

# Parenting Youth Tip Sheet

“Teen parents in foster care face additional challenges that are unique to their situation. Teens in foster care are less likely to finish their schooling and more likely to suffer from mental illness, unemployment, and homelessness than teens not in foster care. Many teen parents in foster care have experienced maltreatment, endured multiple placements, and been separated from parents and other important people.”

Helping Teen Parents in Foster Care

<https://www.casey.org/pregnant-parenting-teens/>

SSW will:

- Utilize [SOP 2.11 Investigation Protocol](#) to determine risks associated with the parenting youth;
- Not file a petition on the parenting youth’s child without specific allegations of abuse, neglect or dependency related to that child; and
- Assess all parenting youth to ensure appropriate supports are provided if the parenting youth is placed in out-of-home care (OOHC) while parenting or expecting to give birth while in OOHC;

Through ongoing case planning, the SSW:

- Provides education on safe sleep and the importance of asking for assistance when needed;
- Ensures access to medical attention, including prenatal, and postnatal care;
- Provides supports that promote age appropriate developmental goals and addresses relevant mental health issues, including the impact of trauma;
- Provides education related to substance abuse (specifically the risks that substance use poses to the developing child), sexual health, the prevention of second pregnancies, and sexually transmitted infections;
- Encourages healthy relationships with partners, peers, family members, and other supportive people;
- Promotes self-sufficiency and independent living skills for youth by helping them to obtain high school diplomas/GEDs, and pursue additional education and employment opportunities, or job training, depending on their interests;
- Assists the parenting youth in applying for other supports such as Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) so that their child receives regular medical care, including developmental screenings; and
- Refers the parenting youth to Family First prevention services when their child is at risk for removal and an evidence-based practice can mitigate this risk.