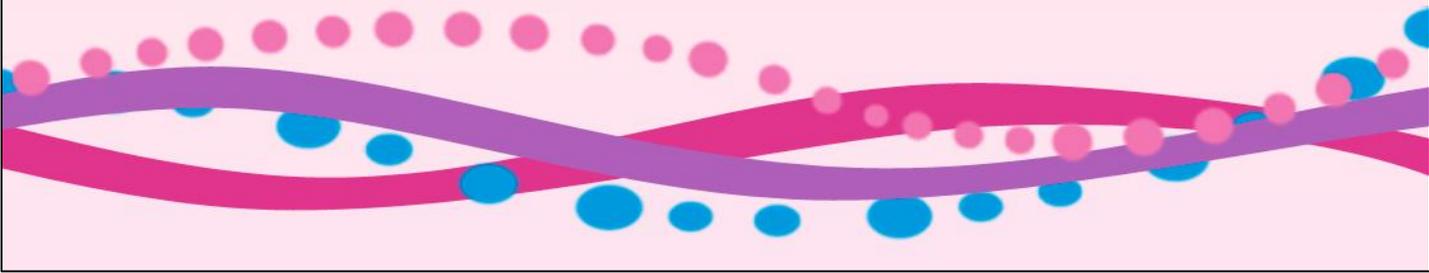


Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Teacher's Guide



Acknowledgements

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Many thanks to these agencies and individuals for their generosity in sharing their time and talents with us:

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Disclaimer

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Overview

The Healthy *Before* Pregnancy curriculum has three basic goals:

1. Increase students' knowledge of the various pathways that can lead to poor birth outcomes
2. Increase students' knowledge about how their current lifestyle and health choices can impact their future reproductive outcomes
3. Give students the knowledge and skills they need to plan their reproductive lives

This curriculum has five lesson plans:

Lesson Plan 1: Pathways to Poor Birth Outcomes

Lesson Plan 2: Multivitamins: Take Them for Life

Lesson Plan 3: Healthy Weight Matters

Lesson Plan 4: Preventable Factors That Can Lead to Poor Birth Outcomes

Lesson Plan 5: Reproductive Life Planning

NC Standard Course of Study for Family and Consumer Sciences Courses

The chart below shows which Family and Consumer Science classes and objectives are met by which lesson plans in the *Healthy Before Pregnancy* curriculum.

Course	NC Standard Course of Study Objective	Healthy <i>Before Pregnancy</i> Lesson Plan
7065 Parenting and Child Development	<p>A. PARENTING PERSPECTIVES</p> <p>PC01.00 Understand the parenthood decision.</p> <p>PC01.01 Understand readiness characteristics and factors that should be considered before becoming a parent.</p> <p>PC01.02 Understand teen sexuality, teen pregnancy, and responsible decisions about abstinence versus sexual activity.</p> <p>PC01.03 Understand family planning issues.</p>	<p>Lesson Plan 4: Preventable Factors That Can Lead to Poor Birth Outcomes</p> <p>Lesson Plan 5: Reproductive Life Planning</p>
7065 Parenting and Child Development	<p>B. CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND GUIDANCE</p> <p>PC03.00 Understand prenatal development and the components of a healthy pregnancy and delivery.</p> <p>PC03.01 Understand environmental and hereditary influences on prenatal development and long-term effects on health of children.</p> <p>PC03.02 Remember the prenatal development of baby from conception to birth and the changes a mother experiences during pregnancy.</p> <p>PC03.03 Understand components of a healthy pregnancy and delivery.</p>	<p>Lesson Plan 1: Pathways to Poor Birth Outcomes</p> <p>Lesson Plan 2: Multivitamins: Take Them For Life</p> <p>Lesson Plan 3: Healthy Weight Matters</p> <p>Lesson Plan 4: Preventable Factors That Can Lead to Poor Birth Outcomes</p>

