

Chapter 10:

What Does it Take to Be a Good Parent?

Objectives:

- ✓ To explore personal values and attitudes about parenthood
- ✓ To learn about the challenges teenage parents face
- ✓ To identify the qualities and resources needed for parenthood
- ✓ To examine the financial costs of caring for an infant
- ✓ To evaluate personal readiness for parenthood

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Introduction to Parenthood

Materials: Newsprint and markers or board and chalk; Leader's Resource, "Perspectives on Parenting"

Time: 20-30 minutes

Planning Notes:

- ✓ Choose four to six statements from the Leader's Resource or write your own.

Purpose:	To explore values and attitudes related to parenting
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Procedure:

1. Write the following sentence on newsprint or the board:
"To be a good parent means..."
2. Ask volunteers to complete the sentence. List, under the sentence, the key words they use.
3. Tell the group that some of the most important life decisions they will make are: (1) whether or not to become a parent, (2) who to become parents with and (3) when to have a child or children. Explain that the next few activities will help them think about parenting.
4. Go over instructions for this activity:
 - Think about each statement I read, then vote. Use:
 - Thumbs up to agree
 - Thumbs down to disagree
 - Folded arms to show you're not sure
 - After each statement, two or three volunteers will share the reasons for their vote.
 - There are no right or wrong answers. The purpose of this activity is to hear different opinions about parenting and to think about what **you** believe.
5. Read the statements one at a time and ask the group to vote on each. Call on teens to share their reasons. Be sure to ask for responses from some who agreed, some who disagreed and some who were unsure. Give additional information when appropriate.
6. Read the statements you have time for, conclude the activity using the Discussion Points.

Discussion Points:

1. What messages did you learn about parenting from your family?
2. Can you give an example of a belief or practice related to parenting that is particularly important in your home or culture?
3. Would you support a law that required people to take courses and pass an exam before they could become parents? Why or why not?

Perspectives on Parenting

1. Everyone should be required to have parenting instruction.
2. Without children, a woman will never feel fulfilled.
3. Parenting is 90 percent love and 10 percent luck.
4. People who decide not to have children are selfish.
5. Women have an instinct about parenting that men do not have.
6. Parenting is the biggest responsibility a person can have.
7. Every man needs a child to carry on his name.
8. Parenting eats up your time, energy and money.
9. Nothing ruins a relationship faster than having children.
10. Being a parent is easier when you're young.
11. Children will keep you from reaching your goals.
12. There are some people who should never be allowed to be parents.

Video: Teenage Parents

Materials: Video on teenage parenting; VCR and monitor (extension cord, if necessary); newsprint and markers or board and chalk

Time: 45-55 minutes

Planning Notes:

Purpose:	To understand what life is like for a teenage parent
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- ✓ Choose a video on adolescent parenting that is appropriate for your group. It should be current, present a balanced picture of the options available to teens and have characters who reflect the racial/ethnic mix of your group. Avoid choosing a video that only presents pregnant and/or parenting teens from one racial or ethnic group; that view may reinforce stereotypes. Several videos you may wish to preview are listed below. Consult the list of video distributors for addresses and telephone numbers.
- **Four Pregnant Teenagers: Four Different Decisions**, (Sunburst Communications, 51 minutes, 1987, \$199.00) Teens weigh the emotional, ethical and financial problems associated with the four options of adolescent pregnancy: adoption, marriage, single parenthood and abortion.
- **Grounded for Life: Teen Pregnancy**, (Kidsrights, 40 minutes, 1988, \$89.00) Interviews with teen mothers illustrate the risks, motivations and thought processes associated with unplanned teen pregnancy; presents the economic and emotional hardships teen parents face.
- **Decisions: Teens, Sex and Pregnancy**, (Kidsrights, 26 minutes, 1986, \$99.95) A multicultural documentary of the decisions three mothers made after they learned they were pregnant; open discussions provide insight for young men and women about the consequences of sexual behavior.
- **Rockabye: Understanding the Implications of Teenage Pregnancy**, (ETR Associates, 17 minutes, 1989, \$95.00) Six teenagers struggle with relationships and responsibilities, peer pressure, strong emotions and self-image; gives teens a better understanding of the adverse effects of teen pregnancy, through the eyes of teen men and women.
- **The Job of Your Life: The Reality of Teen Parenthood**, (HRM Video, 15 minutes, 1992, \$119.00) An unusual presentation of a dream sequence in which a young woman applies for the "job" of being a parent and gets more than she bargained for; teen parents relate how raising a child has taken away their freedom and created stress, which they were not prepared for.
- ✓ Contact your local health department, family planning program or high school to see if they have any of the videos listed above or others on adolescent parenting.
- ✓ Preview the video you choose so you will be prepared for any comments and/or questions from participants.
- ✓ Remember, one or more teens in your program may already be pregnant and/or a parent. Be sensitive to those teens' feelings and needs as you introduce and discuss the video. Point out that while **most** adolescent parents experience more difficulty than adult parents, there are exceptions.
- ✓ Call your local social services or human resources department to find out about teens' eligibility for welfare assistance programs. You will need information on payments through AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and on other programs for teen parents.

