

Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy

National Progress Report: No 2

June 2019

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Summary

The [Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy](#) was published in March 2016 and is the first Scottish strategy focussing specifically on this agenda.

Although parenthood is a positive experience for many young people, it is associated with increased risk of a range of poor social, economic and health outcomes for some. The *Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People (PPYP) Strategy* aims to drive actions that will decrease the cycle of deprivation associated with pregnancy in young people under 18 and provide extra support for all of Scotland's young parents.

Some young people require little or no additional support, whereas others will need intense, targeted support. It is essential we continue to take a holistic approach and put the young person at the centre of action to help them achieve their potential both as individuals and as parents.

This is the second progress report for the *Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy* and provides an update on the priorities identified by the PPYP Steering Group up to the end of 2018/19, as well as actions within the Strategy itself. It also provides information on activity taking place across Scottish Government more widely that supports young people around pregnancy and parenthood.

The [latest statistics](#) show that pregnancies in young people aged under 20 are at their lowest level since reporting began in 1994.

The absolute gap in teenage pregnancy rates between the most and least deprived is narrowing. Rates of pregnancy have reduced across all levels of deprivation in recent years, with those in the most deprived areas falling more. However, those living in areas of highest deprivation still have pregnancy rates five times higher than those in the least deprived.

Children from households with a mother aged under 25 have particularly high relative and absolute poverty rates, which is why they have been identified as one of the priority families in the [Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan](#).

The Strategy makes clear the most effective, evidence based interventions for supporting young people around pregnancy and parenthood, national progress against which is set out in the report. It is essential that all partners work together to ensure that locally and nationally we are supporting young people to make their own, informed choices about their futures, including pregnancy and parenthood.

This second period of delivery has been about driving forward identified priorities and working with local areas, supporting their implementation of the Strategy.

The Scottish Government continues to prioritise the needs of young people around pregnancy and parenthood in young people. The work to implement the Strategy is ongoing and takes place in partnership with the numerous other policies across Government which are also considering the needs of young people in this area.

Next Steps

Over the next year the Strategy delivery will focus on the following 'next steps'.

Leadership and Accountability:

- We will continue to support local implementation through the provision of our 'awareness sessions', working to understand local need and delivery, and sharing examples of good practice.

Giving Young People More Control:

- We will be taking forward work on the development of age and stage appropriate key messages on healthy relationships and consent for professionals caring for and educating early stage and primary aged children.
- We will work in partnership with the 'Keys to Life' to support young people with learning disabilities and other significant communication difficulties around healthy and safe relationships.

Pregnancy in Young People:

- We will publish 'Getting Maternity Services Right for Young Parents' and the accompanying quick reference guide.

Parenthood in Young People:

- We will continue to work with young people and professionals to finalise and publish our guidance for supporting young pregnant women and young parents to remain in school.



Introduction

The [*Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy*](#) was published in March 2016 and is the first Scottish strategy focussing specifically on this agenda.

Although parenthood is a positive experience for many young people, it is associated with increased risk of a range of poor social, economic and health outcomes for some. The *Pregnancy and Parenthood*

in Young People (PPYP) Strategy aims to drive actions that will decrease the cycle of deprivation associated with pregnancy in young people under 18 and provide extra support for all of Scotland's young parents.

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This is the second progress report for the *Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy* and provides an update on the priorities identified by the PPYP Steering Group up to the end of 2018/19, as well as actions within the Strategy itself. It also provides information on activity taking place across Scottish Government more widely that supports young people around pregnancy and parenthood.

PPYP Strategy Priority Work streams

The PPYP Strategy Steering Group prioritised two topics of focus for this second period of delivery. Progress against these is set out in the report.

The topics are;

Supporting Positive Relationships and Sexual Wellbeing

Supporting young people with learning disabilities and other significant communication difficulties around healthy and safe relationships.

Education and Employment

Increasing education and learning through encouraging and supporting school attendance as an intervention for reducing the risk of pregnancy and enabling young people to engage in education during pregnancy and following delivery in their role as young parents (mother and fathers).