7015 Teen Living	<p>TL001. Apply strategies to enhance personal development and interpersonal skills to obtain a greater understanding of self through self-evaluation.</p> <p>TL01.01 Outline factors and strategies that promote personal development.</p> <p>TL01.02 Interpret roadblocks to personal development.</p> <p>TL01.03 Practice interpersonal skills.</p> <p>TL03.02 Critique the consequences and risks of youth parenting.</p>	Lesson Plan 5: Reproductive Life Planning
7045 Foods I	<p>FF4.00 Understand food choices.</p> <p>FF4.01 Understand influences on food choices.</p> <p>FF4.02 Understand guidelines for healthful food choices.</p> <p>FF5.00 Understand the relationship between food choices and health.</p> <p>FF5.01 Understand the six nutrient groups in food.</p> <p>FF5.02 Understand nutritional needs through the life cycle, special nutritional needs, and types of eating plans.</p>	<p>Lesson Plan 2: Multivitamins: Take them For Life</p> <p>Lesson Plan 3: Healthy Weight Matters</p>

Curriculum Format:

Each lesson plan consists of a PowerPoint presentation with Teacher's Notes.

Each lesson plan includes:

- **The Goal:** Provides the overall aim of the lesson plan
- **Learning Objectives:** Describes specific areas of knowledge, attitudes or skills that students will learn or master in the lesson plan
- **Classroom Group Activities:** Group activities to engage students in creative, hands-on learning experiences that reinforce the lesson plan content.
- **Self-Study Activities:** Individual worksheets, reading assignments, websites and/or videos to help students develop more specific knowledge about an area presented in the lesson plan
- **Pre/Post Tests:** Short assessments of knowledge attained from a lesson plan. These can be used before and after the lessons to assess how much students have learned
- **Additional Resources:** Websites, additional curricula for teachers to use to further reinforce or expand upon lesson plan content

How to use this curriculum:

This curriculum is flexible for various teaching needs. The content can be split by lesson plans and then by sections.

The PowerPoint slides along with the corresponding Teacher's Notes are considered the lesson plan. However, you do not need to have access to a computer or projector during class to use the PowerPoint slides. Simply print handouts or give the lesson orally, without handouts.

In addition to the Teacher's Notes found in this document, each PowerPoint presentation contains notes and speaking points. Do not include the notes when printing handouts of the presentations for students.

Additional content, such as the classroom group activities, self-study activities, pre/posttests and additional resources, are designed to be used in a "pick and choose" manner for expanded learning opportunities.

North Carolina Healthy Youth Act

The Healthy *Before* Pregnancy Curriculum, and specifically Lesson Plan 5: Reproductive Life Planning, is designed to support the new legislation regarding comprehensive sexuality education.

In 2009, the Healthy Youth Act (HYA) was passed by the North Carolina General Assembly. This landmark legislation requires that all 7th-9th grade students in North Carolina public schools receive age-appropriate instruction about both abstinence-until-marriage and comprehensive sexuality education unless their parents remove them from one or both parts of the curriculum. There is no standard curriculum provided by the state; local school districts determine what will be taught in their district. School systems must comply with the requirements by the start of the 2010/2011 school year.

Our Healthy *Before* Pregnancy curriculum compliments the principles of the HYA but is not in and of itself a comprehensive sex education curriculum. It does, however, meet many objectives in the NC Standard Course of Study objectives for Family and Consumer Sciences. It aligns with both the HYA and our mission of improving women's wellness, improving reproductive outcomes, and reducing health disparities.

For more information:

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina: [Local Schools Implementation Guidebook: North Carolina's Healthy Youth Act.](#)

Available at: <http://appcnc.org/>

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Teacher's Notes

Lesson Plans 1 - 5

Lesson Plan 1: Pathways to Poor Birth Outcomes

Goal: Students will understand the pathways that lead to poor birth outcomes, as well as health and lifestyle choices that can prevent such outcomes.