Adapted with permission from *Teen Outreach: Youth Development Through Service and Learning*, Association of Junior Leagues International, New York, N.Y., in press.

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- ✓ Investigate the legal rights and responsibilities of an unmarried teenage father in your state. Laws regarding the financial obligations of teen fathers and their parent(s) vary from state to state and have changed dramatically in recent years. Be sure to obtain up-to-date information.
 - ✓ Create a poster of the video characters and their roles, for use in Step 2.

Procedure:

1. Tell the group that teenage pregnancy and parenting is not easy. In this session they will learn more about it by watching a video.
2. Display the character poster that lists names and roles from the video. Highlight parts of the video for teens to focus on, if appropriate.
3. Show the video, then conclude the activity using the Discussion Points and adding other questions specifically related to the video.

Discussion Points:

1. Was this video realistic? Please explain.
2. What are the most positive aspects of teen parenting? The negative?
3. How is parenting as a teenager different from parenting as an adult?
4. Emphasize any of the following points that were not brought out in the video:
 - Teen parents have a difficult time completing high school or continuing on to college.
 - Parenting takes time away from other interests and activities.
 - Pregnant teens and their children have more medical problems than adult women.
 - Because their education is interrupted, teen mothers and fathers have trouble finding good jobs and many need public assistance to raise their child.
 - Welfare reform may take away some of the financial support available to young mothers and their children.
 - Teen fathers often have few rights regarding their child and may have new financial responsibilities.
5. If you wanted to convince a friend not to become a teen parent, what would be your strongest argument?

Wanted: a Job as a Parent

Materials: Newsprint and markers or board and chalk; sample employment ads from the newspaper

Time: 30-40 minutes

Procedure:

Purpose:

To identify the qualities and resources needed for parenthood

1. Tell participants to think about what parenthood requires. Explain that they will write "help wanted ads" for the job of being a parent.
2. Distribute employment ads from the classified section. Ask if anyone has read ads like this before. What information do the ads give? List teens' responses on newsprint or the board and supplement with the list below:
 - Education and skills required
 - Experience needed
 - Familiarity operating equipment or machinery
 - Other resources, such as a driver's license
 - Work hours
 - Salary and benefits
3. Ask participants what basic requirements employers want when they are hiring for entry-level jobs (for example, high school diploma, a certain age, skills, experience). After teens respond, cite examples from several classified ads to help the group develop more understanding of what employers often require.
4. Go over instructions for the activity:
 - Imagine you work in an employment office and have an opening for the parents of a six-month-old infant.
 - Working in small groups, write a classified ad for the position. Include all the qualities and characteristics a job applicant should have. Also include the benefits of the job.
 - Write your ad on newsprint or the board when you are finished.
5. Allow 10-15 minutes for groups to work on their "want ads." When time is up, examine the posted ads as a group and together identify the essential qualities that a parent must have. List those on newsprint and keep them for later activities.
6. Conclude the activity using the Discussion Points.