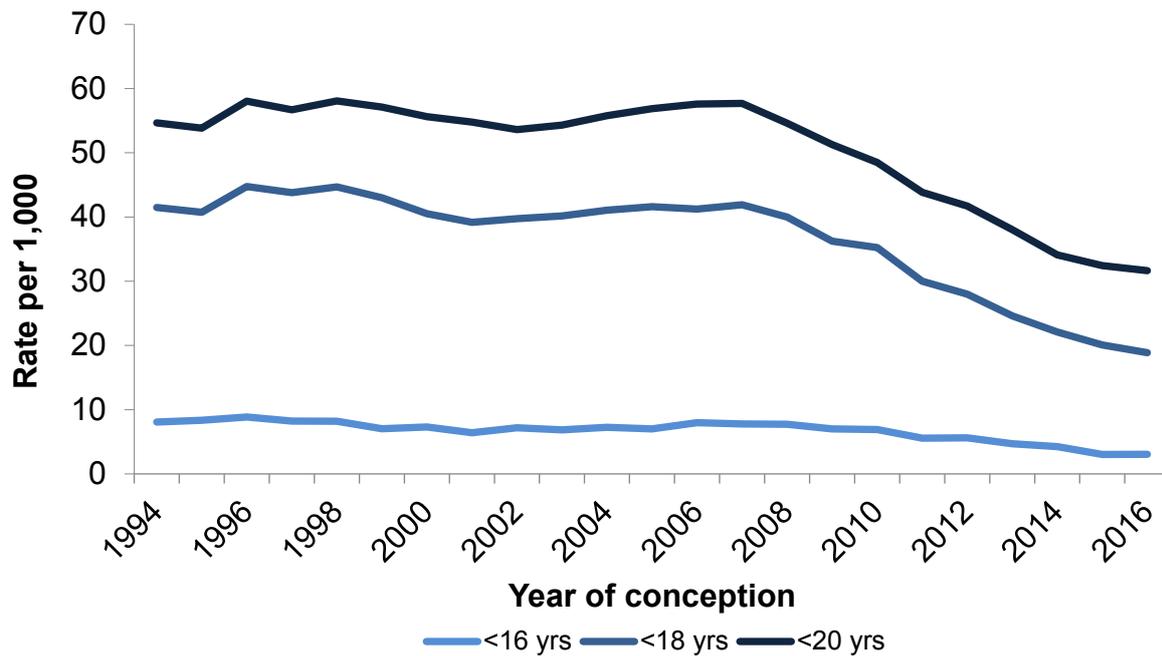
Statistics¹

Data on Scotland's teenage pregnancy rates (i.e. conceptions) are published annually. The [latest data](#) published by ISD show that;

Teenage pregnancy rates (conceptions)

Pregnancies in young people aged under 20 are at their lowest level since reporting began in 1994.

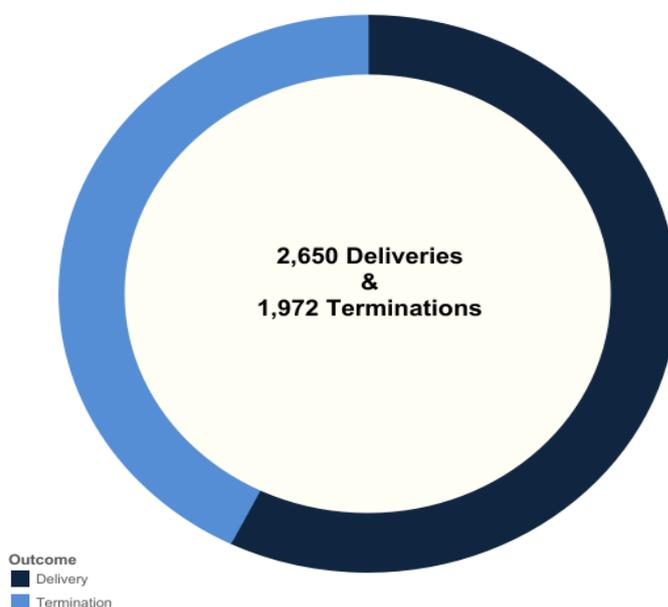
Figure 1: Teenage pregnancy by age group at conception, 1994 – 2016



In 2016, there were 4,622 pregnancies in young women aged under 20.

- 66% were in those aged 18 and 19
- 5% were in those aged under 16

Figure 2: Teenage pregnancies by outcome, 2016



Of the 4,622 conceptions in young women aged under 20 in 2016, 43% ended in termination (increasing to 47% in those aged under 18 and 55% in those aged under 16), although the latest ISD statistics show that there has been a significant decline in the number of terminations in the under 20s over the last decade¹. Whilst there are many different reasons why women will choose to have an abortion, it is often used as a proxy measure for unintended pregnancy. If we examine the data in this light, it seems that a proportion of women under 20 are not intending to fall pregnant.

This means support for young people in making informed choices about their future, including pregnancy and parenthood, continues to be vital. The Strategy makes clear the most effective, evidence based interventions for supporting young people around pregnancy and parenthood, national progress against which is set out in the report. It is essential that all partners work together to ensure that locally and nationally we are supporting young people to make their own, informed choices about their futures, including pregnancy and parenthood, whether that be now, in the future, or not at all.

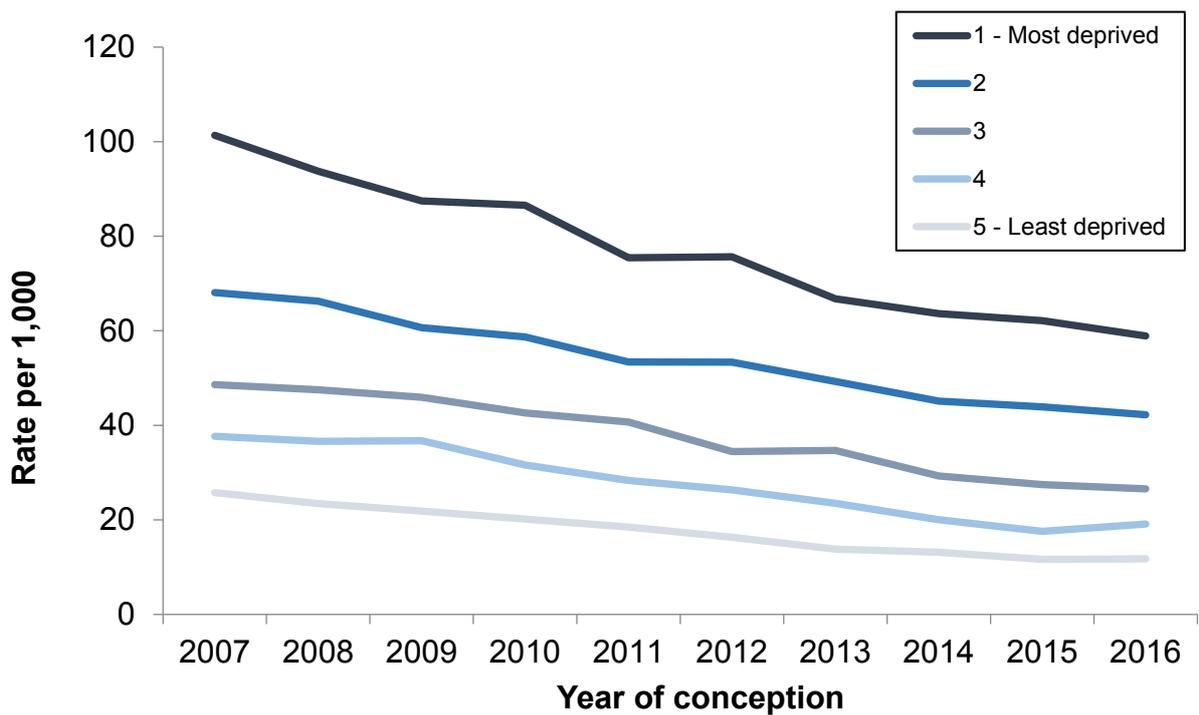
¹ <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Sexual-Health/Publications/2019-05-28/2019-05-28-Terminations-2018-Report.pdf>

