think it helped me out a lot. Like the first day in the hospital, I didn't know how short it could be or how long it could be, and how many meds, and procedures. Now I'm more aware of what could happen when I go into labor and it will just hit me when I get in there, I'll be able to ask the right questions. And know more about what my doctors doing and saying. When the baby gets here I just know more wrongs and rights and how to keep my baby safe and not to overfeed my baby, a lot more safety than I ever knew about.

Section II

REMINDER: Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator Staff and the counselor onsite Staff. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships can be extremely influential in the success and failures that make up daily life. The following set of questions is designed to find out what relationships you have established throughout your pregnancy. I would like to know how your previous

relationships may have changed due to your pregnancy and how the parenting program your are currently enrolled in has helped or hindered existing relationships and have in some way had an impact on you as a new mother.

Researcher: Tell me about the relationship you have with your Mother and Father.

Participant: I've always lived with my mom, so me and my day still get along I still see him every once in a while –but it's still a relationship.

Researcher: Are you close with your mom?

Participant: Now more than ever since I became pregnant.

Researcher: Do you have any siblings?

Participant: 1 older brother/ 3 younger sisters

Researcher: How much have your relationships changed with members of your family since you became pregnant?

Participant: Me and my mom really weren't talking at all and the pregnancy really opened up the relationship. Me and my dad we've always been pretty open with one another so it didn't really change anything except he wanted to kill the dad.

Brother 21-same relationship as dad protective

Researcher: Do you have any extended family members you feel close to? Why do you feel close to them?

Participant: My aunt –mom's brother's wife .She's always there for our family. She's been there in a lot of ways my family hasn't. Good to talk to, she's always there.

Researcher: Is the Father of your child involved in your pregnancy?
Some.

Researcher: So the contact is limited? Does her go to Dr. appointments?
He's been to one.

Researcher: Will the father of your child be involved in parenting your child?

Participant: Ok he's on probation where he can't see the kids after he gets off probation if he's worthy to see her then he can.

Researcher: What would he have to do to prove himself?

Participant: Become reliable, can't be doing drugs, or smoke.

Researcher: Why is that important to you now?

Participant: I don't want any of that around my child.

Researcher: Do you know if her wants to be involved?

Participant: Yes he does.

Researcher: What do you feel like your child will miss out on not having his/her father in the picture?

Participant: Nothing, I mean to a point where it's her dad. But I've got several people that are willing to be there for me and my kid, plenty of cousins and uncles that are so family oriented.

Researcher: What are your friend's reactions when they find out that you are pregnant?
Some were surprised, and some didn't like it –they didn't say that they didn't like it but the fact that I 'm going to have to grow up and they want me to still be able to have fun. They don't understand that I can't just drop the baby off somewhere.

Researcher: Do any of them have kids?

- Participant: Um , one of them does but I don't see her much.
 Researcher: How does this make you feel?
 Participant: It's not going to be as strong after the baby is here, because that's what comes first and if that's the way their thinking ...
 Researcher: How are you feeling emotionally with all of these changes?
 Participant: Pregnancy was a surprise –called the dad immediately and slept on it before I told anyone else.
 Participant: I was kind of freaked out.
 A little bit overwhelmed –but now that it's closer I'm getting a little more used to it.
- Researcher: How are you feeling physically?
 Participant: Strained.
 Researcher: Do you have a church support system?
 Participant: I actually don't right now. With my sister sick we haven't been going lately.
 Researcher: Are you working to regain that connection once your daughter is born?
 Participant: I would like to go back to church
 Researcher: What kind of support do you receive through any church programs?
 Participant: N/A
- Researcher: Tell me in your opinion how the New Beginnings program has helped you in building meaningful relationships that can create a strong support system for you and your child?
 Participant: Taught me things that need to be there in a friendship I didn't realize how much they were taking advantage of me. A good friend actually listens. Quite a bit of my friendships dropped off after I got pregnant.
 Researcher: Do you feel that you're better off without those friendships or do you wish that they still existed?
 Participant: I still want them as friends...

GOALS, EDUCATION/CAREER, RELATIONSHIP, PARENTING, CHILD

Many times the goals that you had set prior to pregnancy don't feel realistic to you after you find out your pregnant and there is a new set of priorities. The following questions are designed to find out what goals you had set for yourself prior to pregnancy, and how those goals have changed or been replaced by new goals. Also, how your plans for each day has changed with pregnancy or birth or your child. Another portion of this sections questions are to look at the goals you have for your child as well as the relationships that your will establish as a new parent.

Prior to pregnancy-

Researcher: What did an average day look like for you?

- Participant: I was really into art and didn't have many goals at all. I had an art scholarship in Texas but with day care and a baby. Now I have goals for a job and I will graduate. I also want to be on my own that's the next goal.
- Participant: Family was way in the future, I didn't see it coming this soon. Maybe 25 years old.
- Researcher: Where do you see yourself in terms of future education, family?
- Participant: I've taken classes for the banking job and I probably will take the classes for the SW airlines job.
- Participant: I would hope to get married in the future-kids I'm not planning on any more right now –maybe after I get married.
- Researcher: Who will watch your baby when you work?
- Participant: My mom
- Researcher: What do you want in life for your child?
- Participant: Happy with the safest way possible. If college is something she wants to do then that's great but if my kid doesn't want to go to college then I'm not going to look down at her.
- Researcher: What do you want in life for yourself?
- Participant: I want to provide something for my kid.
- Researcher: What types of relationships do you consider valuable?
- Participant: Relationships where you can trust
- Researcher: What goals have you set for yourself at this point in your life?
- Participant: Just to get into something and try to move up.
- Researcher: Do you feel that these goals are realistic?
- Participant: Yes
- Researcher: How will you go about achieving these goals?
- Participant: 1 month take it one step at a time and...
- Researcher: On the whole, how stressful do you see your life being with a young baby and perhaps having other things to deal with?
- Participant: Everything can be stressful. I try to keep my stress level to a minimum but I try to find ways to eliminate as much stress as possible. I try to find easier ways to go about things
- Researcher: Overall, how has New Beginnings helped you in setting goals for yourself and your child and in the relationships you hope to establish or may have already established?
- Participant: Showed me a better outlook –I was in a tiny little box and it opened up a lot more there are a lot more options. They opened me up to different things I didn't know about.

General closing questions

- Researcher: What advice would you give another pregnant/parenting teen?
- Participant: Take this class to gain a lot of information. Not even my mom knew. Resources available beyond DHS
- Researcher: In what way(s) has this program helped you the most?
- Participant: I think I've grown a little bit. I think I have –I've gotten more ready to be a mom. Before I thought it would be hard and that I wouldn't be able to do

it and now I see how hard it is and I grasp how hard it is going to be and I still think I can do it.

Researcher: If the program was more than a semester would you enroll again?

Participant: I probably would, if there was more information to be learned.

Covering a little bit of before the baby is born and after as well.