Discussion Points:

1. Do you know anyone who qualifies for the job of parent, as you have advertised it?
2. Can a person get "fired" as a parent? How does that happen? (Answers include: Children can be taken away from neglectful or abusive parents; a parent can lose contact with her or his child through divorce, especially if the other parent moves away.)
3. What equipment does a parent need to operate? (Answers include: collapsing stroller, car seat, crib sides, bottle sterilizer, vaporizer, rectal thermometer, even diapers and clothing.)
4. How does parenting change as children grow older?
5. Does work experience as a parent help you get any other jobs? If so, which ones?

Are They Ready for Parenthood?

Materials: Leader's Resource, "Suggested Questions for Parent Interview;" two copies of the handout, "Roles for Maggie and Vaughn"

Time: 40-50 minutes

Planning Notes:

- ✓ Identify a boy and girl in your group who would do a good job playing the role of prospective parents. They should be articulate and dynamic. Ask them if they will volunteer.

Purpose: To evaluate the readiness of teenagers for parenthood

- ✓ Set up two chairs for the "teenagers," facing three chairs for the "caseworkers."

Procedure:

1. Explain that the group will observe two imaginary teenagers applying for the job of "parents."
2. Tell participants to pretend to be caseworkers at an imaginary Child Development Office. There, trained child development specialists carefully monitor parenting jobs. The year is 2020 and because so many children had such a tough time back in the last century, people must now apply for the job of "parent" before they can even start a pregnancy. The caseworkers' job is to decide who is ready, so every child starts life with qualified parents.
3. Explain that there are two imaginary teens, Maggie and Vaughn, who want to become parents. Give instructions for what you want the group to do:
 - Remember that **parenthood is one of the most important jobs**, even in 2020.
 - Think about the knowledge and skills parents need to care for a child so they can grow up in a healthy, positive environment.
 - Imagine that you are about to interview Maggie and Vaughn, two young people who want permission to start a family. What questions will you ask these prospective parents?
4. Have teens suggest questions and list them on newsprint or the board. Supplement the list with any additional questions from the Leader's Resource, then ask teens to choose nine essential questions. Put checkmarks beside those questions.
5. Ask five volunteers to role-play the interview with Maggie and Vaughn. (If you already have participants as "parents," recruit three "caseworkers".)
6. Review the roles:
 - Maggie — a 16-year-old girl in the 10th grade who loves babies
 - Vaughn — a 17-year-old boy in the 11th grade who thinks that fatherhood proves his manhood
 - three caseworkers — specialists in child development who care about the quality of care parents provide for their children

Adapted with permission from **Teen Outreach: Youth Development Through Service and Learning**, Association of Junior Leagues International, New York, N.Y., 1995.

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7. Give “Maggie” and “Vaughn” the handout that describes their characters. Ask them to take a few minutes to plan their roles. Tell the caseworkers that their job is to be polite and kind, but also to ask tough questions and be very thorough. Each caseworker can ask three of the checked questions in the interview.
 8. Invite “Maggie” and “Vaughn” back into the room and give them directions for their roles:
 - Be enthusiastic: you are very much in love and you really want to have a child.
 - Remember you are both still in high school and answer any questions appropriately.
 - Use the facts on your handouts to help you.
 9. Allow questions from the caseworkers for 10 minutes. Then give other participants a chance to ask any follow-up questions. At the end of the time, ask the caseworkers to decide — are Maggie and Vaughn qualified to become parents at this time? (The answer should be **no**, the teen couple is not qualified.) If yes, help the caseworkers revisit the situation until they agree that, at this time, there are too many reasons stacked against parenthood for Maggie and Vaughn. Go over the potential problems below:
 - Although Maggie and Vaughn seem to have a good relationship now, they are young and inexperienced in love. Even if they marry, their relationship might end and then their child would not have the benefit of two parents.
 - Neither teenager has much income. It takes a lot of money to support a child.
 - Neither teenager lives in housing that could easily accommodate a couple and their baby. Their small incomes are not adequate for getting their own place.
 - Neither teenager has finished high school or has a clear vocational goal. Becoming a parent might mean not being able to finish school or pursue education or training necessary for rewarding employment. That would **not** provide financial security for the child — in the present or the future.
 - It is unclear whether family members would be able to provide any additional financial support, child care and so on. Teen parents have much more success with parenting when they have support from their families or other adults.
 10. Conclude the activity using the Discussion Points.