Teenage pregnancy links to inequality

The absolute gap in teenage pregnancy rates between the most and least deprived is narrowing. Rates of pregnancy have reduced across all levels of deprivation in recent years, with those in the most deprived areas falling more.

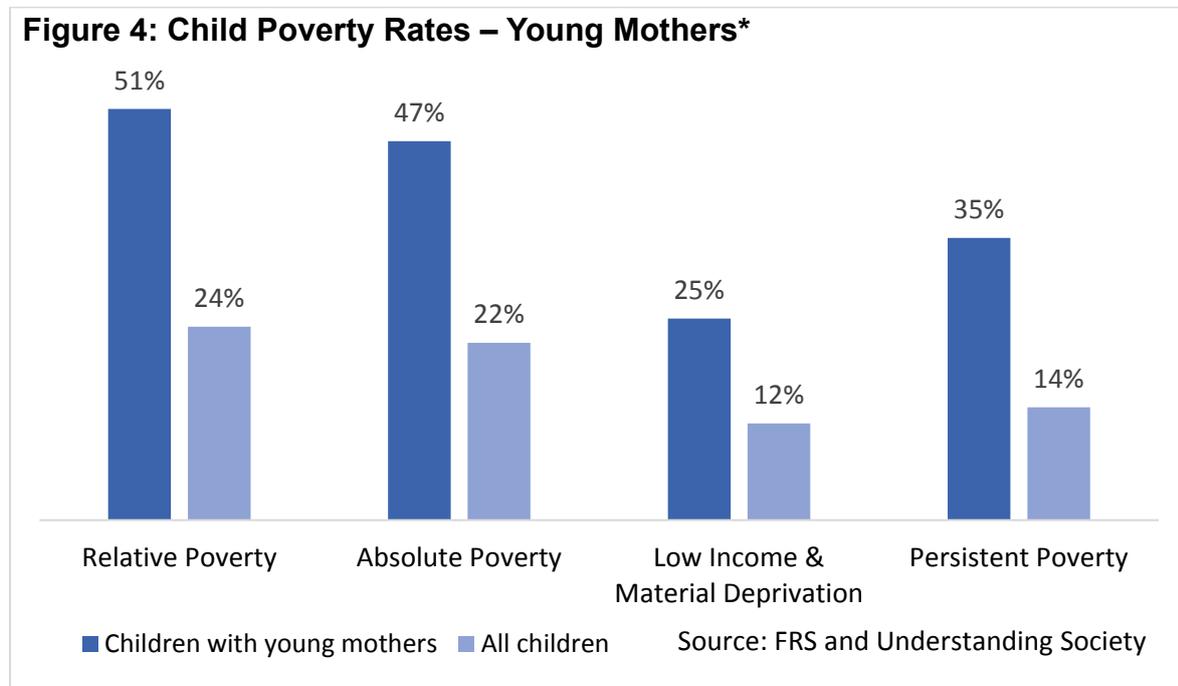
However, those living in areas of highest deprivation still have pregnancy rates five times higher than those in the least deprived.

Figure 3: Teenage pregnancy by deprivation area, 2007 - 2016



Poverty rates for children with young mothers are higher than average

Children from households with a mother aged under 25 have particularly high relative and absolute poverty rates. This is likely to be for a range of factors – for example, less labour market experience or potential interruptions to education.



* Young mothers are considered to be those aged under 25. Rates are taken on an After Housing Costs basis and refer to estimated levels in 2014-17, persistent poverty relates to 2011-15.

Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan



The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan² was published in March 2018 and contains the actions that the Scottish Government will take to tackle child poverty between 2018 and 2022.

The Plan includes a focus on ‘priority families’, which includes young mothers. All of the actions committed will be taken forward with these groups in mind.

Our impact assessments show that certain actions will be of particular benefit to young mothers, including: investment in intensive employment support for parents; work to encourage payment of the ‘real’ Living Wage, expansion to funded Early Learning and Childcare and the new Best Start Grant.

The progress report covering the first year (2018-19) of implementation of the plan has been published www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781787819665.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Studies of have found that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are linked to an increased likelihood of early sex and teenage pregnancy. Compared to people with no ACEs, people with four or more ACEs have been found to be six times more likely to have early sex (before age 16) and six times more likely to have had or caused unintended teenage pregnancy (<http://www.cph.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ACE-Report-FINAL-E.pdf>).

The Scottish Government has committed to preventing and mitigating the negative impacts of ACEs, and is taking a broad approach to addressing a wide range of childhood adversities that can impact on healthy development. This include the 10 key adversities³ commonly explored in ACE surveys and also the wider range of childhood adversities that can impact on healthy development (e.g. bereavement/loss, bullying, community violence, homelessness); as well as the interaction with societal inequality (e.g. poverty, gender inequality, discrimination by ethnicity or sexual orientation) and how these influence the levels of childhood adversity experienced and people’s ability to recover.