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Become familiar with birth outcome terms and their meanings
- Have a basic understanding of the various causes of poor outcomes
- Be able to describe how birth defects are caused and be able to name one that can be prevented
- Be able to describe how NC compares to other states and national statistics with regards to birth outcomes
- Be able to list three things women can do to have a healthy pregnancy

Content:

- Section 1: Birth outcome terms
- Section 2: Causes of poor birth outcomes
- Section 3: Overview of birth defects
- Section 4: NC and birth outcome data
- Section 5: What a healthy pregnancy looks like

Section 1: Birth outcome terms

Objective:

Students will become familiar with birth outcome terms and their meanings

- Infant mortality
- Birth defects
- Unintended pregnancies
- Environmental factors
- Prenatal care
- Premature birth (prematurity)
- Epidemic
- Low birth weight

Classroom Activities:

- Birth Outcomes Taboo Game
- Preconception Health Public Service Announcements

Self-Study Activities:

- Take your online pre-pregnancy IQ quiz at www.marchofdimes.com/pregnancy/getready_quiz.html.
- Watch a 4:56 minute video online called, Prenatal Care: Early Pregnancy Visits on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ztsxpL5HAY.

- Watch a 4:59 minute video online called, Prenatal Care: Ongoing Visits on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=AK8z9R4R_Lo.
- March of Dimes information on [Low Birth Weight](#)
- March of Dimes information on [Premature Birth](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)

Section 2: Causes of poor birth outcomes

Objective:

Have a basic understanding of the various causes of poor outcomes

- Genetic birth defects
- Maternal illness
- Medication
- Environment
- Age of the mother
- “Don’t know”

Classroom Group Activities:

- Pregnancy Facts and Myths
- Maternal Illness Research and Display

Self-Study Activity:

- Watch a 3:07 minute video online called, Alcohol and Pregnancy on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=W58S6VE6kgY.

Additional Resources:

March of Dimes information on pregnancy

- [Teenage Pregnancy](#)
- [Pregnancy After 35](#)

March of Dimes information on the following infections and diseases in pregnancy:

- [Amniotic Fluid Abnormalities](#)
- [Asthma During Pregnancy](#)
- [Chickenpox in Pregnancy](#)
- [Cytomegalovirus Infection in Pregnancy](#)
- Diabetes in Pregnancy: [Preexisting Diabetes](#) and [Gestational Diabetes](#)
- [Fifth Disease in Pregnancy](#)
- [Genital Herpes and Pregnancy](#)
- [Group B Strep Infection](#)
- [High Blood Pressure During Pregnancy](#)
- [HIV and AIDS in Pregnancy](#)
- [Liver Disorders in Pregnancy](#)
- [Placental Conditions](#)

- [Rubella \(German Measles\)](#)
- [Sexually Transmitted Infections in Pregnancy](#)
- [The Thrombophilias and Pregnancy](#)
- [Toxoplasmosis](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)

Section 3: Overview of Birth Defects

Objective:

Be able to describe how birth defects are caused and be able to name one that can be prevented

Classroom Group Activities:

- Birth Defects Q &A
- Birth Defects Research and Report

Additional Resources:

March of Dimes information on various birth defects and genetics:

- [Cerebral Palsy](#)
- [Chromosomal Abnormalities](#)
- [Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate](#)
- [Clubfoot and Other Foot Defects](#)
- [Congenital Heart Defects](#)
- [Cystic Fibrosis](#)
- [Down Syndrome](#)
- [Fragile X Syndrome](#)
- [Genital and Urinary Tract Defects](#)
- [Hearing Impairment](#)
- [Marfan Syndrome](#)
- [Neurofibromatoses](#)
- [PKU \(Phenylketonuria\)](#)
- [Rh Disease](#)
- [Sickle Cell Disease](#)
- [Spina Bifida](#)
- [Tay-Sachs and Sandhoff Diseases](#)
- [Thalassemia](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)

Section 4: NC and birth outcome data

Objective:

Be able to describe how NC compares to other states and national statistics with regards to birth outcomes

Classroom Group Activity:

- Mapping NC Birth Outcome Statistics
- Group Guided Discussion About NC Birth Outcome Statistics

Additional Resources:

marchofdimes.com/peristats

Section 5: What a Healthy Pregnancy Looks Like

Objective:

Be able to list three things women can do to have a healthy pregnancy

Classroom Group Activity:

- Reproductive Life Trajectories

Lesson Plan 2: Multivitamins: Take Them for Life

Goal: To help students understand how important it is for females to be in the habit of taking a daily multivitamin before pregnancy. Studies show that if all women consumed the recommended amount of folic acid before and during early pregnancy, up to 70 percent of all neural tube defects (NTDs) could be prevented.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify the number one cause of infant mortality
- Identify one type of birth defect that may be prevented
- Explain how a neural tube defect occurs
- Identify two types of NTDs
- Explain how common NTDs are in the US, NC and among racial/ethnic groups
- Explain why folic acid in multivitamins is preferred over naturally occurring folate
- Explain other advantages of taking daily multivitamins
- Know how to shop and choose the best multivitamin for them