Researcher: Have you been provided a referral to other parent education classes or programs?

Participant: Yes, different kinds of classes.

Researcher: Will you seek out additional parent education programs?

Participant: Probably not because once I have the baby, well WIC classes that have a class for couples.

Researcher: In what ways could this program work better for you?

Participant: Longer, because it would be less of a rush to get everything done.

Researcher: Is there anything that you feel is important for me to know about being pregnant teen that you felt I missed exploring?

Participant: N/A

End of Transcript

Transcript
Parenting Teen
Participant - Natalee
Section I

***REMINDER:** Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the states Department of Human Services.*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS

What is your age & grade level? 18 years old-Midwest High school Junior (11th grade)

What is your race?

- Caucasian
- Black
- Asian
- Latino/Latina
- American Indian
- Other (please indicate _____)

Do you currently live by yourself?

- I live by myself
- I live with my parents (Baby sister, son, and mother)
- I live with a friend
- I live with a family member
- Other

Researcher: What made you decide to parent your child as opposed to abortion or adoption?

Participant: I figure it was my responsibility, and that I shouldn't just throw him at somebody else because I brought him into this world and I can take care of him. I thought about both –my mom thought about abortion I was too far along. And I thought about adoption about 2 weeks before he was born, but I couldn't do it.

- Researcher: Ultimately was it the responsibility that made your decision to want to parent?
- Participant: No, it was just the fact that someone would love me unconditionally no matter what I did, and they will always be there for me whenever I need them.
- Researcher: What did you do during your pregnancy to prepare for the arrival of your child?
- Participant: Read and looked at movies her in the beginning, ask for advice from family and friends that have been through the same situation. A lot of internet research and I had a nurse that come over to my house and she helped me a lot too.
- Researcher: Did you know what items you would need for your baby in the first few months?
- Participant: I had a lot of people buy me clothes, 2 bassinets, a crib, highchair, potty, bouncer.
- Participant: Diapers, pacifier, bottles, milk and clothes the basics.
- Participant: I never really thought about what I would need. Me and the daddy thought about having one but we didn't say how soon.
- Researcher: What did you think labor and delivery would be like prior to this program and now?
- Participant: Painful. Just painful. I had a c-section so delivery wasn't painful but recovery was. I had a cold and every time I coughed it was really painful. I was released after 2 days.
- Researcher: What were some concerns you had about becoming a parent?
- Participant: Prior to this program
- Participant: Was I going to be able to stay in school, who's going to take care of my baby, will I be able to financially take care of him.
- Researcher: Now that the program has ended?
- Participant: From time to time I've had concerns –I have to think about who's going to watch my baby next year. I do have 1000.00 put back for him, so money wise I'm okay. Nobody can touch it not even me it's for him.
- Researcher: Are you involved in any other parent education/home visitation programs?
- Participant: No.
- Researcher: You mentioned that a nurse came to visit you. Was that a nurse from the hospital where you had him or was it a nurse from the nurse family partnership?
- Participant: Yeah she was from the nurse family partnership, but after I had him I didn't have time for her anymore. I did start seeing her for 4-5 months once a week and she was helpful in answering any questions I had—I still remember everything she taught me.
- Researcher: How are you supporting yourself and your baby?
- Participant: Right now my mom is helping us, as well as other family members. I hope to get a job this summer that I can also work when I start school again and taking care of him.
I'm looking at getting a job at Michael's right by my house.

- Researcher: Are you currently or do you plan to receive any assistance such as Food Stamps, WIC, Medicaid/Sooner care, TANF? IF YES-Do you plan on using this assistance temporarily until you can get on your feet or long term as a main source of support?
- Participant: I am on WIC and Medicaid right now I really don't want to be on food stamps unless I really have to. I'll try to manage on my own and see how that goes, I really don't want to start that, if I have to I will, but I don't want to depend on that.
- Researcher: What do you think the first year will be like with your baby?
- Participant: Stressful.
- Researcher: In what way?
- Participant: No sleep, school, him, his health, my health. Finances, food for him Wondering if he'll be ok and if I will be a good mother to him. Just stressful.
- I'm ok. Right now I'm doing good , when I get out on my own I don't know but You never know when your parents might pass away, you have to actually think ahead, that's what I'm doing.

PARENT EDUCATION

Parent Education is an essential part of parenting. It can increase parent's knowledge on a variety of topics thereby having a positive impact on parenting skills and the relationship that exists between parent and child. The following questions ask your perception about the knowledge you had about parenting before you became pregnant, and how it has changed since you have enrolled in a parent education program.

Parenting Styles *Explain Briefly*

There are 4 types of parenting styles ([Diana Baumrind](#)):

1. Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parents, encourage the child to be independent. Authoritative parents are not usually controlling allowing the child to explore more freely. Authoritative parents set limits, demand maturity, but when punishing a child, the parent will always explain his or her motive for their punishment. Authoritative parents typically forgive instead of punishing if a child falls short. As a result children have a higher self esteem, and are more independent.

2. Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents expect much of their child but do not explain the rules at all, unlike the Authoritative parent. Authoritarian parents are most likely to hit a child as a form of punishment instead of grounding a child. As a result children from this type of parenting lack social competence as the parent generally predicts what

the child should do instead of allowing the child to choose by him or herself. The children also rarely take initiative; they are socially withdrawn and look to others to decide what's right.

3. Permissive Parenting

Permissive are nurturing and accepting, but non-demanding. This type of parent simply wants the child to like him or her at the end of the day and will do anything the child requests to do. As a result the children are rarely (if ever) punished and are generally immature. The children cannot control their impulses and do not accept the responsibility for their own actions. When the child gets in trouble, the child will simply blame someone else even if it was his or her own fault.

4. Neglectful Parenting

Neglectful parents are similar to permissive parenting but the parent does not care much about the child. The parents are generally not involved in their child's life, but will provide basic needs for the child.

- Researcher: Tell me about the parenting style you were raised with.
 Participant: Authoritative
 Researcher: Do you see yourself parenting the same way that your parents did?
 Participant: Yeah, I think I turned out pretty good.
 Researcher: In what ways would you parent the same?
 Participant: Discipline
 Researcher: In what way would you parent differently?
 Participant: No, my mother raised 5 of us by herself for a while; I think she did a pretty good job.
 Researcher: Which parenting style do you think you will adopt?
 Participant: Authoritative

Discipline

- Researcher: What is your plan for disciplining your child?
 Participant: Time out sit them down. I don't believe in hitting them because that can change them mentally .maybe a little tap on the hand
 Researcher: How long will he be put in time out?
 Participant: It depends on what he did. If he hurts somebody then probably longer than if she broke something it would be shorter.
 Researcher: Is there a designated place that you have for time out?
 Participant: Just the living room –or somewhere I can see him.
 Researcher: Do you expect this plan/method of discipline to change as your child grows?
 Participant: How?
 Participant: Yeah, probably when he is about 10 years old no phone or no TV.
 Participant: I don't think time out will work when he's that old.
 Researcher: Will you allow others to discipline your child?
 Participant: Who will you allow to discipline your child?
 Participant: Maybe, family –only some like my mom, dad my uncles and his uncles.