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/child-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/>

³ Physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional neglect, physical neglect, parental separation, growing-up in a household with domestic violence, and growing-up in a household in which there are adults: experiencing alcohol and drug use problems; mental health difficulties; or there are adults who have spent time in prison.

The 2018/19 Programme for Government⁴ (pages 84-85) set out four key areas for action the Government is taking forward to better prevent and respond to ACEs:

1. **Providing inter-generational support for parents, families and children** to prevent ACEs (including actions such as support for perinatal and infant mental health support, expanding Family Nurse Partnership (FNP), increasing health visitor numbers, **tackling child poverty** to support low income families)
2. **Reducing the negative impact of ACEs for children and young people** (including the provision of school counselling services, supporting children affected by domestic abuse, supporting contact between parents in prison and children, **Attainment Scotland Fund** helping schools to delivery health and wellbeing support for children and young people).
3. **Developing adversity and trauma-informed workforce and services** (including implementing the National Trauma Training Programme and Education Scotland work to support nurture and trauma-informed schools).
4. **Increasing societal awareness and supporting action across communities** (including awareness raising of children's rights and funds such as the Families and Communities Fund and CashBack for Communities).

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/delivering-today-investing-tomorrow-governments-programme-scotland-2018-19/>

National Progress, Achievements and Activity To Date

Strand 1: Leadership and Accountability

Local Leadership

Action 1.4 *Assign an accountable person to provide leadership and coordination for the Strategy*

The PPYP Team has worked to identify a 'local lead' for all areas. This has enabled us to communicate with colleagues to understand local progress and challenge in relation to supporting young people around pregnancy and parenthood locally.

We are working with our leads to identify when more "hands on" input from the PPYP Team can be helpful and will continue to offer this support.

National Leadership

Action 1.3 *A National Lead will be appointed to provide national leadership and to help drive implementation of the Strategy.*

The appointment of a 'National Lead' for the Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy has provided a resource who can advocate for the rights of young people around pregnancy and parenthood, working with organisations locally and nationally to help drive forward implementation.

In 2018, we set up our twitter account [@PpypTeam](#) which we have used to promote activity relevant to pregnancy and parenthood in young people.

We have worked to link with young people whenever possible. We have been speaking to young people about their views on healthy relationships and consent, and engaged with young parents to ensure their experiences continue to inform our work.

The PPYP Strategy Steering Group continues to provide expert advice, guiding implementation and advice on next steps.

Local Planning and Data

Action 1.1 *Local needs assessments for young people should be reviewed and updated to reflect the actions in the Strategy.*

Action 1.5 *Action plans are in place to address the outcomes of the needs assessment and pathways in place that take account of data collecting protocols and data sharing practices.*

Ensuring the needs of young people in relation to pregnancy and parenthood are taken account of in local planning is an essential part of ensuring that young people's holistic needs are considered. The team is continuing to support local areas to consider their young people's needs in relation to pregnancy and parenthood.

Working with different areas has meant understanding different approaches, and one which enables the PPYP Team to be part of thinking around pregnancy and parenthood in young people. Not only does this allow us to understand local approaches, but to also start sharing these across the country.

Working with Clackmannanshire

The PPYP Team worked with colleagues at Clackmannanshire Council to help them develop their PPYP Action Plan.

For the first time, the team took a hands on approach to facilitation, working with multi-agency colleagues to identify the great work already in progress, making the links across work streams and thinking about the gaps that the action plan can address.

This half day workshop enabled fantastic, collegiate discussion and produced a draft action plan that will help support improvements for young people around pregnancy and parenthood across Clackmannanshire.

The Team was delighted to work with Clackmannanshire and hope to be able to replicate this approach with other areas over the coming year.

Working with Tayside

Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and Angus local areas are taking a pan-Tayside approach to their local planning around pregnancy and parenthood in young people.

Through setting up a short life working group, multi-agency colleagues from across Tayside have been considering how best to support young people in Tayside around pregnancy and parenthood.

As part of this approach, the National Lead is a member of the Steering Group, facilitating linkages and sharing examples of good practice.

Next Steps: We will continue to support local implementation through the provision of our 'awareness sessions', working to understand local need and delivery, and sharing examples of good practice.

Strand 2: Giving Young People More Control

A key aim of the Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy is to enable and empower young people so that they feel a sense of control over their own lives, allowing them to build self-efficacy and providing equality of opportunity for the future – and particularly in relation to the impact this has for choices around pregnancy and parenthood.

The following section sets out the work taking place nationally to empower young people in their decisions around pregnancy and parenthood.

Positive Outcomes and Educational Engagement

Closing the Attainment Gap

Evidence shows that education and engagement with learning are key interventions which help young people to plan for their future – including pregnancy and parenthood. Poor attendance at school, low attainment or achievement, few or no aspirations and free school meals entitlement are key indicators for risk of teenage pregnancy.⁵

The Scottish Government has prioritised young people's attainment and in 2018/19 committed a total of £179 million to contribute to the commitment to allocate £750m during the course of this Parliament to tackle the attainment gap, targeting resources at the children, schools and communities most in need. This investment will have a real impact on engaging young people with education and learning, providing a key intervention for reducing the risk of pregnancy at a young age.

Supporting Positive Relationships and Sexual Wellbeing

Ensuring the sexual health and wellbeing of all Scotland's young people is essential not only to reduce the risk of pregnancy at a young age, but also to support mutually respectful and consensual relationships.

A number of work streams from across Government are working to support young people in this area.