Optional Activity:

Ask teens to develop a questionnaire and interview teenage parents they know. They should encourage the young parents they interview to talk about how they are happy with their decision, how the experience is challenging. Encourage them to talk to a variety of teen parents, those who have dropped out of school, stayed in school, live alone on AFDC, live with a parent, live with a partner, are completing a GED and so on.

Discussion Points:

1. What does the couple need to learn or to do before they can be good parents? (Answers include: Spend more time together to be sure their relationship is a strong one; finish their education and/or get specific training for meaningful employment; make sure at least one of them has a good-paying, secure job; take some parenting classes so they have more information about child development and early infant care.)
2. Is it important for parents to be qualified for the job?
3. Is it important for a child to have two parents? Why or why not?

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4. If Maggie and Vaughn were actual teenagers, would they really be asking to become parents? How do most teenagers become parents? (Answer: They become parents as the result of a pregnancy they say is accidental and unplanned.)
 5. What support do teen parents need to meet their educational and vocational goals?
 6. Do you know a teen couple that is qualified to be parents now? Please describe their special qualifications.
 7. With all the reasons to wait to have a child, why do so many teenagers become parents anyway? (Answers include: They do not believe a teen girl is at risk of becoming pregnant every time she has vaginal intercourse; they do not plan to have sexual intercourse, it just happens; they do not use contraception each time they have sexual intercourse; they want a child.)
 8. Should couples have to seek approval before they could become parents?

Suggested Questions for Parent Interview

1. What are your qualifications?
 - ✓ How much education do you have?
 - ✓ What work experience do you have?
 - ✓ How much money do you earn?
 - ✓ Do you have any savings?
 - ✓ Between school and work, how much free time do you have?
 - ✓ Where do you plan to live with a baby? How much space is there?
2. How will having a baby affect your relationship with each other?
3. Why do you want to be parents at this time in your lives?
4. Do you have any experience with babies and young children. Are you patient with fussing, messy or misbehaving children?
5. What kind of help can you expect from parents, relatives and friends? Who could help out with emergencies, bills or babysitting?
6. What would be the best thing about being a parent? The most difficult?
7. What job or career do you want in the future? How would having a baby now affect your goals?
8. What are your plans for continuing school after the baby is born?
9. How do your parents feel about becoming grandparents now?
10. Would becoming a parent now affect your relationships with your friends?

Roles for Maggie and Vaughn

Maggie: You are 16-years-old and in 10th grade. You live with your parents and grandmother in a two-bedroom apartment. You love children and have spent a lot of time lately with your older sister and her baby daughter. You have been dating Vaughn for over a year and you really love him. You work part-time in a fast food restaurant on the weekend, where you earn \$4.75 an hour. You think your mom would help with a baby, but you have not talked about it with her.

Vaughn: You are 17-years-old and in the 11th grade. You live with your father in a one-bedroom apartment. He is gone a lot of the time because of his job. You are crazy about Maggie and think she would make a perfect mother. You think the two of you could do an excellent job of raising a baby. You want to hurry and grow up so you can get started with your life, and you feel being a father would make you more mature. You work part-time at a gas station in the evenings and on Saturdays, but you are still not sure what career you want. You are good at fixing cars, but you have never liked reading much. You are willing to work really hard to earn money and plan to stay in school if you get permission to have a baby. Maggie's parents like you a lot.

