

What Teens Want Other Teens To Know About Preventing Teen Pregnancy

A Message from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

When it comes to teen pregnancy — why it happens and how to prevent it — teens get loads of advice from adults, but they aren't often asked to offer their own. Along with Teen People magazine, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy set out to change this by asking teens directly what they would say to other teens about preventing pregnancy.

As so many of you have made clear, the teen years shouldn't be about pregnancy, parenting, midnight feedings, and diapers. We hope that you find these ideas useful — and perhaps see your own views and opinions reflected in them.

1. Thinking "it won't happen to me" is stupid; if you don't protect yourself, it probably will. Sex is serious. Make a plan.
2. Just because you think "everyone is doing it," doesn't mean they are. Some are, some aren't — and some are lying.
3. There are a lot of good reasons to say "no, not yet." Protecting your feelings is one of them.
4. You're in charge of your own life. Don't let anyone pressure you into having sex.
5. You can always say "no" — even if you've said "yes" before.
6. Carrying a condom is just being smart — it doesn't mean you're pushy or easy.
7. If you think birth control "ruins the mood," consider what a pregnancy test will do to it.
8. If you're drunk or high, you can't make good decisions about sex. Don't do something you might not remember or might really regret.
9. Sex won't make him yours, and a baby won't make him stay.
10. Not ready to be someone's father? It's simple: Use protection every time or don't have sex.