⁵ Crawford, Cribb & Kelly (2013) Teenage Pregnancy in England. Centre for Analysis of Youth Transitions (CAYT) Impact Study: Report No. 6

Key Messages for Young People on Healthy Relationships and Consent



Action 2.1 *Develop key messaging to promote understanding of consent and healthy relationships in young people.*

A short life expert working group worked to develop the 'Key Messages for Young People on Healthy Relationships and Consent'. The resource, which is for professionals working with young people, has now been [published](#)⁶.

To communicate these messages to young people, and to provide additional information and advice on healthy relationships and consent, an online resource for young people is being developed in partnership with Young Scot. This resource will make links with numerous topics which impact on healthy relationships and consent from mental health to sexual health.

Following on from the publication of key messages for young people, work has commenced on the development of age and stage appropriate key messages on healthy relationships and consent for professionals caring for and educating early stage and primary aged children.

Next Steps: We will be taking forward work on the development of age and stage appropriate key messages on healthy relationships and consent for professionals caring for and educating early stage and primary aged children.

Supporting young people with learning disabilities

PPYP Priority Workstream: *Supporting young people with learning disabilities and other significant communication difficulties around healthy and safe relationships (including reproductive health choices).*

The PPYP Strategy Steering Group identified that some young people with mild – moderate learning disabilities may need more support to achieve healthy relationships and for empowerment around reproductive health choices.

A small expert group was convened to discuss this work stream. The group felt that this issue is important to *all* young people with learning disabilities and other significant communication difficulties. In light of this, we are working with colleagues in Learning Disability policy under the auspices of '[Keys to Life](#)' to consider how best to take this important work forward.

Next Steps: We will work in partnership with the 'Keys to Life' to support young people with learning disabilities and other significant communication difficulties around healthy and safe relationships.

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/key-messages-young-people-healthy-relationships-consent-resource-professionals-working-young-people/>

Expert Group for Preventing Sexual Offending Involving Children and Young People

The Expert Group was established in order to identify fresh actions to better prevent sexual crime involving children and young people, both as victims and perpetrators, in order to mitigate the harm it causes. Whilst undertaking its work, the Group considered a range of perspectives, including public health and gendered analysis approaches, in line with the Equally Safe programme. The Group's report is currently being finalised.

Equally Safe

The Scottish Government, through the auspices of Equally Safe, is funding the expansion of the Rape Crisis Sexual Violence Prevention Programme to secondary schools in all 32 local authorities. The programme aims to provide consistency in approaches to the prevention of sexual violence and contributes to Equally Safe in its aim to address the systematic inequality, attitudes and assumptions that give rise to violence and abusive behaviour.

The programme delivers modules that cover gender, consent, sexual violence and how it can be prevented, sexualisation and pornography, social media, the impact of sexual violence and how to access support.

Equally Safe is also supporting Rape Crisis Scotland and Zero Tolerance to develop and pilot a 'whole schools approach' to tackling gender based violence. The pilot will be evaluated by the University of Glasgow.

Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities are adapting and adopting the Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit (launched in 2018). The Ministerial Letter of Guidance to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the subsequent Outcome Agreement Guidance from the SFC to institutions expects them to adopt a Gendered Analysis, assess their own policies and practices against the Toolkit and put measures in place to keep students safe and engaged with their studies while meeting the needs and diversity of survivors.

Action is being driven forward by the Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities Working Group, whose membership includes, Universities Scotland, Colleges Scotland, NUS Scotland, Police Scotland, Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the Emily Test Campaign. Key achievements over the last year include:

- Universities Scotland taking the lead in development Gender Based Violence (GBV) Support Cards and supporting materials for use by university and college staff to support students which means that now every member of staff in a college and university in Scotland will know where to get help for someone who discloses any form of gender based violence (<https://endgbv.uk/>) and in the development of the GBV and Mental Health Support Stickers. These list national and confidential support services for people within a college or university setting experiencing Gender Based Violence and/or mental health issues. It is intended

that the Stickers will be displayed in toilet facilities, communal areas, student accommodation, student unions and other spaces.

- The completion of three regional events for all colleges and universities to distil learning from Fresher's Weeks and start of college year activities to inform future awareness work, local collaboration and increase awareness and understanding of the Tool Kit. A resource for colleges and universities will be made available over the summer of 2019.
- Universities Scotland are leading work to review the current Student Misconduct Guidelines.
- A Community of Practice, hosted on 'Khub', has now been established.

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) Education

Provision of RSHP education is acknowledged as a key intervention to support positive relationships in young people and reduce rates of pregnancy in young people. Work is ongoing to provide comprehensive RSHP education to children and young people that reflects their needs and the world they are living in.

RSHP Teaching Guidance

Following recommendations of the LGBTI Inclusive Education Working Group, in November 2018, and the Review of Personal and Social Education, in January 2019, the Scottish Government is committed to reviewing and updating the statutory teaching guidance on RSHP education. The review will see the 2014 teaching guidance revised so it includes key issues affecting children and young people in school including LGBT inclusion, sexual harassment, consent and healthy relationships.

RSHP education 3-18 Resource



RSHP Scotland

Welcome to the programme of work that is developing a resource for **relationships, sexual health and parenthood** (RSHP) education for children and young people.

The resource that will take shape on this site in the coming months will be used in schools, early learning settings, colleges and community-based learning. It is organised to sit within Curriculum for Excellence. The emerging resource is here for you to see, use and comment on. All content is draft, it will change as a result of feedback from the curriculum design network - a self-selecting group of professional colleagues, learners and parent/careers. You can join this network at [cfe:involved](#); once subscribed, you will be kept informed of developments and have the opportunity to influence the work.