Classroom Group Activities:

- Multivitamins Facts and Myths
- Remember to Take Multivitamins Brainstorm
- Take Your Multivitamin Every Day Pledge

Self-Study Activity:

Take an online folic acid quiz at one of the following websites:

- marchofdimes.com/pregnancy/folicacid_quiz.html
- folicacidinfo.org/pages/folicacid_iq.php
- cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/quiz.html

Additional Resources:

North Carolina Preconception Health Campaign
everywomannc.com

March of Dimes
marchofdimes.com

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cdc.gov/ncbddd/index.html

Spina Bifida Association of America
sbaa.org

National Council on Folic Acid
folicacidinfo.org

National Organization for Rare Disorders
rarediseases.org/ (contains information about anencephaly)

Advocating for Folic Acid: A Guide for Health Professionals
Sponsors: Association of Schools of Public Health, March of Dimes
folicacid.net/

Lesson Plan 3: Healthy Weight Matters

Goal: To help students understand that a female's personal weight in adolescence and young adulthood can have an impact on the health outcomes of future (or present) pregnancies.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Calculate their own Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Describe the difference between healthy weight, overweight and obesity
- Understand the concept of planning for a healthy weight prior to pregnancy/parenthood
- Identify the negative health consequences for babies when the mother is obese during pregnancy
- Describe obesity trends among pregnant women in NC (including race/ethnicity) and among adolescents
- Identify three ways to take control over their own personal weight and health

Classroom Group Activities:

- Healthy Weight Presentations
- Healthy Weight Student Advocacy

Self-Study Activities:

- Use the *Healthy Habits for Life* booklet (order at everywomannc.com)
- Read and summarize *Kids Health in the Classroom* articles
- Use the energy tracker tool from *Kids Health in the Classroom: Personal Health-Nutrition*
- Take the Eat Smart Move More quiz to find out your energy balance level at myeatssmartmovemore.com
- Choose recipes from myeatssmartmovemore.com that you would like to make at home; prepare grocery lists
- Write your own fitness motivational story (about yourself or someone you admire)

Additional Resources:

Kids Health in the Classroom - Teachers Guides Grades 9-12

kidshealth.org/classroom

Each Teacher's Guide correlates with National Health Education Standards. Each guide contains: links to articles for teens, discussion questions, activities for students, and reproducible materials.

Personal Health Series

- Fitness
- Energy Balance
- Healthy Snacking
- School Lunch

Eat Smart Move More North Carolina Campaign
myeatsmartmovemore.com

Eat Smart Move More North Carolina
eatsmartmovemoreenc.com

Note: SyberShop is an interactive CD for teens to learn about healthy eating and physical fitness. Must order ahead of time through your local Cooperative Extension Agent. Order information can be found here: eatsmartmovemoreenc.com/Sybershop/Sybershop.html.

Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less
esmmweighless.com

Be Healthy. Be Happy. Be You. Beautiful campaign, by the [Office on Women's Health girlshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov) - Information and tools about nutrition and fitness

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Healthy Weight: It's not a diet, it's a lifestyle - cdc.gov/healthyweight
- CDC Physical Activity - cdc.gov/physicalactivity

Fruits and Veggies Matter
fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/index.html

My Bright Future
hrsa.gov/womenshealth/mybrightfuture/menu.html

FitDay: Free Diet and Weight Loss Journal
fitday.com

Livestrong
livestrong.com

- Free daily tracker- My Plate
livestrong.com/myplate

SparkPeople
sparkpeople.com/

Shape Up America!
shapeup.org

Small Step
smallstep.gov

Choose My Plate
choosemyplate.gov

Let's Move
letsmove.gov

Eating Well
eatingwell.com

Aim for a Healthy Weight
nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/index.htm

