

Young Parents

Many young people have dreams of becoming parents and despite some negative media coverage and common stereotypes; they choose to have children early in life and flourish in their role as a young parent. Young parents may find it easier to relate to their children and be able to adapt to the physical demand of caring for a child easier than anyone else. However, young parents face many social, emotional and financial challenges; they may become isolated, be unable to cope with the emotional demand of raising a child or be unable to financially support a child.

The challenges of being a young parent can be magnified if the young parent is a sole parent, or, has limited partner or family support or if the pregnancy is unplanned. Young parents, particularly in these situations, need, and have the right to, additional support to assist them in their role as a young parent. This is especially important in Tasmania as Tasmania has the second highest rate of teen pregnancy in the country and there are limited services available to assist young parents, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Youth sector and health workers have become more aware of the growing need to provide support to young mothers and young fathers entering into a parenting role. Support services previously have been targeted at young mothers and support groups only open to women. Services are now beginning to expand their services to include fathers. While these programs are a positive step forward for young parents, additional services are needed to cater to the different parenting needs of young fathers and young mothers as they often have different needs and support and services.

YNOT is committed to:

- Advocating for targeted programs for young parents aiming to support them to reconnect or stay connected in education and training during pregnancy and following birth.
- Advocating for support programs and parenting skills classes to be made available and targeted to the specific needs of young parents.



- Highlighting the need for accessible child care facilities to be established for young parents to enable them to engage in education, employment, recreational activities and maintain their own health needs.
- Raising awareness about issues affecting young parents and young pregnant women, and addressing the often negative attitudes towards young parents in the media and communities.
- Advocating for increased financial support for young parents.

Future Vision

A Tasmania in which young parents are supported and have access to the services and resources they need to be successful parents. There will be increased education and employment opportunities encouraging young parents to stay involved or become involved in these areas and not be excluded due to being a young parent.

References

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