

Developing Well

Teenage Pregnancy

Revised: 21/10/2016

Introduction


















Most teenage pregnancies are unplanned and around half end in an abortion. As well as it being an avoidable experience for the young woman, abortions represent an avoidable cost to the NHS. While for some young women having a child when young can represent a positive turning point in their lives, for many more teenagers bringing up a child is extremely difficult resulting in poor outcomes for both the teenage parent and the child, in terms of the baby's health, the mother's emotional health and well-being and the likelihood of both the parent and child living in long-term poverty.

Research evidence, particularly from longitudinal studies, shows that teenage pregnancy is associated with poorer outcomes for both young parents and their children. Teenage mothers are less likely to finish their education, are more likely to bring up their child alone and in poverty and have a higher risk of poor mental health than older mothers. Infant mortality rates for babies born to teenage mothers are around 60% higher than for babies born to older mothers. The children of teenage mothers have an increased risk of living in poverty and poor quality housing and are more likely to have accidents and behavioural problems.

What do we know?

Rate of teenage conceptions per 1000 females aged 15

Recent trend: 

Period		Count	Value	Lower CI	Upper CI	South East	England
1998		96	31.0	25.1	37.9	37.8	46.6
1999		103	33.4	27.2	40.5	35.9	44.8
2000		83	27.6	22.0	34.2	36.0	43.6
2001		84	28.1	22.4	34.8	35.0	42.5
2002		79	26.7	21.2	33.3	34.6	42.8
2003		71	23.9	18.7	30.2	33.2	42.1
2004		89	29.2	23.5	35.9	33.5	41.6
2005		86	27.1	21.7	33.5	34.4	41.4
2006		81	25.3	20.1	31.5	33.4	40.6
2007		70	22.0	17.1	27.7	33.0	41.4
2008		90	28.1	22.6	34.6	33.0	39.7
2009		77	24.4	19.2	30.5	29.9	37.1
2010		71	22.2	17.3	28.0	28.0	34.2
2011		85	27.0	21.6	33.4	26.1	30.7
2012		61	19.7	15.1	25.3	23.2	27.7
2013		57	18.5	14.0	23.9	20.5	24.3
2014		62	19.7	15.1	25.3	18.8	22.8

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

In West Berkshire in 2014 there were 62 conceptions to teenage mothers under 18, a rate of 19.7 per 1000 females aged 15-17. This is similar to the South East rate of 18.8 and the national rate of 22.8 per 1000. The rate has dropped over time from 31 per 1000 in 1998. This is against a backdrop of a national fall in this time period.

In 2014, there were 21 births to women aged under 18 in West Berkshire, which was a rate of 6.7 per 1,000 female population (aged 15-17). This was similar to the England rate of 6.7 per 1,000 population.

45% of under 18 conceptions led to an abortion in West Berkshire, compared to 51% nationally.

In 2014, there were an estimated 8 conceptions to women aged under 16 in West Berkshire. This was a rate of 4.6 per 1,000 female population (aged 13-15), which was similar to the England rate of 4.4 per 1,000 population.

What is the data telling us?

As stated, the trend is for a decrease in the figures nationally. In West Berkshire teenage pregnancies have fluctuated over the last decade but the trend has been down overall. The numbers are relatively small and a small change in numbers can alter the percentage rate significantly and thus caution needs to be advised in analysing these figures.

Recommendations for consideration

Young people need good, accessible sexual health services and there has been a history in West Berkshire of commissioning services in different settings to meet the sexual health needs of our teenagers. Services and support currently available are listed in the table below.

More information needs to be available to schools, youth centres and other venues where young people meet, to make them aware of the choices related to sexual health and wellbeing.

Prevention messages need to be consistent and regularly updated to provide young people with the most up to date information they need about services and support. Better use of new technologies is an area that needs to be explored to empower young people to access online help and services.

Other services and partner organisations

School Nurses provide support and advice on sexual health matters in all our state secondary schools. There are a growing number of Health Champions in schools who have been trained up to provide advice and support to their peers about health in general, including sexual health issues.

Health Points exist specifically for young people at Newbury College and the Waterside Centre in Newbury, which is also the base for the C-Card Scheme (a

condom distribution scheme that offers advice on contraception and a pregnancy advice service).

West Berkshire Community Hospital offers regular sexual health clinics, including contraceptive services, to young people on Saturday mornings and Monday and Thursday evenings.

A dedicated sexual health website exists across Berkshire providing access to information, services and contacts – [Safe Sex Berkshire](#)

A dedicated sexual health outreach nurse with a remit to work with young people provides one to one support on a case by case basis. This is provided through the Royal Berkshire Hospital as part of the commissioned sexual health service in West Berkshire.

Community Pharmacies provide Emergency Hormonal Contraception (the ‘morning-after pill’) free of charge to young women throughout the district, offering advice and guidance regarding contraceptive methods.

Long Acting Reversible Contraception (both IUDs and implants) are available in all our GP practices

Trust House offers free confidential counselling and support for vulnerable young people who have suffered sexual abuse, trauma or victimization. (tel 01189 584 033)

A free termination of pregnancy service is available for young women who are seeking a termination. The provider is BPAS (British Pregnancy Advisory Service) and a clinic is available in Reading (03457 304030)

Thames Valley Positive Support (TVPS) provides a free HIV on-line testing service for concerned young people on the Safe Sex Berkshire website. [Safe Sex Berkshire](#)

Support for Teenage mothers: A variety of services and support are available in West Berkshire for young women who choose to give birth. The Health Visiting Service, commissioned by the Local Authority will be informed by the Midwifery Service of all under age pregnancies proceeding to term. They will then ensure that targeted support is given to the young mother and family.

Across West Berkshire there are a number of Family Hubs (formerly Children’s Centres) that offer group sessions, information and advice to parents with pre-school children

National and local strategies

[Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Beyond 2010](#)

Other chapters you might be interested in

Access to the Antenatal Pathway
Antenatal and Newborn Screening

West Berkshire Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Breastfeeding

Child Development Check for ages 2 to 2 and a half years

Childhood Immunisation

Maternal Mental Health

Emotional Health and Wellbeing of Children

Sexual Health and HIV

If you have any questions about this chapter, please contact Public Health and Wellbeing Team on publichealthandwellbeing@westberks.gov.uk or 01635 503437