Lesson Plan 4: Preventable Factors That Lead to Poor Birth Outcomes

Goal: To help students understand that the health choices they make today can impact the health of their future babies (smoking, drinking, medications, stress, nutrition and exercise)

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify the five main causes of poor birth outcomes and give examples of each
- Understand that neural tube defects can be prevented up to 70% of the time by taking multivitamin every day
- Understand how to prevent STIs and how early and consistent prenatal care can diagnose and treat STIs to reduce associated consequences for pregnancy and babies.
- Understand how gestational diabetes can affect the health of a baby and why proper prenatal care is necessary
- Identify at least four environmental factors that can affect the health of a growing fetus or newborn baby
- Describe the health consequences for a growing fetus or newborn baby if the mother smokes and/or is exposed to second- and third-hand smoke
- List at least three tips from the NC Eat Smart Move More Campaign
- Explain why pregnancy intendedness affects the health of a newborn baby
- Create their own Reproductive Life Plans

Classroom Group Activities:

- Preventable Factors Research and Report
- Lifestyle Card Game
- Couples Case Studies
- Pregnancy Facts and Myths

Self-Study Exercises:

- Goal Setting (use handout)
- Personal Reproductive Health Risk Assessment for Females
- Adolescent Reproductive Life Plan

Additional Resources:

March of Dimes information on preventable factors that can lead to poor birth outcomes:

- [Thalidomide](#)
- [Accutane and Other Retinoids](#)
- [Illicit Drug Use During Pregnancy](#)
- [Smoking During Pregnancy](#)
- [Drinking Alcohol During Pregnancy](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)

Lesson Plan 5: Reproductive Life Planning

Goal: To help students plan for future “intended” pregnancies as part of their overall life plan

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Explain what pregnancy intendedness means
- Name three concerns associated with unintended pregnancy for the woman or baby
- Explain the main components of a Reproductive Life Plan
- Name three health risks for baby or mom associated with teen pregnancy
- Explain what “In the Fog Zone” means and how to avoid it
- Name five ways to get ready for pregnancy (physical health, emotional well being and financial security)

Classroom Group Activities:

- Lifestyle Card Game
- Couples Case Studies
- Pregnancy Facts and Myths
- Reproductive Life Trajectories

Self-Study Exercises:

- Goal Setting (use handout)
- Personal Reproductive Health Risk Assessment for Females
- Adolescent Reproductive Life Plan

Additional Resources:

National Campaign to Prevent Teenage and Unplanned Pregnancy

thenationalcampaign.org

NC Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention

appcnc.org

Find county specific statistics about teen pregnancy

- About Teen Pregnancy: Statistics
- County Facts
- Archived Stats

North Carolina Preconception Health Campaign

everywomannc.com/your-health/reproductive-life-planning

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy
Pre and Posttests
and
Answer Keys



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Lesson 1: Pathways to Poor Birth Outcomes Pre/Posttest

Please circle the answer that you think is most correct for each question.

1. Infant mortality means a baby dies before its 1st birthday.

TRUE

FALSE

2. What does prematurity mean? Choose one.

- (a) Babies born before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy
- (b) Babies born between 37 and 40 completed weeks of pregnancy
- (c) Babies born after 40 completed weeks of pregnancy

3. When looking at birth outcome data, North Carolina is one of the:

- (a) Ten best states to be born in
- (b) Ten worst states to be born in
- (c) Somewhere in the middle

4. What race or ethnicity is most affected by prematurity?

- (a) White
- (b) African-American
- (c) Hispanic
- (d) Native American

5. Can you name five causes of poor birth outcomes?

6. What is the leading cause of death of infants?

- (a) Birth defects
- (b) Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- (c) Second hand smoke
- (d) Shaken baby syndrome

7. Which birth defect is preventable up to 70%?

- (a) Down syndrome
- (b) Cleft lip/palate
- (c) Heart defects
- (d) Neural tube defects



Pre/Posttest Answer Key

Lesson 1: Pathways to Poor Birth Outcomes

1. TRUE
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. Birth defects, maternal illness, medications, environment, age of mother, don't know
6. A
7. D



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Lesson 2: Multivitamins: Take Them for Life Pre/Posttest

Please circle the answer that you think is most correct for each question.