Researcher: How will you allow them to discipline him/her?
Participant: Time out, no yelling no slapping on the hand

Growth and Development

Physical

Food/Good Nutrition

Researcher: Are you breastfeeding?
Participant: Yes for 2 days then he quit. I found out they gave him a bottle at the hospital before she got the chance to breastfeed. I found out not too long ago and I'm really upset about it.
Researcher: Have you thought about contacting a lactation consultant?
Participant: I did and we tried but he just wouldn't latch on.
Researcher: If No-are you aware of bottle safety procedures?
Participant: Yes
Researcher: Tell me what you know about introducing food to your baby. How would you introduce new foods to your baby?
Participant: I will start him at 6-7 months and see and give him what he likes, except candy because I want to make sure that he's healthy. With new foods I'll taste it to show him that it is ok.

Physical Activity

Researcher: Do you think that physical activity with your infant is important for his/her development? Why?
Participant: Yes, it will help him learn, and to walk, crawl, touch, and grab, explore, and just learn more.
Researcher: What types of activities have you learned about that can help your baby with healthy physical development?
Participant: Tummy time, rolling, taking little steps. He can scoot a little.

Infant Safety

Researcher: Can you tell me about child proofing in your home and what you expect will need to be done in order to keep your baby safe?
Participant: We have put in outlet plug covers, and we have the gates. You have to be careful of glass and sharp objects, medicine need to be put up high.
Researcher: At what age will you begin childproofing?
Participant: I have a four year old sister at home so the house is already child proofed
Researcher: How do you make sure that your infant is safe while traveling by car?
Participant: Put him in his seatbelt correctly –snug but not tight.
In a car seat rear facing.

Sleep

Researcher: How does your baby sleep at night /naptime?
Participant: Good –sleeps all night through 10 pm and wakes up at 6-7 am
Researcher: On restless nights how will you comfort your child?

- Participant: I rock him in our rocking chair, or I put him in his stroller and walk around with him and listened to the music we have for him and it calms him (water, nature sounds, and lullabies)
- Researcher: How will you handle uncontrollable crying?
- Participant: I'll try to hold him and pat him, but if I get to wound up I'll sit him down and get myself together and go back to him.
- Researcher: What types of bedtime rituals have you established with your baby?
I read him books and he knows it's time for bed after about 3 books

Cognitive (Thinking/Learning)

- Researcher: Prior to enrolling in the New Beginnings Program did you think that talking and interacting with your infant would be important for his/her development?
- Participant: Yes, always knew that.
- Researcher: How do you feel now about positive interaction with your infant and his/her development?
- Participant: I was pregnant and talking him even though I felt silly
- Researcher: Tell me about the types of activities you do with your child to increase their learning and sense development?
- Participant: Read him books, sing the ABC's, I have card patterns with colors and animals, I have a textured books.

Socio Emotional

- Researcher: Tell me about what you've learned about temperaments and how you as a new parent will be flexible whether your baby is relaxed or laid back as opposed to being slow to warm (Explain to the participant)
- Participant: Now he's easy, in the future I will work with him and talk with him until he is comfortable
- Researcher: How will you help your baby feel less anxiety as he or she grows when you have to leave him/her with a caregiver for school or work?
- Participant: I would definitely let him get to know the person before I leave him with them. Then I will tell him they are here to help him and mama has to go but if you need me just call me.
- Researcher: How much do you think that the environment that you expose your child to will affect your baby's development in each of these areas?
- Participant: I don't know, I say, I know this is your house but my baby can't be around that. I'll ask them to go into another room or outside and they respect that. Sometimes they'll tell me to go to my room for a minute and I will.
- Researcher: Tell me some of the ways you interact with your child to encourage healthy growth and development?
- Participant: Read, talk, and sing I let him see people
- Researcher: Overall, how has this program prepared you for the interaction you have with your child?
- Participant: It's been good because a lot of stuff I didn't know I learned here. I'm glad I got in here, at first I was like I don't want to be here, I want to see my

friends, but now I'm glad that I did because I know more and it's always good to know more.

****END OF SECTION I****

Section II

***REMINDER:** Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.*

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships can be extremely influential in the success and failures that make up daily life. The following set of questions is designed to find out what relationships you have established throughout your pregnancy. I would like to know how your previous relationships may have changed due to your pregnancy and how the parenting program you are currently enrolled in has helped or hindered existing relationships and have in some way had an impact on you as a new mother.

Researcher: Tell me about the relationship you have with your Mother & Father.

Participant: Good relationship with both can talk with them about anything.
(Stepfather)

My real father and I don't talk.

Researcher: Do you have any siblings?

2 older 1 younger brother 1 younger sister

Researcher: How much did your relationships change with members of your family when you became pregnant?

Participant: Pretty disappointed because they had high hopes for me. They are starting to come around because they see that I'm taking responsibility, that I know how to...my uncle was the most disappointed because his daughter had a child when she was in 10th grade and another shortly after.

Researcher: Do you have any extended family members you feel close to? Why do you feel close to them?

Participant: My dad, this is his first grandson. It brought us closer. The birth of my son moved the relationship with my mother farther apart.
(All of her mother's side had children at a young age)

Researcher: Was the Father of your child involved in your pregnancy?

Researcher: Is the father of your child involved in parenting your child now?

Participant: I found out when I was 4 months along –we were very close friends –he was always there checking on me every 10 minutes- making sure everything was ok... it made me feel special.

He's not any more he didn't like it when I got into another relationship with someone else- he has a girlfriend and he's not like this with his other child's mother.

Researcher: How does that make you feel?

Participant: It makes me feel like he doesn't care about him. The opportunity to see him is t here, I call him but he doesn't answer or call back it's been 2 1/2 months

Researcher: What do you feel like your child is missing out on not having his/her father in the picture?

Participant: How Good of a father he really -he's a good person, and also where he gets his athletics from.

Researcher: How can you tell he's athletic?

In audible

(He kickes and it seems like he wants to walk)

Researcher: What were your friend's reactions when they find out that you were pregnant?

Participant: Oh they were happy. All my friends were happy.

Researcher: Do you think it was happiness because everyone loves babies, or

Participant: No we all consider ourselves as sisters so they thought of him as their nephew. They were all aunts.

Researcher: Did any offer concerns about goals that you had and how this pregnancy would c change your goals?

Participant: MMM...no they were just all happy.

Researcher: Do any of them have children?

Participant: No

Researcher: How did this make you feel?

Participant: Loved for me and my baby -because now he has not only my family but also my friends that will love him -he'll just get love all around.

Researcher: How are you feeling emotionally with all of these changes?

You found out at 4 months? Wow were you not showing at all?