Use the menu at the top to explore more about the programme. The intention is to complete the work and publish the final RSHP resource by the summer of 2019.

A partnership of NHS Boards and Local Authorities is leading the development of an online RSHP teaching resource. It will deliver a new RSHP teaching resource for 3–18 years in line with Curriculum for Excellence and other national policy guidance. The resource is designed to fill gaps in teaching resources highlighted by teachers and pupils. The final resource

and all additional outputs will be available for the beginning of the academic year 2019/20.

Personal and Social Education (PSE) Review

In the Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027, the Scottish Government committed to a review of Personal and Social Education (PSE), which incorporates RSHP education. The review process included asking professionals and young people how the issue of sexual consent is taught within RSHP education from early learning through all levels of school education – in an age and stage appropriate way – from a young age. The final PSE report and accompanying suite of recommendations was

published in January 2019 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/review-personal-social-education-preparing-scotlands-children-young-people-learning-work-life/>

Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

The PPYP Strategy notes the importance of access to high-quality sexual health services and the provision of effective contraception.

Research into young people's attitudes towards condoms and contraception

Action 2.3 *Demonstrate how young people are aware of their rights and how they are acting on them.*

The PPYP Team is working in partnership with three NHS Boards⁷ to conduct research into young people's attitudes towards condoms and contraception. This links to Action 2.3 in the Strategy, to ensure young people understand their rights in relation to accessing sexual and reproductive health services.

It is intended that this research will not only inform the development of sexual health services that meet the expressed needs of young people in Scotland, but also help us to understand how we can best provide the information and resources that young people require.

The findings will be published in summer 2020.

⁷ NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Lothian

Strand 3: Pregnancy in Young People

Young people who have conceived should be provided with objective and non-judgmental information and support to be able to make an informed choice regarding how they proceed with their pregnancy.

Early identification of pregnancy and pregnancy options

Pregnancy information and advice

Action 3.1 *Information on pregnancy should be available in places frequented by young people and should consider the needs and concerns of young people, particularly concerns around confidentiality.*

Action 3.2 *Accurate and up to date information on pregnancy and local services is made available on local sexual health websites and other websites aimed at young people.*

As part of their project to support pregnancy and parenthood in young people, Young Scot are working to include more information on www.youngscot.org on pregnancy, linking to Actions 3.1 and 3.2 in the PPYP Strategy.

This will include more information on early identification of pregnancy, including on the signs and symptoms of pregnancy. It will also provide information on pregnancy options and who young people can approach in confidence if they need advice and support about a pregnancy.

Getting Maternity Services Right for Young Parents

Action 3.7 *A guide for midwives, doctors, maternity support workers and receptionists will be developed in collaboration with the NHS and young parents based on the Public Health England guide 'Getting maternity services right for pregnant teenagers and young fathers'.*



The PPYP Strategy committed to developing a guide that would support those working in maternity services to better understand the particular needs of pregnant young women and their partners (Action 3.7). NHS Health Scotland has been developing 'Getting Maternity Services Right for Young Parents', the content of which is now finalised. A 'quick reference guide' is now being developed and both resources will be published in Autumn 2019.

Next Steps: We will publish 'Getting Maternity Services Right for Young Parents' and the accompanying quick reference guide.

Pathways of care

Mental Health

Teenage mothers have higher rates of poor mental health for up to three years after the birth of their baby and are three times more likely to experience post-natal depression⁸. Supporting the mental health of young mothers is vital and the earlier support and treatment is provided, the better for both mother and baby.

The Scottish Government has committed to supporting women's mental health by transforming the services they receive during pregnancy and after birth, through the provision of individually determined tiers of support, from counselling to the provision of specialist services. Perinatal and infant mental health was a significant commitment in the 2018/19 Programme for Government, which established a commitment to providing three tiers of support across Scotland, in line with the needs of individuals:

- For those 11,000 women a year who would benefit from help such as counselling we will support the third sector to provide this
- For those 5,500 women in need of more specialist help we will ensure rapid access to psychological assessment and treatment
- For those 2,250 women with the most severe illness we will develop more specialist services and consider the need for a small number of additional inpatient beds or enhanced community provision

On March 6 2019 the First Minister announced that commitment will be supported by £50 million of investment in perinatal and infant mental health services over the next 4 years. The Perinatal Mental Health Managed Clinical Network also published its [recommendations](#) on 6 March, along with the [Women and Families Maternal Mental Health Pledge](#) which was developed by women with lived experience of perinatal mental health services. In order to deliver the PfG commitment, a Programme Board has been established, chaired by Hugh Masters. The composition and structure of the Board and associated groups will take into account the needs of young parents and in particular will look at links to the Family Nurse Partnership and other services that support young mothers. It will also consider the needs of younger women when accessing perinatal mental health services.

8

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524506/PHE_LGA_Framework_for_supporting_teenage_mothers_and_young_fathers.pdf

Strand 4: Parenthood in Young People

Promoting positive attitudes to young parents

Online resources for young parents

Action 4.6 Agencies (national and local) webpages aimed at young people or young parents have information on support for young parents around social and health needs

Action 4.7 Develop a resource for young parents which provides up to date information and support on accessing welfare and includes help and support to understand their housing rights.



Young parents have said that one of the greatest challenges they face is the stigma and judgemental attitudes they experience because of their age.

Through funding from the Scottish Government's CYPFEI and ALEC fund, Young Scot has been working with a group of young parents to develop the '[Ping](#)' resource for young

parents. Linking to Actions 4.6 and 4.7, they have been challenging attitudes to young parents and developed, amongst other resources, the film 'What not to say to a young parent'.

