



Florida State University's Young Parents Project

As Complex As It Gets:
Providing Services for Teen Parents and their Children during the Time of a Global Pandemic



May 28, 2020



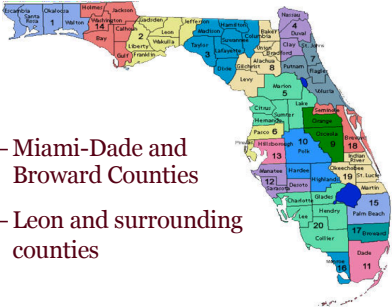
Our Time Together

- Foundations of our work with teen parents and their children
- Addressing trauma and resilience
- Using Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum
- Engaging young families through telehealth

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Our Work With Court-Involved Teen Parents and their Children





- Miami-Dade and Broward Counties
- Leon and surrounding counties

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****Think Development****


- Physical
- Cognitive
- Language
- Social Emotional

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The Adolescent Brain

- The human brain is not fully developed into an “adult brain” until age 25.
- The prefrontal cortex is the last part of the brain to mature.
- It controls the “executive functions” of the brain.

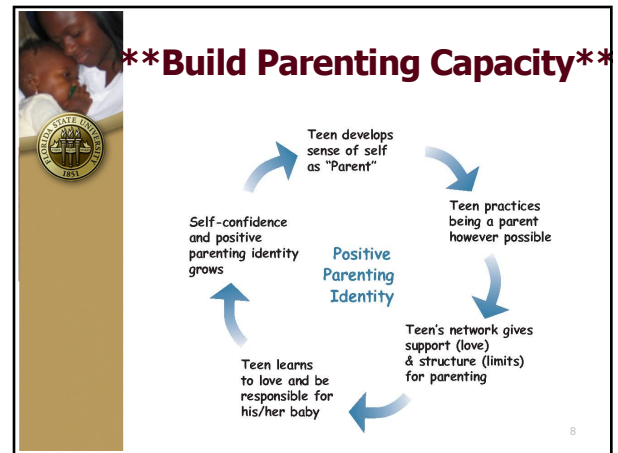
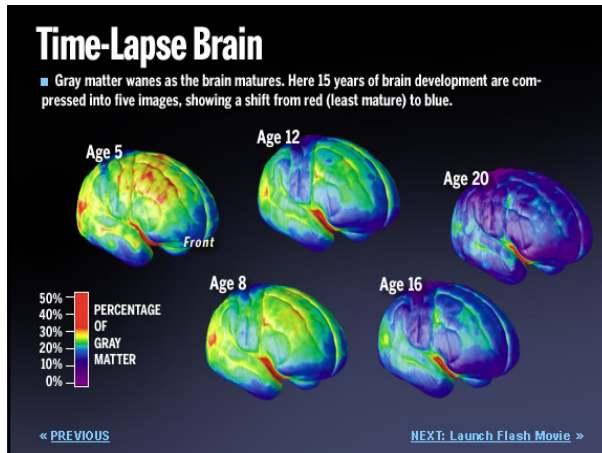


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Executive Functions Include...



- Planning
- Setting priorities
- Organizing thoughts
- Suppressing impulses
- Weighing the consequences of one's actions



Learning From Mistakes

All adolescents need opportunities to "fail" safely.

Consider Trauma

Many young parents are dealing with the long-term impact of sexual abuse and trauma while simultaneously learning to parent a young child.

Prevalence of Sexual Abuse

- 62% of the pregnant and parenting adolescents interviewed had experienced some form of sexual victimization in their preteen or teenage years (Boyer & Fine, 1992)

Interpersonal violence

A common and dangerous reality for teen parents

- Teens and young adults are especially vulnerable, with violence intensifying when the teens found out they were pregnant.
- Time of greatest risk for homicide is during pregnancy

(Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2010)





Interpersonal violence

- Impacts health outcomes
 - delay in prenatal care
 - substance abuse
 - depression
 - birth control use
 - accessing health care
- Impacts the developing relationship with their child

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Reproductive Justice

*Parenting with safety,
support and dignity.*

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Strengths of Young Parents

What are your
experiences?

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YPP Telehealth Services


Services Offered Prior to COVID-19

- Weekly Home visits
- Social Work support services
- Relationship Based Dyadic Intervention

Quick turnaround

- New way of offering services
 - Determining telehealth platforms
 - Issues that arise can typically be resolved in one home visit, now it could take weeks with closures.
 - Importance of ongoing case discussions/ team meetings

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Loss of Protective Factors - Ensuring Safety for Teen and Baby

Built-in protective factors before Covid-19

- A part of a home visiting program
- Family dynamics were established
- Teen in an educational program
- Babies/toddlers enrolled in child care


Recognizing the Crisis

- Varying responses to the crisis
- Loss of employment
- Re-establishing schedules and routines

Supporting our teens and their babies to feel safe

- Being mindful of keeping ourselves grounded
- Response from our teens


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Relationship-based Intervention

- Amount of time in the program – 1 month to 3 years
- Response to telehealth calls varies with each teen
- Consistency and persistence builds accountability and high expectations
- Accountability is one of the ways we promote positive outcomes
- Established relationships support ongoing engagement


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Infant Mental Health Approach – Supporting Teens and their Babies

- Focuses on strengthening the parent-child relationship
- Provides developmental guidance to parents
- Develops and maintains regular levels of affective regulation
- Helps parents provide physical and emotional safety for themselves and their children
- Allows for joint construction of a trauma narrative

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How Do You Handle These Stressors?

Lots of skills to go.

- Talk with someone you trust about money management.
- Make a written budget and try to stick to it.

Things going up at home like the dishes or the laundry.

- Get your priorities straight and make a to-do list.
- Choose one or two things that you have been putting off and do it immediately.

Arguing a lot with your partner.

- Make a schedule that you can follow to help you relax, or become quiet.
- Do some work together and take a break.

Being easily annoyed or becoming angry easily.

- Calm down. Go outside for a walk or listen to music.
- Take a walk, listen, talk, or breathe a friend who has a good attitude.

Someone close to you being sick, in the hospital, or dying.

- Stay positive. Talk to someone you can provide emotional and other support.

Feeling like you cannot cope.

- Remember that if you are sick, such as with a cold, flu, or other illness, you are not alone. Many people are sick, and having the flu.
- Don't let them in. Mental health can provide.

Other things that stress you out:

-
-
-

How is your stress?

Perfect for a Healthy Baby Home Visiting Curriculum
Infant Baby Series: 10 Handout 2.4

The Magic of Breathing Deeply


"With this breath I let go of anger.
With this breath I let go of worry.
With this breath I let go of fear."

When you feel afraid to keep your breaths steady. Your muscles may also get tight—especially in your back, neck, shoulders and jaw. Taking slow, deep breaths can ease your tension, especially during childbirth. Start by slowing down your breathing. Count how many seconds it takes for you to take a normal breath along your nose to focus on breathing. Now, can you slow it down? Make it take twice as long to breathe in and twice as long to breathe out. Every time you breathe out, imagine that the tension is leaving your body. Release all of your body when you let the breath go. Let the tension in your face and shoulders go.


Tip of water between contractions keeps your mouth from getting dry. Your partner can help you focus on your breathing.

You will be surprised at how quickly breaths like this will improve how you feel.

Perfect for a Healthy Baby Home Visiting Curriculum
Infant Baby Series: 10 Handout 2.4




Minding the Baby – adaptation of the model



(Slide)


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“Being held in the mind of another”

Jeree Pawl

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Trauma Informed Practice

- Look for root causes and not just resulting symptoms (depression, eating disorder, etc.)
- Help the teen understand
 - how trauma affects emotions
 - how trauma experiences impact parenting
 - how they want to parent differently

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Tips for fathers-to-be



Ways you can help:

- Go with her to prenatal appointments.
- Learn about prenatal development, the birth process, and becoming a parent.
- Hold her stomach and feel your baby move or even kick!
- Tell her how beautiful she is!
- Go to childbirth classes together.
- Rub her feet when they are swollen.
- Massage her back.
- Run a bath for her.
- Stock up on baby supplies and equipment.
- Encourage her to think about breastfeeding.
- Learn how to hold, feed, diaper, hold, and comfort a baby.
- Do the shopping and finances.

- Take care of the other children so she can take a nap.
- Choose your baby's name together.
- Ask how she wants you to help during the delivery.
- Hold her hand during contractions.
- Be there to witness the birth of your child.
- Let her know how honored you are to be the father of her child.
- Hold your baby and look into his eyes as soon as he's born.
- Let him know you are there for him and his mom.

Being a good father begins with being there for your baby's mother.

Perfect for a Healthy Baby Home Visiting Curriculum
Infant Baby Series: 10 Handout 3.2

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- Recognize the impact of trauma on the parenting relationship
- Linking to specialized trauma therapists
- Recognize that each stage of development, trauma may need to be re-addressed



- Asking about funny or unique experiences that they will remember
- Ensure safety and safe spaces to share if needed
- Identify strengths that help them cope with the uncertainty
- Using this time to be fully present with their child

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- Fears around delivery in the hospital
- Stress of changing birth plans
- Challenges in attending doctor appointments consistently
- Fears of public transportation
- Changes in eating habits due to stress and financial issues





Health Education and Care

Needs of Newborn:

- Difficult to assist with breastfeeding education without being face to face
- Teen has the stress of a newborn without the social support
- Fears of going to the pediatrician for newborn well visits
- New financial stress of diapers, etc.



Health Education and Care

Child Development:

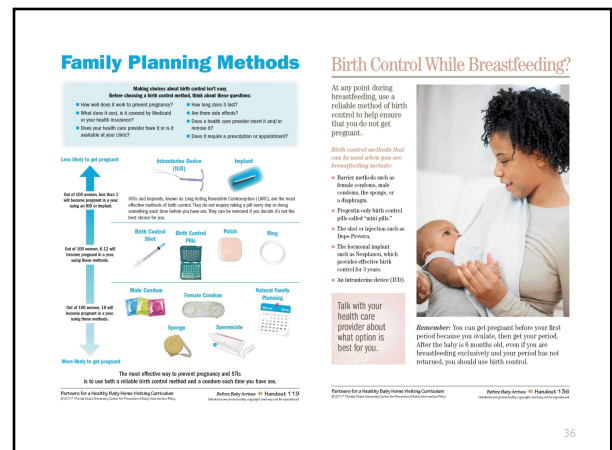
- Challenges of observing development
- Skipping immunizations
- Tantrums increasing due to changes in schedule and lack of child care




Health Education and Care

Family Planning:

- Missing Depo shots
- Skipping appointments to get refills on pills
- Increased pressure from partners and more time at home





Health Education and Care

Advocacy:

- Changing the type of support for doctor appointments
- Spending time to translate medical jargon
- Addressing feelings of powerlessness for teen and staff member


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Always our Goal

Supporting teen parents to become advocates for themselves and their babies.

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Staying Connected


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Telehealth Intakes

- Many of our clients have a history of exploitation
 - What does it feel like for them to share personal information with a stranger over the phone?
- Slowing down the intake process
 - Primary focus is on building rapport
 - Gathering basic demographic information
 - Other needed information will unfold over time
- Allow client to take the lead in sharing about their circumstances


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Getting to know each other

- "Beginning our work together over the phone is really different for me."
- "I know we can work together by video until we can meet in person"
- "Let me tell you a little about myself. My favorite food/music/activity is..."
- "The pandemic has changed my daily life by..."


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Engagement

- Adapting our services for specific needs
- Change in frequency and duration
 - Shorter calls if needed
 - May require more calls per week
- Continuing to address concrete needs and planning for future needs
- Video platforms, if possible, for introduction to teen and infant/toddler


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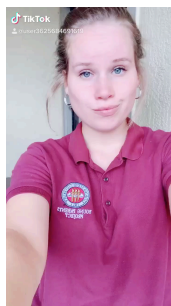
Getting Creative

- For those who are difficult to engage
 - Use of social media
 - Mix it up
 - Sending notes and packages
 - Framing the message



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Getting Creative



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Take time to remember those special moments...

- Birthdays - both teens and babies
- Graduations
- Loss of loved ones

Be the ones to follow-through

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Relationship-based Intervention

A teenage parent's new relationship with a supportive home visitor... can bring what they may have missed earlier in their lives.

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Thanks to Our Partners!



2nd Judicial Circuit
for Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon,
Liberty, and Wakulla Counties



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Stay In Touch!

 **FSU Center for Prevention & Early Intervention Policy**
www.cpeip.fsu.edu

 **Partners Facebook Home Visitor Support Group**
www.facebook.com/PartnersFSU

 **Partners Instagram**
[@fsupartners](https://www.instagram.com/fsupartners)

 **Partners Twitter**
[@FSU_CPEIP](https://twitter.com/FSU_CPEIP)

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