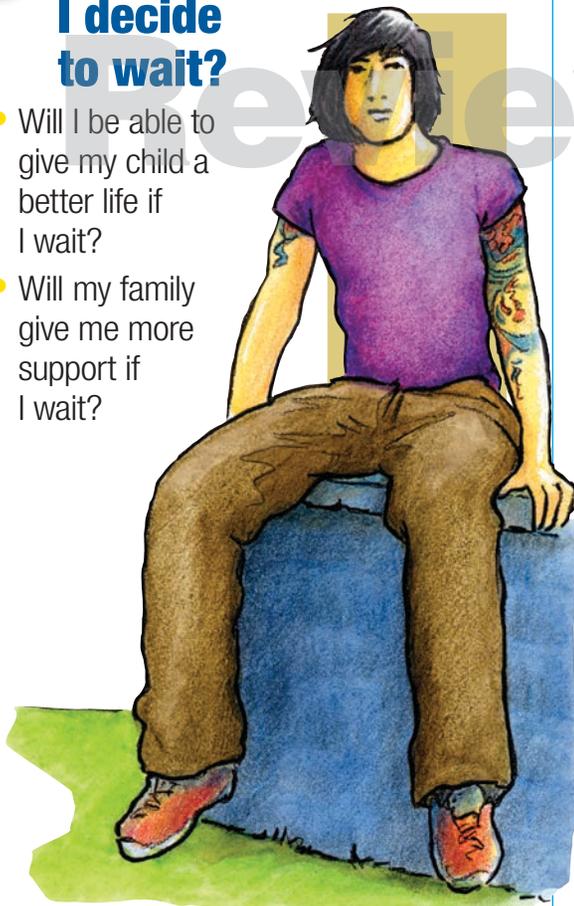


? What do I want from my life?

- Do I want to finish school or start a career?
- Do I have other goals such as to play a sport or travel?
- How hard will it be to do those things if I have a child now?

? What if I decide to wait?

- Will I be able to give my child a better life if I wait?
- Will my family give me more support if I wait?



Am I ready to be a dad?

Inside are some questions that can help you think about it. If you are not ready, it is best to wait. For more information about pregnancy prevention and family planning, talk with your parents, a health care provider or another trusted adult. Or visit: stayteen.org

Review Copy

This pamphlet is not a substitute for medical care. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with a health care provider.

Written by Mardi Richmond.
Designed by Eva Bernstein. Illustrated by Meg Biddle.
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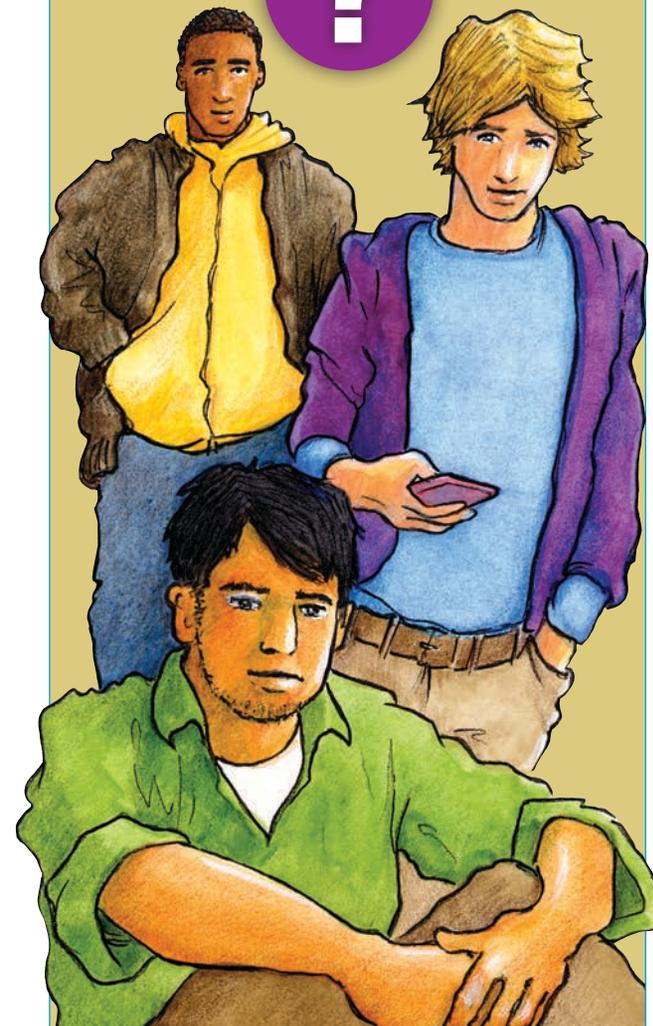
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Am I Ready to Be a Dad