Flour Sack Babies

Purpose: To learn about being a parent through a simulated firsthand experience

Materials: Ten-pound sack of flour for each participant; newsprint and markers or board and chalk; materials for decorating flour sacks (markers, crayons, glue, bits of yarn and ribbon, buttons, scraps of fabric and so on); the handout, "Rules of Baby Care"

Purpose: To learn about being a parent through a simulated firsthand experience

Time: Session 1: 20-30 minutes;
Session 2: 40-50 minutes

Planning Notes:

- ✓ Let school or agency staff know this activity is taking place. Teens will be carrying flour sack babies while they participate in other activities or classes.
- ✓ This activity requires five to seven days to be effective. Decide upon your timeframe so you can inform your group.
- ✓ Try to get the flour sacks donated from a local store. If that is not possible, and cost is an issue, a bag of sand or salt could be substituted. Eggs have also been used in activities like this, but they lack the weight of a real baby.

Procedure:

1. Tell the group this activity will simulate "firsthand experience" with parenting.
2. Go over instructions for the activity:
 - Each of you will receive a 10-pound sack of flour to represent your "baby." You can decorate your baby and dress her or him any way you wish.
 - Flip a coin to determine whether your baby is a boy or girl: heads equals female and tails equals male. The sex of a real baby is determined by genes carried in the father's sperm cells, and the chances are about equal of having a male or female.
 - Find a cloth to serve as a blanket. Your baby should always be wrapped for warmth, since these babies are all very young.
 - Follow all the rules of good baby care, as outlined on your handout. (Distribute the handout, "Rules of Baby Care.")
3. Tell the teens how many days they will be responsible for their flour sack babies, then, before ending the session, allow them about 15 minutes to decorate their babies.

Session 2

1. After the assigned period of time is over, bring the group back together and conclude the activity using the Discussion Points.

Discussion Points:

1. What was it like taking care of this baby all the time?
2. What significant things about parenting a real infant did you **not** have to deal with? (Answers include: crying, diapering, illness, bathing, sleepless nights and so on.)
3. How was your normal routine changed by this parenting experience?

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4. If you had a real baby, would you be willing to give up some of your social activities? Would you have a choice?
 5. What things would you have needed and/or wanted to buy for your baby if it were real? Would you have had the money?
 6. If you used babysitters to look after your baby, how much money did you spend/would you have spent?
 7. All of these flour-sack babies were assumed to be healthy. How would your life have been different if your "baby" had been born with a disability?
 8. How would a baby affect your family? A relationship with a romantic partner? Your friendships?
 9. How would a baby affect your educational plans? Would you be able to continue in school or hold a job and be a parent?
 10. Do you plan to have a baby one day? If so, at what age would you like to become a parent?

Rules of Baby Care

1. Keep your baby with you at all times, 24 hours a day. If you must leave your baby for any reason, you have to get a babysitter. Babysitters earn \$3.00-4.00 per hour or more when caring for an infant, so keep a record of what your babysitting services cost you.
2. Keep the baby warm, dry and protected from harm at all times. Don't ever leave it unattended, or put it in the trunk of a car or your school locker. Treat the flour sack like a real infant: hold it carefully, rock it occasionally, talk and sing to it.
3. Every four hours (from approximately 7 a.m. till 9 or 10 p.m.) stop and spend 15 minutes "feeding" the baby. (You are lucky that a flour sack baby will **not** cry and wake you up during the night for additional feedings.)
4. Find a safe place for your baby to sleep in your home. In a quiet place, create a comfortable bed that the baby cannot roll off of.
5. If your flour sack rips, you must research medical care for your baby. Approximately what would a doctor's visit and stitches cost?
6. If you lose your baby, you could be charged with child abuse. Research the penalties for a parent whose child is injured or dies from neglect or abuse.

The Costs of Parenting

Materials: Copies of the handout, "Costs of Baby's First Year;" Leader's Resource, "Baby's First Year"

Time: Session 1: 15-20 minutes; Session 2: 40-50 minutes

Planning Notes:

- ✓ Review the Leader's Resource, "Baby's First Year," to see if the costs listed are realistic for your community.