Supporting Young Parents: Professionals Forum

Action 4.1 Ensure everyone working with young parents communicates effectively, across multiple services, putting the young parent(s) and their needs at the centre.



In November 2018, we held our first forum for professionals who work directly with young parents. This links to PPYP Strategy Action 4.1.

Supporting Young Parents: Professionals Forum 2018 was an opportunity for professionals who work directly with young parents to come together to

identify the issues affecting Scotland's young parents, promote good practice and identify where expertise and learning can be shared.

Family Nurse Partnership

The Family Nurse Partnership programme provides intensive, nurse-led, home visiting support for first time young mothers in Scotland. Mothers aged 19 and under across most parts of Scotland and young mothers under 24 in some areas are offered FNP.

The Family Nurse Partnership blog was launched in April 2018 and provides information about the FNP programme [FNP Blog](#).

To evidence the impact of FNP in Scotland, an Evaluability Assessment⁹ was carried out to identify the best approach to use. This concluded that the use of a 'natural experiment' would be the best approach, through data linkage of Education, Health and Social care outcomes. This was externally commissioned in 2016 and will conclude by 2020 <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/115156/>

Alongside this, a qualitative evaluation was also commissioned, to look at the perceived value of the programme from clients, family nurses and wider stakeholders. The [FNP Revaluation Report](#), published in June 2019, concluded that the perceived value of the programme included a range of factors that both identify and address social risk factors associated with being a young parent.

Young people not involved in FNP continue to receive support from universal health services, through health visiting which includes the [Universal Health Visiting Pathway](#). The Pathway provides an opportunity for health visitors, children and their parents to build a strong relationship, in which health visitors can appropriately support families including acting as a gateway to other services. NHS Boards are currently implementing the Pathway and we expect full rollout by January 2020.

Social Isolation and Loneliness

Young parents have identified that feeling isolated and lonely can be one of the most challenging parts of being a parent as a young person;

In December 2018, the Scottish Government published its first national strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections, [A Connected Scotland](#). The strategy has four priorities: empower communities and build shared ownership; promote positive attitudes and tackle stigma; create opportunities for people to connect; and, support and infrastructure that fosters connections.

The Strategy recognises that social isolation and loneliness can affect people at all ages and stages of life, and acknowledges the particular vulnerability and needs of young parents in this area. As *A Connected Scotland* moves into its implementation stage, the needs of young parents in relation to isolation and loneliness will be further considered.

⁹ <http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/26102.aspx>

Support to control reproductive health and pregnancy spacing

Rapid, repeat pregnancy (i.e. within one year) is associated with an increase in adverse health outcomes. The provision of post-partum contraception to all women who wish to have it, provides women with the opportunity to control their reproductive health, planning their pregnancies in a way that is best for them.

Post-Partum Contraception

Action 4.4 *Ensure all pregnant women aged under 20 are consulted about their contraception preferences antenatally and that these preferences are provided early in the post-natal period.*

In order to increase women's access to post-partum contraception, a short life expert group was set up to consider the best approach to supporting improvements in universal post-partum contraception provision, linking to Action 4.4 of the Strategy.

To help increase access to and understand different practice models, Ayrshire and Arran and Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Boards have been funded to take forward 'post-partum contraception pilots'.

Building on the work of NHS Lothian¹⁰, these pilots are intended to help set up universal access to post-partum contraception in these Board areas as well as providing learning and examples of practice for the rest of Scotland.

Education, training and employment

It is our ambition that no young woman has to leave education, training or employment as a direct consequence of a pregnancy.

Support for school aged young parents

Action 4.9 *Local Authorities should develop guidance for schools to ensure that support and planning processes are in place to allow young people who become pregnant to remain in their own school.*

PPYP Priority Work stream: *Enable young people to engage in education during pregnancy and following delivery in their role as young parents (mother and fathers).*

We are working with an expert group to take a 'Once for Scotland' approach and develop guidance to help schools ensure the support and planning processes are in place that allow young people who become pregnant or parents to remain in education. This links to Action 4.9 in the Strategy as well as being an identified priority for 2018/19.

A working group has been established to develop the guidance. Local Authorities who wish to use it will be able to amend the document with their own local policies and processes. As part of this work, we are talking to young parents to ensure that their voice is present throughout.

¹⁰ <https://obgyn.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1471-0528.14674> / <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28590560>

Next steps: We will continue to work with young people and professionals to finalise and publish our guidance for supporting young pregnant women and young parents to remain in school.

Education Evidence Briefing

PPYP Priority Workstream: *Increasing education and learning through encouraging and supporting school attendance as an intervention for reducing the risk of pregnancy.*

In the Growing Up in Scotland study, mothers who were younger than 20 years when their first child was born were less likely to have a qualification at Higher Grade or above and more likely to be reliant on welfare benefits and tax credits than mothers who were older¹¹.

Supporting young parents to remain in education has the potential to increase their opportunities for employment and future earnings, increasing future life choices. In response to this work stream, Health Scotland are developing an evidence briefing which will look at what support or interventions would help young parents to stay in education, should they chose to do so. The briefing will focus on the research question of “*What works to support young parents remain in education?*”

The Briefing will provide a strong evidence base for the guidance and will be published on the Health Scotland website in 2019.

Employability

As part of the [Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan](#), the Scottish Government is developing the Parental Employability Fund. £12 million has been allocated over three years to provide the Fund, offering specific, targeted and integrated employability and up skilling support.

The fund is primarily targeted at 5 key groups - one of which is young parents (aged under 25 years). The fund will assist parents both in and out of work offering key worker support, and helping parents to access services including money advice and accredited job-specific training.

The Fund will be operational in 2019.