Participant: No, and I had my period...I was happy, mad and shocked all at the same time. My mom came to check me out of school to get birth control and the dr. took a pregnancy test and it came out positive.

Researcher: How are you feeling physically?

Participant: The same -sometimes I still can't believe that I had a baby. Sometimes I see him as a brother not a son. I'm still trying to catch on. I wish I was pregnant still; it was the greatest feeling to feel the baby move and kick it is just the weirdest feeling.

Researcher: Do you think you went through postpartum?

Participant: No I didn't.

Researcher: Do you have a church support system?

Participant: No.

Researcher: Is that because you don't have a support system or because you don't attend church?

- Participant: I go to church I just don't have a support system. I go with my boyfriend and his family.
- Researcher: Do you feel like you will be able to get a support system going there for yourself overtime?
- Participant: Yes, hopefully.
- Researcher: What kind of support do you receive through any church programs?
- Researcher: Tell me in your opinion how the New Beginnings program has helped you in building meaningful relationships that can create a strong support system for you and your child?
- Participant: I wouldn't know –
- Researcher: I rephrased the question and she still was not able to answer.

GOALS, EDUCATION/CAREER, RELATIONSHIP, PARENTING, CHILD

Many times the goals that you had set prior to pregnancy don't feel realistic to you after you find out your pregnant and there is a new set of priorities. The following questions are designed to find out what goals you had set for yourself prior to pregnancy, and how those goals have changed or been replaced by new goals. Also, how your plans for each day has changed with pregnancy or birth or your child. Another portion of this sections questions are to look at the goals you have for your child as well as the relationships that your will establish as a new parent.

Prior to pregnancy-

- Researcher: What did an average day look like for you?
- Participant: School come home go to sleep talk on the phone, and if it's the weekend go to parties.
- Researcher: Did you have a lot of free time?
- Participant: YES,
- Researcher: What were your goals at that time?
- Participant: I wanted to be a math teacher or a math professor; I wanted to go to college or the navy, or the army or the marines. Or some type of military service.
- Researcher: Where did you see yourself in terms of family and long term relationships?
- Participant: I kept saying that I was going to have my first kid at the age of 25. I really didn't want to be married because I don't like to be tied down. I did want a long term relationship with out the I do part.
- Researcher: Why do you think that is?
- Participant: I just see other people in family and people in other families' going through the same thing and I didn't want to see myself go through that. Mental and physical pain and I didn't want to go through that

During pregnancy-

- Participant: School come home go to eat talk on the phone sleep and if I had a dr. appt go to the dr. appt.
- Researcher: Were you pretty good about going to dr. appointments?
- Participant: Haven't missed not one. And been there on time.

Researcher: Where did you see yourself in terms of school, relationships, and your child?
Participant: I still want to be a professor; I still want to go into a branch of the military. I do want to settle down now that includes marriage. I think I've found the one.
No w I see that now that I have a baby I do have to work extra hard. Not only to keep food in my stomach and shelter over my head but I have someone else to worry about now. So that's going to push me even more to do better than what I am doing now.

Researcher: After you grad are you looking at going into college so that you can become a math professor?
Participant: I will probably go into the military first just because I heard they pay for college. But I think I can do both. But I still want another baby when I'm 2, 25 is still the goal.

Researcher: Does your current boyfriend act as father figure for your son?
Participant: Oh yes, he loves him. He calls him his son and he wants him to call him dad... And are you okay with that?
Participant: I'm ok (smiling). I don't push him to do anything he just decides to be that way.

Researcher: Will you tell your son that your boyfriend is not his bio father?
Participant: I will tell him that he's not your bio father but that he is your father –the one who took care of you and raised you.

Researcher: When he is older will you let him see his bio father?
Participant: If he wants to see his real father, then I have no problem with that.

Researcher: When it comes to a point where you have married do you think that your boyfriend would want to adopt your son?
Participant: Yes! He has already said that he does.

Researcher: Do you currently work?
Participant: No. not yet getting a job when school is out.

Researcher: Did you work after the baby was born?
Participant: Yes until I found out I was pregnant. I was working at Taco Mayo and I was afraid I'd slip.

Researcher: Who watches your baby when you work?
Participant: I haven't thought about that yet I was thinking my daddy or I have a lot of relatives.

Researcher: What do you want in life for your child?
Participant: The best, make sure that he is set up financially, a loving wife that will love him no matter what, a good education, the best things that I can give him, make sure he's okay, good health, that's all I can ask for. Just believe in God and he'll have all that.

Researcher: What do you want in life for yourself?
Participant: Financial, Stable, a very good education for my son, good health so I can stick around a little longer.

Researcher: Are there time when your faith is tested?

- Participant: Sometimes.
- Researcher: How do you handle it?
- Participant: Talk to somebody about it, talk to my boyfriend about it. Sometimes I'm like, if God really loved me would he give me a baby and I'm still a baby myself? I sometimes think about that but, God knows what he's doing .If her didn't think I could take care of him he wouldn't have given him to me, that's how I see it.
I get down when I think about it sometimes but I talk to my boyfriend about it or I talk to his mother about it because she's into church. I just talk about it ...it's not good to hold things in.
- Researcher: What types of relationships do you consider valuable?
- Participant: Like in my relationships...In audible
My father is there for me he doesn't judge me. My mom same thing but she judges me, Boyfriend loves me and my son even though he's not his.
- Researcher: Do you feel that the people you named you can trust? Yes –I'm trying to work
that out with my boyfriend-overtime –yeah. He's talking about getting married in 2010.We'll see about that. You can't put all your trust into a person.
- Researcher: What goals have you set for yourself at this point in your life?
- Participant: Hopefully I'll graduate early so that I can start college early. I probably look up papers, resources on the army/navy.
- Researcher: Do you feel that these goals are realistic?
- Participant: Yes, if I just put my heart and mind to it , cause I see people that are born into nothin' that have something, anybody can do it.
- Researcher: How will you go about achieving these goals?
You have already mentioned...
- Participant: Stay focused, keep my faith in God, cause he does it all. Stay focused, don't let it go another way or unless someone tells me that it's not good do what I want to do and don't listen to what everyone else say or think. They can have their opinion but at the end of the day it's up to you.
- Researcher: On the whole, how stressful did you see your life being with a young baby and perhaps having just life's daily ups and downs to deal with?
- Participant: Inaudible
- Researcher: How do you view your life now?
- Participant: I feel fine 50/50
- Researcher: By 50/50 what does that men
- Participant: It depends on how he's feeling –if he's in a good mood then I'm in a good mood. If he's in a sad mood then I'm sad because I can't do anything to make him happy. If he's in a bad mood I'm in an ok mood.
- Researcher: So he dictates mom's happiness?
- Participant: Yeah
- Researcher: Overall, how has New Beginnings helped you in setting goals for yourself and your child and in the relationships you hope to establish or may have already established?