Purpose:	To calculate the costs of raising a child today
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Procedure:

Session 1

1. Ask the group what they think it costs to raise a baby for its first year. Discuss for a few minutes, then introduce the activity as a research project to find out what the real costs are.
2. Divide teens into three teams, distribute the handouts, and review instructions.
- In teams, find the **average cost** of the items on the handout. Use as many resources as you need to. You may want to consult any of the following:
 - Catalogs
 - Parents, friends and other adults
 - Department and baby stores, grocery stores and pharmacies
 - A local hospital or a pediatrician's office
 - A child care center
 - Fill out the handout and calculate the total cost of raising a baby in its first year.
 - Be prepared to share your results with the other teams at the next session.

Session 2

1. Ask teams to present their findings on about one-third of the items on the handout. After each presentation, the other teams can ask questions or challenge the findings.
2. After teams have presented, conclude the activity using the Discussion Points.

Discussion Points:

1. Is the cost of raising a baby in the first year higher or lower than you guessed?
2. What cost the most? What other items would **you** like to purchase if you were a new parent? How much would those items add to the overall cost?
3. What salary would you need?
4. If a teen parent had to depend on a monthly public assistance check, would that affect what she or he could provide for a child?
5. Are there ways to reduce costs? Would you buy clothes, furniture, and other items for your baby at a second hand or thrift shop?
6. If you or your girlfriend were pregnant now, who would be able to help you with the financial burdens of parenthood?

Baby's First Year

Mother's Medical Expenses

Doctor's fees **\$1,625**

Hospital room for three days **\$3,095**

Anesthesia **\$4,225**

The total hospital bill of \$7,315 includes a three-day stay in a semi-private room and fees for the labor room, delivery room, anesthetist, nursery and routine nursing care. A Caesarian delivery costs \$15,642 and requires a five-day stay in the hospital.

Many people have some form of health insurance, but mothers under 18 are not often covered for maternity benefits. Insurance policies vary: some pay most of the costs of a delivery, others pay only between one-third and one-half.

A mother can lower expenses by having a midwife or a resident in a local teaching hospital deliver the baby, staying in a maternity ward instead of a semi-private room, and/or attending a birthing clinic or center that sets fees according to the mother's ability to pay.

Younger teens and teens who have not received adequate prenatal care may have **increased risk for complications** during their pregnancies and deliveries. If complications do develop, costs will be much higher for both mother and baby.

Baby's Medical Expenses

Six well-baby care visits **\$360**

Immunizations (shots) **\$76**

These costs assume the baby is well and needs no extra visits to the doctor or pharmacy. Some public clinics provide free or low-cost services and immunizations.

Diapers

Disposable diapers for 12 months **\$655**

Diaper service for 12 months **\$545**

Watching for sales and shopping for diapers in a discount store can save some money.

Baby's Food

Formula and food, if mother does not breastfeed **\$1,500**

Food only, if mother breastfeeds baby **\$240**

Although babies do not eat much, they eat often. The healthiest, least expensive way to feed the baby is by breastfeeding exclusively for the first four to six months, with gradual supplementation of cereal and afterwards. Young mothers who must return to school and/or work can still breastfeed but will need support and advice. The La Leche League can advise young mothers about breastfeeding in general, and about specific problems, like combining breastfeeding with a job. Many public health departments provide free supplemental infant foods, including infant formula, to mothers who meet low-income qualifications.

Baby's Clothing

5 changes of clothing for newborn to 3 mos. **\$50**

5 changes of clothing for infant 6 mos. **\$50**

5 changes of clothing for infant 9 mos. **\$80**

5 changes of clothing for infant 12 mos. **\$100**

Seasonal items (e.g., winter snowsuit, bathing suit, outfits for religious holidays) **\$60**

Shoes and socks for 6 mos. and 12 mos. **\$70**

These are low estimates: to dress babies in fancy clothes or to have more than five changes of clothing would increase prices considerably. Families can save money by borrowing baby clothing from relatives and friends, shopping at discount or used clothing stores or garage sales and buying clothes slightly larger than necessary so they will last more than one season. Clothing needs vary, depending on the time of the birth and the climate where the baby lives.

