

Questions for Teens about Sexual Behavior, Relationships, Teen Pregnancy

OPENING: [Introductions] Thank you for agreeing to talk with us. We are with the Somerset County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program. You know, the rate of teen pregnancy in Skowhegan is very high – one of the highest in Maine.

We are talking with you because we want to hear your opinions, feelings, and experiences about relationships, having sex, preventing pregnancy, and why some teens want to have babies. You certainly know more about what it's like to be a teen today than we do! Your thoughts and opinions provide us with new information and ideas to do our work, which is to help teens delay pregnancy until they are older and have had a chance to meet some of their goals and dreams.

Today, you are educating us. We will answer any questions you have, but mainly we are here to listen.

Everything you say here is confidential. We will take notes, but without names. We will relate what you say, in a general way, to our program's Advisory Board and will use your ideas and opinions to develop programs for teens, parents, schools and the community. If we want to use a quote from one of you, we will ask your permission first and we won't use your name.

Do you have any questions? We've developed some questions to ask you, but we also want the conversation to flow where you want it to go, so take charge! And, please know that you don't have to speak about your personal experiences unless you want to. You can talk about your friends or the scene in general.

Relationships

Are the relationships you see really short term – a night, a week, a month? Or are they longer and more emotionally involved?

What would you consider a long relationship? How long are most of the relationships you see?

How old are teens when they start relationships with just one guy or girl? Is the couple the same age or is one older?

Do couples seem to really care about each other and take care of each other?

Do you ever hear about relationships that are abusive in some way? Who is abusing who? How?

Do you believe partners are more likely to be pressured into having sex when they are in a relationship? If you feel that is true, do you feel that girls may be more pressure or boys? Why?

What do you like, or dislike, about these steady relationships?

Sex and the Skowhegan Teen

How old are teens generally when they start having sex?

What do you mean by sex? Oral sex? Intercourse?

Are sexual moments planned or more accidental?

Is it usual for both people to agree equally on whether or not to have sex? Or is one person more forceful about it? Are there discussions first?

Is it hard to say no to sex? What would make that easier if you didn't want to have sex?

Do you think teens usually use protection when they have intercourse? Do they use condoms? Birth control pills? Other devices? How do they get them?

Do you think it is difficult to get contraceptive prescriptions? What are the problems? Transportation? Expense? Knowing where to go?

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Do you feel you are at risk for sexually transmitted diseases if you have unprotected sex? Even if only one time?

Would you advise a potential partner to be tested for STDs before having sex?

Talking with Parents or Other Trusted Adults About Sex

Are most teens able to talk to a parent about sex and to ask questions?

What do teens want to know from their parents about sex? Values? Experiences? How to handle situations? How to get contraceptives?

If its hard to talk to parents, why is this so?

What could parents do differently that would make it easier to talk to them about sex?

Teen Pregnancy

Why do teens get pregnant, (aside from not using contraceptives)?

Do you think teens sometimes want to get pregnant? If so, what are they wishing for, or wanting, or hoping for?

When a teen gets pregnant, what plan do they make for themselves about the pregnancy? Do teens sometimes choose abortion? Do they plan for adoption of the baby? Do they plan to keep the baby? What are your feelings about abortion? Adoption?

If they plan to keep the baby, how do they plan to take care of the baby and themselves? Financially? Emotionally?

Are the fathers involved? What usually happens with relationships when the girl gets pregnant?

Do you think teens consider the consequences of getting pregnant and raising a child as a teen?

Do you know the statistics for teen moms and their children about completing education, going on welfare, etc.?

Preventing Teen Pregnancy

Do you think it's a good idea to get pregnant as a teen? Why or why not?

What would help teens delay pregnancy until they are older?

What can parents do to help teens delay pregnancy?

What can your schools do to help teens delay pregnancy?

What can the community do to help teens delay pregnancy? For example, if you had more – out-of-school activities, things to do, good part-time jobs, help finding and applying for jobs and going to college after high school, support for developing your talents, support for making plans for the future and realizing them – would these “resources” help delay pregnancy for teens?