¹¹ Bradshaw P, Schofield, L. The Experiences of Mothers Aged Under 20: Analysis of Data From the Growing Up in Scotland Study. ScotCen Social Research; 2014.

Childcare Funding

Flexible childcare is vital for young parents to help them stay in education, training or employment.

The Scottish Government and local authorities have committed to almost double the funded entitlement to early learning and childcare (ELC) from 600 to 1,140 hours from August 2020 for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds from the relevant start dates. This works out at around 30 hours of funded ELC a week over a school year, or 22 hours a week over a calendar year.

Local authorities have already started to “phase in” the expanded offer. The expansion planning guidance which was issued to local authorities in March 2017 made clear that plans for phasing should reflect the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to ensure that families and communities who stand to benefit most from the expansion also benefit first. As a result of ‘phasing in’ the entitlement, over 11,000 2 to 5 year olds are already benefitting from more than 600 hours of funded ELC.

Funding Follows the Child will be introduced alongside the national roll-out of the expanded entitlement in 2020. Funding Follows the Child, which is ‘provider neutral’, is underpinned by a National Standard that all providers delivering the expanded hours – regardless of whether they are in the public, private or third sector, or childminders – will have to meet.

Further information on this and other sources of childcare support available to families, can be found on the Parent Club website at: www.parentclub.scot/elc.

Housing

Action 4.5 *Young parents should have the help and support they need to understand their rights in this area [access to housing].*

Pregnant young women and young mothers make up about one in 25 of all applications for homeless assessments in Scotland¹².

Scotland’s strong homelessness rights mean families are placed in temporary accommodation as a legal right, with 80% of this being within furnished social rent homes. Families with children and pregnant women should only be in B&B or similar accommodation for a maximum of seven days, before they are moved to either temporary or settled accommodation. The Scottish Government is currently consulting on new standards for temporary accommodation.

[Ending Homelessness Together: A High Level Action Plan](#) was published in 2018. The Action Plan sets out the actions necessary to end homelessness in Scotland, ensuring a personalised, tailored response to people’s housing needs. Such an approach is invaluable to young parents and their families, to ensure they get the warm, secure housing they need amongst a community of their choice where they can access help and support.

¹² Either the homeless applicant or their partner was female and under 21 and at least one child in household

Income Maximisation

Best Start Grant



Young parents aged under 18, or aged 18 or 19 and still dependent on their parent or carer, are amongst the families that qualify for the Scottish Government's new [Best Start Grant \(BSG\)](#). Payments of the [Best Start Pregnancy and Baby Grant](#) commenced in December 2018. Qualifying young parents will receive £600 on the birth of their first baby, and £300 for any subsequent children.

We have also introduced 2 further payments of £250 for each child at key points in their early years, around the time they start nursery and school. Applications for the Early Learning payment opened in April 2019, and for the School Age Payment in June 2019.

Best Start Foods

From 12 August 2019, Scottish Government will launch Best Start Foods. Families on low incomes, who qualify for Best Start Foods, will receive a Best Start Food payment card. The card will be phased in to replace the current UK scheme of Healthy Start Food Vouchers. The value will increase from £3.10 to £4.25 per week, the benefit is intended to support families on low income benefits with children up to 3 years old. The card will provide these families with further choices about where to purchase nutritious foods such as milk (including infant formula), fresh, frozen or tinned fruit and vegetables, pulses and eggs.

Job Grant

The Scottish Government has committed to introducing a Job Grant for young people aged 16-24 years old (inclusive), who have been out of paid employment for six months or more.

The Job Grant will comprise of an one-off cash payment of either £250 or £400, the higher amount being payable to young people who have children. It aims to help meet the initial costs of starting work, which might include things like lunches and travel to work, supporting a smooth transition into employment for young people on low incomes. Consultation responses and what we heard directly from young people will inform further development of Job Grant policy.

Financial Health Check

Through the commitment in the *Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan*, low income families can access free personalised advice on money matters, from claiming benefits and reducing household energy costs to accessing grants such as the Best Start Grant and the School Clothing Grant. The Financial Health Check service commenced on 1 November 2018 and is delivered by the Citizens Advice Network in Scotland.

Clients can access the service either over the phone on **0800 085 7145**, or face to face in a local bureau. Backed by £3.3 million in funding over two years, it is estimated that at least 15,000 households a year will benefit from this service.

In line with the priority families set out in the Delivery Plan, young mothers aged under 25 are particularly encouraged to make use of the service.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Whilst rates of pregnancy in young people in Scotland continue to decline and the inequalities gap is narrowing, rates are still amongst the highest in Western Europe and inequalities remain.

The Scottish Government continues to prioritise the needs of young people around pregnancy and parenthood. The work to implement the Strategy is ongoing and takes place in partnership with the numerous other policies across Government which also consider the needs of young people in this area, and in particular the work to support our young parents through the *Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan* and the provision of the Family Nurse Partnership programme.

In 2019/20 we will focus on the actions below:

Leadership and Accountability:

- We will continue to support local implementation through the provision of our 'awareness sessions', working to understand local need and delivery, and sharing examples of good practice.

Giving Young People More Control:

- We will be taking forward work on the development of age and stage appropriate key messages on healthy relationships and consent for professionals caring for and educating early stage and primary aged children.
- We will work in partnership with the 'Keys to Life' to support young people with learning disabilities and other significant communication difficulties around healthy and safe relationships.

Pregnancy in Young People:

- We will publish 'Getting Maternity Services Right for Young Parents' and the accompanying quick reference guide.

Parenthood in Young People:

- We will continue to work with young people and professionals to finalise and publish our guidance for supporting young pregnant women and young parents to remain in school.



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