Nursery Furnishings

Crib **\$130**

Crib sheets, blankets and bumper pads **\$48**

Infant seat **\$35**

Car safety seat **\$65**

Stroller **\$60**

Dresser/changing table **\$40**

These prices are for the least expensive selections. Fancier items cost much more. Buying used items, borrowing from friends or relatives or improvising saves money.

Baby-Care Needs

Bottles **\$40**

Feeding dish and baby spoon **\$16**

Baby lotion and powder **\$30**

Diaper ointment **\$10**

Hairbrush **\$3**

Bathing items (bath, shampoo, soap) **\$25**

Baby aspirin, nasal aspirator and rectal thermometer **\$20**

Baby care items listed here are those usually needed at some time during the first year. There are many others that could be purchased, but they will add to the expense.

Baby Pictures

One set of portraits with multiple photos **\$25**

This cost was calculated based on buying the basic package of photos at a local department store. Any additional portraits or snapshots would increase the cost.

Child Care

During school/work hours (8 hours per day) **\$9,100-11,700**

Evenings (5 hours once each week) **\$780**

Daycare expenses are calculated with infant care costing between \$175 and \$225 per week; the range in your area may be very different. Evening babysitting calculations assumed a cost of \$15 per week.

This large expense assumes the mother is still in school or has taken a full-time job. It is very difficult to find convenient, full-day infant care: many programs will not take a baby that is not toilet trained, or approximately two years old. Licensed home day care is available in many areas, but a provider can only care for one or two infants at a time. The expenses for child care usually continue until a child begins kindergarten; then there may be costs for after-school care. These costs can be reduced if there is a relative who will care for the baby during the day and/or on occasional evenings. The time allotted for evening babysitters is minimal and probably will not accommodate a young parent's social needs. Parents can save money by trading babysitting with other parents.

Costs of Baby's First Year

MOTHER'S MEDICAL EXPENSES

Doctor's fees \$ _____

Hospital room for three days \$ _____

Anesthesia \$ _____

BABY'S MEDICAL EXPENSES

Six well-baby care visits \$ _____

Immunizations (shots) \$ _____

DIAPERS

Disposable diapers for 12 months \$ _____

Diaper service for 12 months \$ _____

BABY'S FOOD

Formula and food, if mother does not nurse \$ _____

Food only, if mother nurses baby \$ _____

BABY'S CLOTHING

5 changes of clothing for newborn to 3 mos. \$ _____

5 changes of clothing for infant 6 mos. \$ _____

5 changes of clothing for infant 9 mos. \$ _____

5 changes of clothing for infant 12 mos. \$ _____

Seasonal items (for example, winter snowsuit or baby snuggler, bathing suit, outfits for religious holidays) \$ _____

Shoes and socks for 6 mos. and 12 mos. \$ _____

NURSERY FURNISHINGS

Crib \$ _____

Crib sheets, blankets and bumper pads \$ _____

Infant seat \$ _____

Car safety seat \$ _____

Stroller \$ _____

Dresser/changing table \$ _____

BABY-CARE NEEDS

Bottles \$ _____

Feeding dish and baby spoon \$ _____

Baby lotion and powder \$ _____

Diaper ointment \$ _____

Hairbrush \$ _____

Bathing items \$ _____

Baby aspirin, nasal aspirator and rectal thermometer \$ _____

CHILD CARE

During school/work hours (8 hours per day) \$ _____

Evenings (5 hours once each week) \$ _____

BABY PICTURES

Three portraits w/multiple photos \$ _____

TOTAL.....\$ _____

Choosing the Best Father

Materials: Newsprint and marker or board and chalk; copies of the handout, "Candidates for Fatherhood," for each participant

Time: 40-50 minutes

Planning Notes:

- ✓ Prepare half sheets of newsprint for each small group, for use in Step 5.
- ✓ Call the local welfare or district attorney's office to find out about the legal rights and responsibilities of young fathers in your state. Ask a health clinic staff person or a school guidance counselor about community resources that support teen fathers. You will need this information in Discussion Points 4 and 7.