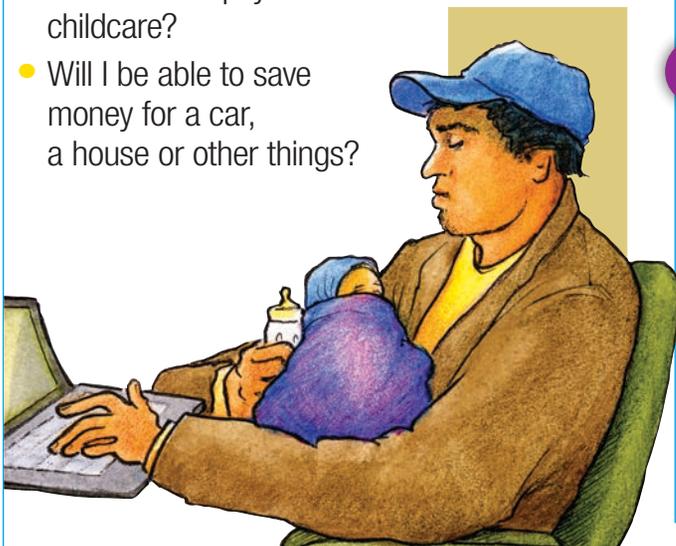
?



Being a dad can be one of the most meaningful things you can do. But if it happens too soon, it can be hard for you and your baby. Ask yourself these questions.

? Can I afford to support a child?

- Will I work? Will the baby's mother work too?
- Will I have enough money for:
 - Food?
 - Diapers and clothes?
 - A safe place to live?
 - Doctors and medicine?
- Will I need to pay for childcare?
- Will I be able to save money for a car, a house or other things?



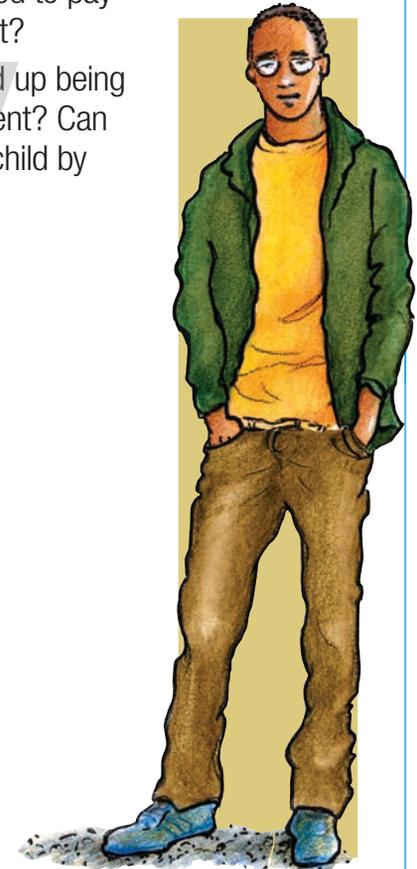
? Am I ready to take care of a baby 24/7?

- Am I willing to do my share of the laundry, cleaning and cooking?
- How do I feel about changing dirty diapers?
- What if:
 - I don't get enough sleep?
 - My baby won't stop crying?
 - I get angry, frustrated or overwhelmed?
- Am I willing to give up other things in my life (like hanging out with friends) to spend time with my child?
- What if my child has health problems or special needs? How would I handle that?



? Is my relationship ready for a child?

- Are we ready for a lifelong commitment?
- How does my partner feel about having a baby?
- Will having a baby put a strain on our relationship?
- Can I give my partner emotional and physical support while she is pregnant?
- What would happen if we split up? Am I prepared to pay child support?
- What if I end up being a single parent? Can I care for a child by myself?



? Will I be a good father?

- Am I aware of both the good and the hard parts of being a parent?
- How would I learn to be a good dad? Would I talk to my own family or other parents? Would I need to take a parenting class?
- To protect my child and to be a better dad, can I stay away from cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs?