

Lesson Nine: Deciding When to Become a Parent

Student Learning Objectives:

The students will be able to...

1. State the likelihood of pregnancy when people don't use protection.
2. List three reasons to delay parenting until adulthood.
3. List three reasons that couples choose not to have a child at certain points in their lives.

Agenda:

1. Facilitate an activity called "What are the odds?"
2. Introduce the purpose of the lesson using statistics.
3. Have students role play situations from the Scenarios: Planning to Parent Activity while classmates complete an Observation Worksheet.
4. Conduct a "true or false" activity to portray the negative consequences of teen parenthood.
5. Lead a focused writing exercise to reinforce delaying parenthood until adulthood.

1. "What are the odds?"

Each penny represents a couple...

If your penny has a **BLACK** dot on it please move to the left side of the room

If your penny DOES not have a **BLACK** dot on it please move to the right side of the room

If 100 couples have UNPROTECTED sex for a year, 85 of them would be pregnant by the end of the year

85%!

Maybe you got pregnant or started a pregnancy the first time you had sex...

Maybe you got pregnant or helped your partner got pregnant within the first two months...

Or maybe you got pregnant or started a pregnancy by the end of the year...

15%

Assuming you didn't want a pregnancy, and that everyone in the class represents a couple who had sex without using any birth control, only you ...would have been lucky enough to not get pregnant or start a pregnancy.

Maybe you're not pregnant because you are infertile...

Maybe some of you just happened to have sex at the particular times of the month when she wasn't ovulating, so there was no egg to fertilize

And probably some of you will get pregnant next year....

2. Use statistics to set a norm in favor of delaying pregnancy until adulthood and to describe the purpose of the lesson.

In reality, lots of people don't leave pregnancy up to chance.

Here's an interesting fact to consider. In the U.S., the average age that women have their first child is 25 years old, but the average age that guys and girls start having vaginal sex is 17 years old.

What are people doing all those years in between to prevent pregnancy?

As you can see, lots of people work on delaying pregnancy until a later time. This is the purpose of today's lesson ... for us to think more about what makes it a good time to become parents. We will do that by imagining several different situations.

3. Role Play: Scenarios, Planning to Parent Activity (See attached PDF)

To the observers...

What were the most common issues the couples raised?

What were the least common?

Did you notice anything interesting or surprising about what you observed?

To the actors & observers...

Which reasons for waiting to become a parent seemed most important to you?

Which seemed most realistic?

4. True or False... Getting pregnant as a teen can make life a lot harder for teens themselves and for their children. It may also impact the teens' parents. Not just when they have a baby, but in their future as well. Many teen parents do an incredible job of overcoming the odds, especially with support from their families and community. However, it's still helpful for us to understand these challenges.

We're going to do a true or false activity. When I read you a statistic, I want you to give me a thumbs up if you think the statistics is true, and a thumbs down if you think it is false.

1. Becoming a parent is the leading cause of dropping out of school among teen girls. (TRUE)
2. Eight out of 10 teen mothers do not marry the father of their first child. However, these dads are still able to pay enough child support to help the mom and baby get by. (FALSE)
3. 64 out of 100 children grow up in poverty when: the mother gave birth as a teen, the parents were unmarried when the child was born, and the mother did not receive a high school diploma or GED. (TRUE)
4. Sons of teen moms are NO more likely to end up in prison than anyone else. (FALSE)
5. The children of teen mothers are more likely to be born too early and not weigh enough compared to children of older mothers. This raises the chance of infant death and many other medical problems. (TRUE)

Discussion Questions:

Were you surprised by any of these statistics? Which ones and why?

How did it change your thinking about teen pregnancy, if at all?

Did it give you any ideas about how to support teens who are already pregnant or who are parents?

Do you have any ideas about how to support friends in delaying pregnancy until they're older?

5. Focused Writing Worksheet (See attached PDF)

Pick the one sentence that fits your life situation the closest and complete the sentence. Consider some of the issues we discussed today, and think about how it might apply to your own lives.