Purpose:	To explore the qualities of a good father
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Procedure:

- 1 Point out that a lot of discussion about teenage pregnancy focuses on young mothers, but young fathers also have an important role.
- 2 Ask the group to brainstorm the specific characteristics of a good father and list their responses on newsprint or the board. Add any that you feel are appropriate from this list:
 - He is willing to explore new, nontraditional ways of parenting.
 - He cares about his children. He shares the responsibility of raising them.
 - He spends time with his children.
 - He knows the importance of showing love and affection.
 - He financially supports his children.
 - He tries to maintain a healthy relationship with the child's mother.
 - He does not do drugs.
 - He has goals for the future.
 - He makes decisions based on what is good for his children.
 - He knows how to care for children or is willing to learn.
 - He is willing to give up things to be a good father.
 - He does not hurt his children or their mother.
- 3 Explain that teens will pretend they are grandparents who, due to special circumstances, have the opportunity to choose the kind of man they want to father their grandchild.
- 4 Go over instructions for the activity:
 - Small groups will have three case studies of men who are fathers.
 - Read the case studies and consider the group's list of characteristics of a good father, as well as additional qualifications you think are important.

Adapted with permission from *Young Fathers' Curriculum*, Public/Private Ventures, Inc., Philadelphia, PA, 1992.

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- Choose one who is most like the father you would want for your grandchild. List on newsprint the qualities that make him your choice.
 - Choose one person to report your decision to the rest of the group.
5. Divide into small groups and distribute the handouts, newsprint and markers. Allow five minutes for groups to work, then ask groups to read their choice and qualities.
 6. Conclude the activity using the Discussion Points.

Discussion Points:

1. What positive qualities did all the fathers share?
2. What were some of your biggest concerns about any of the fathers?
3. What makes it more difficult for a young man to be a good father? What makes it easier?
4. What are the legal rights of a father under the age of 18 in your state? (Research this question before asking it, as suggested in the Planning Notes.)
5. If the female in a male-female teenage couple is pregnant, and the male refuses to marry her, what rights do you think he should have? Should he have a say in the decision to have an abortion or place the child for adoption? Should he be allowed, or required, to help raise the child later on? Why or why not?
6. If the female in a male-female teenage couple is pregnant, and she refuses to marry the male, what rights do you think she should have? Should she be able to have an abortion or place the child for adoption without telling him? Should she be able to raise the child without involving the father? Why or why not?
7. What resources exist in your community to help young fathers. What they are? (Research this question before asking it, as suggested in the Planning Notes.)

Candidates for Fatherhood

Candidate 1 Bernard is 19-years-old and unemployed. His girlfriend Joyce just had their first child. Bernard was supportive of Joyce throughout her pregnancy. In between looking for work, he went on every doctor's visit with Joyce and gave her back rubs every night so she could sleep. Bernard and Joyce also attended childbirth classes together and he was in the delivery room when the baby was born. He sees Joyce and the baby almost every day, but he rarely has any money to give Joyce for the baby. This causes arguments from time to time. Joyce is usually okay with the way things are, but her mother hates Bernard because he doesn't have a job.

Candidate 2 Kenny is 17-years-old and recently dropped out of school to get a job to support his newborn baby. He has a low-paying job at a convenience store. Kenny regularly sees Shari, his child's mother, but she often criticizes him for not spending even more time with her and the baby. Kenny gives Shari money every month. It's not a lot but it's regular and she can count on him. He also provides some child care or arranges with his mother to keep the baby. Shari doesn't think that Kenny should leave the baby with his mother so much. But Kenny feels that his child should spend time with him and his grandmother. Kenny loves his child, but he's beginning to think that things won't work out with Shari.

Candidate 3 Joe is a 17-year-old high school senior. He is a good athlete and is well-liked by his friends. His girlfriend, Tina, has just had their first baby. Joe has kept his grades up and divides his time between school and a part-time job. He visits Tina and the baby as much as possible but is often tired after going to school all day and working at night and weekends, so he actually spends very little quality time with them. Joe has encouraged Tina to get her high school diploma or at least a GED and he plans to go to the community college next year and study computers. Joe believes their baby will have a better life and more of a future if he and Tina have a solid education and good jobs.

