

THINK PREGNANCY IS
NO BIG DEAL?

THINK AGAIN!



How?

Who?

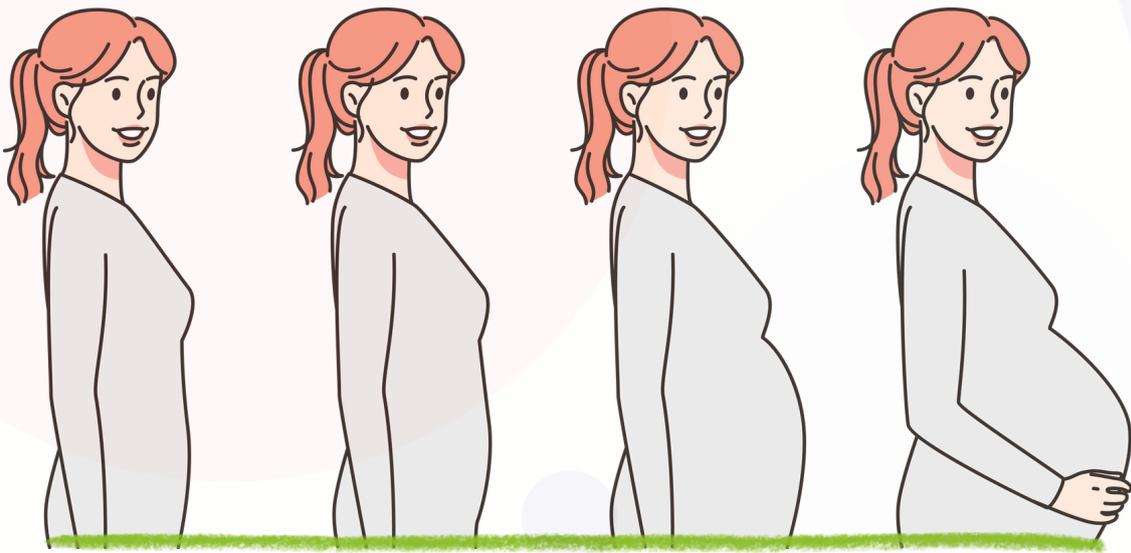
Where?



Greenhouse
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Your body changes, big time

If you're a young person in care, the thought of having a baby might seem exciting or even a way to find unconditional love. But the reality is far from a fairy tale. Becoming a parent, especially as a teenager, brings challenges you can't even imagine until you're in it.



Pregnancy isn't just a temporary thing. From morning sickness to swollen feet, your body goes through it for 9 long months. And that's just the start, after birth, there's recovery from labour, hormonal shifts and potentially lasting effects like stretched muscles and scarring. Getting your pre-baby body back takes time and effort many young women aren't prepared for. Pregnancy is a completely natural, beautiful thing but it's got to be treated as such by a person that is ready to go through it and understand the changes you will go through.

Babies depend on you 24/7



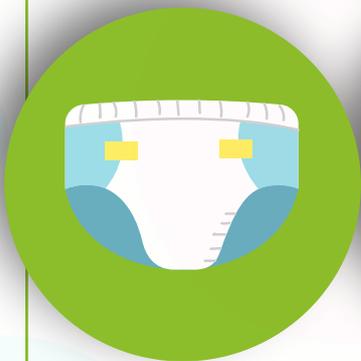
Think you'll be able to just hand your new born off when you need a break? Think again. Babies require constant care and supervision - they can't even hold their heads up at first! You'll be sleep-deprived, constantly worrying if they're eating and breathing properly. Your entire life revolves around feeding schedules, nappy changes, and soothing inconsolable crying.

Any dreams of just hanging with your friends pretty much goes out the window. This is why, before wanting to get pregnant make sure you have a solid support structure around you, and this doesn't mean someone who you have know for 6 months. These are people you have known for many years and that have not let you down. If they have let you down before, the chances are they may let you and your baby down too, which is not fair on your or your child.



Good luck affording anything

Babies are expensive - nappies, cots, clothes, childcare if you want to work. And that's just the start. If you don't have an education or stable job, providing for a child will be a constant struggle that could leave you and your little one going without basic needs. Unless you have a supportive structure helping out financially, making ends meet will be incredibly difficult on your own.



You may feel **totally** alone

Do you have a strong support system of people who've been there for years? Or just a revolving door of recent friends? Have a real think about it... As mentioned, when the reality of motherhood hits, casual relationships usually can't provide the comfort and assistance new mums desperately need. Without longstanding family or mentors by your side, loneliness and isolation can be crippling. Think of a time you felt alone, isolated with no back up and multiply that by two. Bringing another life into this world is a serious life change and therefore needs to consider all angles.



The unthinkable can happen

If caring for a baby starts to seem overwhelming and you're not coping well, there's the risk of neglect - not intentional, but caused by fatigue, lack of resources, or postpartum mental health issues. If signs of neglect are spotted, social services may determine you can't properly care for your child...and remove them from your custody. Having your baby taken away is many young parents' worst nightmare. It is vital to ensure you are ready to have a baby and not to take it as a 'phase' or even what is in 'fashion' with people you know, as the consequences can and will happen.

Becoming a parent is one of the biggest responsibilities you'll ever take on, and should be one of the best experiences you will ever go through. Without emotional and financial support systems in place, bringing a child into unstable circumstances means you'll both be facing an uphill battle. So before getting pregnant, be honest about whether you're truly ready - your lives depend on it.