- Participant: This program taught me that even if you do have a baby, you don't have to stop your life; you just have to think about somebody else's life including yours. Taught me that if they were your friends before you had your baby and they're not now, they weren't good friends, because a friend will be by you through anything.
With all of the girls over there, they're all great, they're funny and I love all of them as a sister.
- Researcher: Do you think you'll keep in touch with them after the program ends or...
- Participant: I hope so, I mean it's not a guarantee but I really hope so, cause 3 of them are seniors and they're graduating they're going to be out on their own .Hopefully, I'm open , I think we have a good friendship so ...inaudible
- Researcher: Have they been inspirations to you or helpful in any way?
- Participant: Yes and the instructors have been an inspiration, they told me to keep my head up rain, snow, thunder hail and tornado and all keep my head up.

General closing questions

- Researcher: What advice would you give another pregnant/parenting teen?
- Participant: Don't give up, keep doing what you do and do your best. That's all you can ever do is do your best.
- Researcher: In what way(s) has this program helped you the most?
- Participant: Probably stay positive about everything.
- Researcher: Are there times that it is hard to do that?
- Participant: Yeah it's hard but, it is but it's not. even though your head might not be positive just look to your heart and it's going to tell you it's going to be ok and you really have to believe it cause if you don't it's not going to be ok
- Researcher: If the program was more than a semester would you enroll again?
- Participant: Yeah.
- Researcher: And would you prefer that it be after you had your child for it to extend that way or for you to have started a semester early like maybe in you 2nd trimester instead of your last?
- Participant: From here now ...cause I've been through that already. I don't know what's up ahead of me so that it would be nice see what's ahead of me and behind me.
- Researcher: Have you been provided a referral to other parent education classes or programs?
- Participant: No.
- Researcher: Do you think you will seek out any additional programs?
- Participant: Hopefully, I hope so, it's not guaranteed but I hope so.
- Researcher: What reasons would you have for checking out other programs?
- Participant: If I don't know something already they might help me learn something new about my baby that I don't know about.
- Researcher: In what ways could this program work better for you?
- Participant: If it was longer! If it was longer.
- Researcher: Are you not ready to be released quite yet?

Participant: Not quite yet, I am but then I'm not. I'm ready to get back to my school but if it was longer that would be good.

Researcher: Is there anything that you feel is important for me to know about being a pregnant teen that you felt I missed exploring?

Participant: No, not that I know of.

End of Transcript

Transcript
Parenting Teen
Participant-Olivia

Section I

***REMINDER:** Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS

What is your age & grade level? 18/High school Senior

What is your race?

- Caucasian
- Black
- Asian
- Latino/Latina
- American Indian
- Other (please indicate _____)

Do you currently live by yourself?

- I live by myself
- I live with my parents
- I live with a friend**
- I live with a family member**
- Other-Boyfriend and his sister**

Researcher: What made you decide to parent your child as opposed to abortion or adoption?

Participant: Cause I feel like it was my decision to have her and she deserved a chance to live. In audible...

Researcher: As far as adoption was that ever a thought?

Participant: No.

Researcher: Why wasn't it a though?

Participant: I just thought for her to be with me would be the best option for her.

- Researcher: What did you do during your pregnancy to prepare for the arrival of your child?
 Participant: I worked up until the week before she was born so I saved a lot and We learned a lot of helpful tips in our classes, so and I took a few birthing classes and things like that and got advice from family members and that's about it.
- Researcher: Did you know what items you would need for your baby in the first few months?
 Participant: Pretty much yeah
 Researcher: What types of items did you know you would need to stack up on?
 Participant: Diapers, wipes, milk, bottles, those are the main things. Then there are things to help soothe her, in audible.
- Researcher: What did you think labor and delivery would be like before you had her?
 Participant: I thought it would be easier than it was. I wanted to have a natural birth but it was too hard
- Researcher: Did you start off natural then it was ...
 Participant: Yeah uh huh ...it was just, it took 7 hours for me to dilate another centimeter so ...I was in labor 15 hours and I was already at a three when I went.
- Researcher: WOW! So after having her you know what you had previously thought wasn't true, you thought it would be a lot easier and it was a lot more difficult.
- Researcher: What are some concerns you had about becoming a parent?
 Participant: I guess the concern would be me having to be a single mother that was my main concern.
- Researcher: And has that been relieved in some sense now that you've had her or are you still kind of feeling that way?
 Participant: No, cause her father plays a big part, it's just pregnancy hormones and you're always in arguments. Now everything's fine.
- Researcher: Are you involved in any other parent education/home visitation programs?
 Participant: Um... Children's First.
- Researcher: How often ...is it a nurse that comes out?
 Participant: Yes.
 Researcher: How often do they come out?
 Participant: At least twice a month.
 Researcher: Do you find them helpful?
 Participant: Yes.
 Researcher: How long have they been coming out?
 Participant: Since I was probably 2 months pregnant.
- Researcher: How are you supporting yourself and your baby?
 Participant: Right now I'm just strictly going to school and her father actually works and supports us for right now until school lets out and I'll turn back to my job.
- Researcher: So you'll start working again in the summer?
 Participant: Uh huh, probably in the next couple of weeks.

- Researcher: Do you know where you will be working?
 Participant: I was at Sears, so I'll probably go back to Sears for a while.
 Researcher: Are you currently or do you plan to receive any assistance such as Food Stamps,
 WIC, Medicaid/Sooner care, TANF?
 Participant: Right now my daughter had Medicaid and I have sooner care, um so as far as, that will probably be it, and maybe food stamps, but I don't think so.
 Researcher: And no WIC?
 Participant: I have WIC
 Researcher: You said that you are on food stamps?
 Participant: No
 Researcher: Okay, no
 Researcher: IF YES-Do you plan on using this assistance temporarily until you and your boyfriend can get on your feet or long term as a main source of support?
 Participant: Yes only temporarily.
 Researcher: What do you think the first year will be like with your baby?
 Participant: Um I don't know ... I guess she's grown so fast a lot of changes that have happened so quick. I guess she's grown up a little faster than I expected. Its fun, it's just the sleeping is hard.

PARENT EDUCATION

Parent Education is an essential part of parenting. It can increase parent's knowledge on a variety of topics thereby having a positive impact on parenting skills and the relationship that exists between parent and child. The following questions ask your perception about the knowledge you had about parenting before you became pregnant, and how it has changed since you have enrolled in a parent education program.

Parenting Styles Explain Briefly

There are 4 types of parenting styles ([Diana Baumrind](#)):

1. Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parents, encourage the child to be independent. Authoritative parents are not usually controlling allowing the child to explore more freely. Authoritative parents set limits, demand maturity, but when punishing a child, the parent will always explain his or her motive for their punishment. Authoritative parents typically forgive instead of punishing if a child falls short. As a result children have a higher self esteem, and are more independent.

2. Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents expect much of their child but do not explain the rules at all, unlike the Authoritative parent. Authoritarian parents are most likely to hit a child as a form of punishment instead of grounding a child. As a result children from this type of parenting lack social competence as the parent generally predicts what

the child should do instead of allowing the child to choose by him or herself. The children also rarely take initiative; they are socially withdrawn and look to others to decide what's right.

3. Permissive Parenting

Permissive are nurturing and accepting, but non-demanding. This type of parent simply wants the child to like him or her at the end of the day and will do anything the child requests to do. As a result the children are rarely (if ever) punished and are generally immature. The children cannot control their impulses and do not accept the responsibility for their own actions. When the child gets in trouble, the child will simply blame someone else even if it was his or her own fault.

4. Neglectful Parenting

Neglectful parents are similar to permissive parenting but the parent does not care much about the child. The parents are generally not involved in their child's life, but will provide basic needs for the child.

- Researcher: Tell me about the parenting style you were raised with.
 Participant: Um I would probably say ...
 Researcher: I can summarize them for you again.
 Participant: Number 2
 Researcher: Read number 2
 Participant: Number 2
 Researcher: Do you see yourself parenting the same way that your parents did?
 Participant: No, they did kind of an... in audible
 Researcher: In what ways would you parent the same?
 Participant: Um...probably just having high expectations for my child. That would be the main thing
 Researcher: In what areas?
 Participant: As far as school, hobbies things that they're interested in.
 Researcher: In what way would you parent differently?
 Participant: Well with my daughter I see I don't know I would be more or less like the first parent. And try to explain more before punishment, I think that works a little better.
 Researcher: Which parenting style do you think you will adopt?
 Participant: The first one (Authoritative)
 Researcher: What aspect of Authoritarian parenting fits with the way you were raised?
 Participant: The punishment.

Discipline

- Researcher:* What is your plan for disciplining your child?
Participant: I think more I guess try to listen more as a parent not so much of the hitting because I think that makes your child shy away from you in some aspects and um, I 'm going to be firm with my child and let her know what I expect but also want to hear their side, so I'm going to be more attentive to my child.
- Researcher:* Do you expect this that listening, having high expectations and being more attentive, not using hitting as a form of discipline and being firm with her –do you expect her to change as she grows?
Participant: No, I think it will work at any age for the child.
- Researcher:* Will you allow others to discipline your child?
Participant: Um...her father and that's probably it.
Researcher: How will you allow him to discipline her?
Participant: We both have the same views so...In audible.

Growth and Development

Physical

Food/Good Nutrition

- Researcher:* Are you breastfeeding?
Participant: No
- Researcher:* Did you start breastfeeding?
Participant: Yes Ma'am.
- Researcher:* Did you choose to stop or was it just not working?
Participant: It wasn't working; I didn't produce enough for her so I had to give her a bottle too and...
- Researcher:* How did it make you feel that she wasn't able to breast feed?
Participant: I was disappointed because I really wanted to breastfeed cause I got all the information that it is so much better for them, so I was kind of disappointed.
- Researcher:* Tell me what you know about introducing food to your baby.
Participant: Um...well the first that I've heard is start them with cereal close to about 4 months then you move to the baby foods and probably close to one they get regular milk and regular food.
- Researcher:* How would you introduce new foods to your baby?
Participant: Like with cereal probably start off in the Bottle.

Physical Activity

- Researcher:* Do you think that physical activity with your infant is important for his/her development? Why?
Participant: Um, I spend a lot of physical time with her. We do a lot of things I think that they just need that like we do as adults or young adults.

Researcher: What types of things like being physically active with her what does it help?

Participant: I think bonding

Researcher: What types of activities have you learned about at NB that can help your baby with healthy physical development?

Participant: Reading, singing, talking, in audible

Infant Safety

Researcher: Can you tell me about child proofing in your home and what you expect will need to be done in order to keep your baby safe?

Participant: Um probably have the plugs on the outlets, um locks on the cabinet doors and gates on the stairs, and um not being in like a regular bed by themselves like a regular bed, the toilet stool keep the lid down cause I know older kids like to explore don't leave them in the tub by themselves.

Researcher: At what age will you begin childproofing?

Participant: Um I haven't started yet, but probably when she starts crawling.

Researcher: How do you make sure that your infant is safe while traveling by car?

Participant: Always have her car seat strapped in properly. I always try to get done an extra 10 to 15 minutes just to get it in the car correctly.

Sleep

Researcher: How does your baby sleep at night /naptime?

Participant: She naps a lot during the day and at night she goes to sleep at about 11 or 12 and sleep probably til 3 she'll wake up ready to feed and then she'll sleep till about 5:30 then she'll be ready to feed again.

Researcher: On restless nights how will you comfort her?

Participant: Usually she's just, she spoiled, normally I just hold her and let her lay with me she's fine. Or me and her dad will take turns with her so...In audible.

Researcher: How will you handle uncontrollable crying?

Participant: Just hold and cuddle her. Music she likes music or something to just distract her. Researcher: Different noises or lights something to distract her.

Researcher: Is she typically easy to calm?

Participant: She mostly just wants to be picked up.

Researcher: What types of bedtime rituals have you established with your baby?

Participant: Um, usually we have our after we eat dinner we sit around and watch TV for a

little while and around 9:00 I bathe her. Then I get her bags ready and we lay down close to 10:30.

Researcher: When you lay her down do you watch TV? What is the settling?

Participant: Normally I'll play music for her but the lights are out.

Cognitive (Thinking/Learning)

Researcher: Prior to enrolling in the New Beginnings Program did you think that talking and interacting with your infant would be important for his/her development?

- Participant: Um, I really didn't know that it was important for their development but, I just always saw people talking to babies and stuff but I just thought they were just talking to them I didn't know it actually had anything to do with their development until I got in the class.
- Researcher: Has that shed a lot of light on the subject?
- Participant: Yeah it has.
- Researcher: How do you feel now about positive interaction with your infant and s/her development?
- Participant: Um...I think it's very important. I mean before I would have done it that's just because you know other people do it but to know, it actually helps now.
- Researcher: Tell me about the types of activities you do with your child to increase their learning and sense development?
- Participant: Well I talk to her a lot and her dad talks to her a lot, and sings to her. But usually it's just talking and singing and then once a week we take her to the park and that's fun.
- Researcher: What do you do with her at the park?
- Participant: I have the strap on sling so I let her swing with me and just walk around and we try to go when it's close to the sunset and she smiles.
- Researcher: Do you see the expression on her face?
- Participant: Yes anything that has light she likes it. We also take her niece and nephew.

Socio Emotional

- Researcher: Tell me about what you've learned about temperaments and how you as a new parent will be flexible whether your baby is relaxed or laid back as opposed to being slow to warm (Explain to the participant) In audible...
- Researcher: How will you help your baby feel less anxiety as he or she grows when you have to leave /her with a caregiver for school or work?
- Participant: Probably just be there for every need so that she know that I'll always be there and I'll always be back.
- Researcher: How much do you think that the environment that you expose your child to will affect your baby's development in each of these areas?
- Participant: Um I think it will effect her a great deal I think k it will probably be some of the things that will make her as a person.
- Researcher: Do you feel that the environment that she's in is a pretty positive?
- Participant: Yes.
- Researcher: Overall, how has this program prepared you for the interaction you have with your child? ...
- Participant: I guess the main thing it's taught me is the positive things to help her with her development.

****END OF SECTION I****

Section II

REMINDER: Any information that you share in this interview that may indicate child abuse or neglect in relation to you or your child will cause the interview to stop and a report to be made to both the program coordinator [REDACTED] and the counselor onsite [REDACTED]. Additionally, a report will be filed with the child abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-522-3511 in connection with the States Department of Human Services.

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships can be extremely influential in the success and failures that make up daily life. The following set of questions is designed to find out what relationships you have established throughout your pregnancy. I would like to know how your previous relationships may have changed due to your pregnancy and how the parenting program you are currently enrolled in has helped or hindered existing relationships and have in some way had an impact on you as a new mother.

- Researcher: Tell me about the relationship you have with your father and mother.
 Participant: Um, me and my dad are really, really close. We're probably like I guess the way people usually expect a mother and daughter to be. Me and my mom we're, we're ok. We are decent to each other. But we don't have a strong relationship.
- Researcher: What do you think caused the breakdown in that relationship?
 Participant: Um, I guess cause our relationship had been like that since I was like 12 or 13. I guess some of it probably too could have been cause my mom worked a lot and my dad was there for us and we get along better.
- Researcher: Do you think the relationship with your mother grew apart when she found out that you were pregnant? Or do you think that had no impact on your relationship with her.
 Participant: Um it did after I had the baby because she um...helped out a lot with getting stuff for the baby, once I had the baby we started getting into it and I moved out and we got less close because she basically took my income tax checks to reimburse herself so ...
- Researcher: So there are a little bit of trust issues regarding what you thought was a gift from grandma?
 Participant: Yeah
- Researcher: Has your father always been supportive of you and has that relationship increased since you found out you were pregnant.
 Participant: I think it actually increase cause he was the first person I told and he was the one who took me to the doctor to find out. So I think it has increased.
- Researcher: Do you have any siblings?
 Participant: I have a 16 year old brother.
- Researcher: Did your relationship change at all with him when he found out you were pregnant?
 Participant: No. it stayed the same.
- Researcher: How much did your relationships change with members of your family when you became pregnant?

- Participant: Um, I guess with certain family members my relationship decreased just because they were talking about me behind my back.
- Researcher: Regarding your pregnancy?
- Participant: Shaking head yes.
- Researcher: How did that make you feel?
- Participant: I don't know I was upset.
- Researcher: Were you upset at what they were saying or just the fact they were saying it behind your back?
- Participant: Um, both.
- Researcher: You don't have to get graphic or detailed but what kind of things were they saying.
- Participant: Um basically, just saying I wasn't going to finish, I wasn't going to graduate, I wasn't going to go to college um some said I wasn't going to be a good mother and the relationship with my boyfriend wasn't going to work out. In audible
- Researcher: When you think about that time and the comments that were made how do you feel knowing now your situation and that he is very involved in your daughter's life how does that make you feel when you think of what they said?
- Participant: I just feel like they were wrong.
- Researcher: Do you have any extended family members you feel close to? Why do you feel close to them?
- Participant: I have a few cousins that I'm really close to I guess because they always give me good advice but they never were like you need to do this you need to do that they just gave me their opinions and they always supported me no matter what . Most of them went through the same thing I have so ...
- Researcher: Do you mean pregnancy?
- Participant: Un huh,,,
- Researcher: At a young age?
- Participant: Uh huh, and they all graduated and everything.
- Researcher: Was the Father of your child involved in your pregnancy?
- Participant: Yes
- Researcher: The full pregnancy?
- Participant: Yes
- Researcher: What did that involve?
- Participant: He just came around a lot and got a lot of things for her, I mean he went to a few Dr. appointments but he worked a lot to so he couldn't go to everyone so.
- Researcher: What was his reaction when you told him you were pregnant?
- Participant: He was excited cause he wanted a baby.
- Researcher: Is he a little older than you or a little younger or same age?
- Participant: He's the same
- Researcher: Is the father of your child involved in parenting your child now?
- Participant: Uh huh...he supports her, he's there with her every day so, pretty much he does everything.

- Researcher: Have you shared with him what you learned in class and if so how has he taken it?
- Participant: I was mostly talked about the relationship part because he has like a dozen nieces and nephews and so he knows the basics. He's glad to learn stuff.
- Researcher: How was he at the hospital?
- Participant: Worn out and excited.
- Researcher: There are statistics that say majority of children of fathers at a young age aren't really supportive or active in their Childs life. Being opposite of what the stereotypes say how does that make you feel?
- Participant: It makes me feel happy and even though that's what the statistics say, I know a lot of guys that are younger they might not be with the girl but they are always with their child.
- Researcher: In what ways do you think your daughter will benefit from having her dad in the picture?
- Participant: Just having someone else to talk to someone that's always going to be there to help her you know someone to talk to when mama can't understand she has daddy to go to.
- Researcher: What were your friend's reactions when they find out that you were pregnant?
- Participant: Most of them were happy and excited and supported me...But like the guys were like are you going to get an abortion? You should get an abortion.
- Researcher: Really, all the guys?
- Participant: Most of them.
- Researcher: Why do you think that was their first suggestion?
- Participant: Well I know that some of them had gotten girls pregnant and they wanted the girl to get an abortion because they didn't want that responsibility.
- Researcher: Did they?
- Participant: Uh huh.
- Researcher: When you say your female friends were excited did they say what they were excited about?
- Participant: I think it was just the baby...cause now all of them are pregnant.
- Researcher: Are they 18 as well?
- Participant: 18-19
- Researcher: When the girlfriends told you they were excited and the guy friends told you they thought you should have an abortion based on their experiences how did this make you feel?
- Participant: Um it really didn't have an effect on me because I had my mind made up.
- Researcher: How are you feeling emotionally with all of these changes?
- Participant: Um, I pretty much kind of expected that so...
- Researcher: So when you found out you were pregnant and thinking about relationship you expected that relationships would change?
- Participant: Uh huh...
- Researcher: Did they change the way that you expected them to?
- Participant: Yeah somewhat, yeah cause me and my dad have always been close and me and my mom haven't been as close so I expected those changes.

- Researcher: How are you feeling physically?
Participant: I'm fine with this physical; I just want to beat this stomach (laughing) that's about it.
- Researcher: Do you have a church support system?
Participant: Yeah.
- Researcher: What kind of support do you receive through any church programs?
Participant: Um they just always encourage me. Most of them are older ladies and they had children when they were younger than me. They were at my baby shower so they helped out with the baby too.
- Researcher: Do they continue to be a support system?
Participant: Uh huh, yes they do.
- Researcher: Is this a church you grew up going to?
Participant: Yes I grew up going there.
- Researcher: Tell me in your opinion how the New Beginnings program has helped you in building meaningful relationships that can create a strong support system for you and your child?
Participant: I guess it's just taught me other ways other methods of bonding with my child.
Um small things that count. You know with the baby. Like with the breastfeeding, you just think about the nutrition you don't think that it actually have that time with your baby to have some bonding and cuddling time with your baby.
- Researcher: So it's increased your relationship through teaching different methods of bonding with your child and small things even breast feeding creates an additional sense of bonding?
Participant: Uh huh
- Researcher: Ok what about has it helped you to learn different techniques about building future relationships with friends, or the community or different programs that help to build support systems?
Participant: Yeah it has, it teaches you thing that you should do to get along with others.

GOALS, EDUCATION/CAREER, RELATIONSHIP, PARENTING, CHILD

Many times the goals that you had set prior to pregnancy don't feel realistic to you after you find out your pregnant and there is a new set of priorities. The following questions are designed to find out what goals you had set for yourself prior to pregnancy, and how those goals have changed or been replaced by new goals. Also, how your plans for each day has changed with pregnancy or birth or your child. Another portion of this sections questions are to look at the goals you have for your child as well as the relationships that your will establish as a new parent.

Prior to pregnancy-

Researcher: What did an average day look like for you?

Participant: Average day would be go to school in the morning after school go home nap work until 10 come home eat dinner talk with my boy friend and go to sleep.

Researcher: Where did you see yourself in terms of your future goals?

Participant: Um, the only thing that really changed is that I was thinking about going into the military or going to an out of state college.

Researcher: What state?

Participant: Atlanta

Researcher: Prior to pregnancy what is the biggest thing that you miss doing that you were able to do then that is not as easy to do now.

Participant: Sleep

Researcher: What about freedom?

Participant: Probably just doing things with my boyfriend at the spur of the moment. Just going and doing something.

During pregnancy-

Researcher: Explain how your days changed.

Participant: Went to school, slept a little bit during school. I still worked normally. I would still have conversations in the evening but I was really worn out.

Researcher: Was there a significant change in the way your body was feeling and your emotions were feeling?

Participant: I was tired just really sensitive feelings.

Researcher: Once you became pregnant where did you see yourself in terms of school and family goals?

Participant: I still wanted to go to college so I picked a school where I could do online courses and be home with the baby and still do the career that I wanted to and um far as the military I don 't know cause of the 6 week training and I would have to leave her.

Researcher: What is the career path that you've started down?

Participant: Uh...Psychology.

Researcher: Have you already started applying or colleges?

Participant: Inaudible

Researcher: Do you currently work?

Participant: Not right now but next week probably

Researcher: Did you work after the baby was born?

Participant: No I was off. I wanted to return but my boyfriend wanted me to stay home for the first year.

Researcher: That is really nice.

Researcher: Who watches your baby when you work?

Participant: My boyfriend's sister she works in a day care so she would go to day care with her.

Researcher: Have you looked in on the day care?

Participant: No

Researcher: Do you have any concerns about her safety?

- Participant: I would rather just have her there with me but. I feel safe that it is a family member. I also have another option, a lady who attends church with me and she has a small daycare. We'll have to plan out our work schedules where we could be there with her.
- Researcher: What do you want in life for your child?
- Participant: I want her to be able to make the right decisions for herself, and just to have a decent life, to have the opportunity to go to an out of state college if she wants to or get as many scholarships as she can or be in as many sports as she wants to--you know have a nice family, I prefer for her to wait to have a child at least until after high school or wait until she's married or something like that.
- Researcher: What do you want in life for yourself?
- Participant: I want to be able to have my career and to be a good mother, and eventually get married. I would like to wait at least two years to have another child...I want a boy.
- Researcher: Do you have any regrets about getting pregnant?
- Participant: I guess just the opportunities for college. 'cause I really wanted to go out of state and I actually got a scholarship too but ...it was a small scholarship but still.
- Researcher: What types of relationships do you consider valuable?
- Participant: Um, family relationships, relationships with your spouse or significant other, and relationship with your child.
- Researcher: Why are they a value to you ?
- Participant: Family is for support, they are there to help you with everything a child you just need a close relationship with your child because you're the person who is responsible for them and then religion have that keep going In audible
- Researcher: What goals have you set for yourself at this point in your life?
- Participant: Um right now it's just about getting prepared. Start saving for a house and being a good mother. After this class jus spend time with my daughter
- Researcher: Do you feel that these goals are realistic?
- Participant: Uh huh.
- Researcher: How will you go about achieving these goals?
- Participant: Um, well to be able to spend more time with my daughter I'm going to do the online classes which I'll be home more. In audible
- Researcher: On the whole, how stressful did you see your life being with a young baby and perhaps having other things to deal with?
- Participant: Um, at the beginning it was really stressful because I was at home with my mom so basically I did everything by myself but now it's easier because her dad's there -he helps out a lot.
- Researcher: Overall, how has New Beginnings helped you in setting goals for yourself and your child and in the relationships you hope to establish or may have already established?
- Participant: It actually keeps us going and keeps us motivated to know that we can even though we do have children, we can accomplish our goals and our dreams. And it taught us ways to keep good relationships with co workers

and things to help you keep your job. Have a positive attitude don't gossip and to be professionals.

General closing questions

Researcher: What advice would you give another pregnant/parenting teen?

Participant: Um, just I guess to stick with her goals and don't let other people discourage her.

Researcher: In what way(s) has this program helped you the most?

Participant: Um, I guess just it helps with self esteem and motivation.

Researcher: If the program was more than a semester would you enroll again?

Participant: I would.

Researcher: Why?

Participant: Just because we have really good instructors and we can actually talk to them about our problems and they just encourage us and help us with our work as much as we need them to. That's what I like.

Researcher: How was the class relationship?

Participant: At the beginning we were all shy and now were all really close.

Researcher: Do you see the relationships and friendships that you've made in the class continuing after the class?

Participant: Some

Researcher: Have you been provided a referral to other parent education classes or programs?

Participant: Yes, I know some at OU and one was a birthing class. I would say probably 2-3.

Researcher: Are you familiar with Family Expectations?

Participant: Yes.

Researcher: Will you attend any of their meetings?

Participant: I have a lady who's been talking with me about it.

Researcher: Will you be participating in any of them?

Participant: I might

Researcher: Will you seek out additional parent education programs?

Participant: I might -I will probably go more e with stuff for family and me and my daughter.

Researcher: In what ways could this program work better for you?

Participant: Making it longer than a semester.

Researcher: Would you prefer earlier on in you pregnancy or after your daughter was born

Participant: Earlier on in the pregnancy.

Researcher: What do you think you could have gained?

Participant: Probably just a lot of stuff over all because there is just so much stuff

Researcher: Is there anything that you feel is important for me to know about being pregnant teen that you felt I missed exploring?

Participant: I don't think so.

End of Transcript