1. One in how many babies are born with a birth defect?
 - (a) 1 in 33
 - (b) 1 in 55
 - (c) 1 in 75
 - (d) 1 in 100

2. Females should take at least _____ of folic acid each day.
 - (a) 200 micrograms
 - (b) 400 micrograms
 - (c) 800 micrograms
 - (d) 1000 micrograms

3. Studies show that if all women consumed the recommended amount of folic acid before and during early pregnancy, up to _____ of all NTDs could be prevented.
 - (a) 20%
 - (b) 35%
 - (c) 70%
 - (d) 90%

4. The spinal cord of a developing fetus closes between:
 - (a) 2-4 weeks of pregnancy
 - (b) 6-8 weeks of pregnancy
 - (c) 18-20 weeks of pregnancy
 - (d) 35-38 weeks of pregnancy

5. Generic multivitamins are not as good as brand name multivitamins?

TRUE

FALSE

6. Folic acid is most absorbable in a multivitamin or supplement compared to food.

TRUE

FALSE

7. Multivitamins may protect against heart disease, stroke and certain cancers.

TRUE

FALSE



Pre/Posttest Answer Key

Lesson 2: Multivitamins: Take Them for Life

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. FALSE
6. TRUE
7. TRUE



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Lesson 3: Healthy Weight Matters Pre/Posttest

Please circle the answer that you think is most correct for each question.

1. BMI stands for
 - (a) Binary Measure Input
 - (b) Body Mass Index
 - (c) Body Metabolic Implementation
 - (d) Body Measure Input

2. What percentage of NC teens are overweight or obese?
 - (a) Less than 25%
 - (b) Between 25% and 50%
 - (c) Over half (50% or more)

3. The likelihood that overweight children will become obese adults is almost ___ times higher than the risk for children who are not overweight.
 - (a) 2
 - (b) 3
 - (c) 5
 - (d) 9

4. Babies born to obese moms are at higher risk for:
 - (a) Being born “stillborn” (not alive at birth)
 - (b) Dying in the first 28 days of life
 - (c) Birth defects
 - (d) All of the above

5. Minority populations are more affected by obesity than white populations.

TRUE FALSE

6. Individuals in poverty are more likely to be obese than wealthy individuals.

TRUE FALSE

7. Babies born to overweight mothers are more likely to become obese adults

TRUE FALSE

8. A woman's weight before pregnancy doesn't matter; it's only the weight she gains during a pregnancy that affects the health of mom and baby.

TRUE FALSE



Pre/Posttest Answer Key

Lesson 3: Healthy Weight Matters

1. B
2. B
3. D
4. D
5. TRUE
6. TRUE
7. TRUE
8. FALSE



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Lesson 4: Preventable Factors That Can Lead to Poor Birth Outcomes Pre/Posttest

1. List 5 factors that can cause a baby to die or be born unhealthy.

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

Please circle the answer that you think is most correct for each question.

2. What kind of birth defect can be prevented up to 70% of the time?

- (a) Neural tube defects
- (b) Heart defects
- (c) Down syndrome
- (d) Cleft lip/palate

3. What is the easiest way to get enough folic acid every day?

- (a) Food
- (b) Sunlight
- (c) Multivitamin
- (d) Milk

Please circle all that apply:

4. If left untreated, which of the following sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can be fatal for a baby being born?
- (a) Gonorrhea
 - (b) Genital herpes
 - (c) HIV
 - (d) Syphilis
 - (e) Genital warts
5. Women who smoke during pregnancy have increased chances of having a baby...
- (a) Who is born prematurely
 - (b) Who is low birthweight
 - (c) Who is very large at birth
 - (d) Who dies of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Please circle either TRUE or FALSE for following statements.

6. Second-hand smoke can cause slow lung growth and asthma in newborns and young children

TRUE FALSE

7. Third-hand smoke is dangerous to newborns and young children.

TRUE FALSE

8. A woman's weight before pregnancy doesn't matter; it's only the weight she gains during a pregnancy that affects the health of mom and baby.

TRUE FALSE

9. Having a planned or unplanned pregnancy doesn't really affect the health of the baby.

TRUE FALSE



Pre/Posttest Answer Key

Lesson 4: Preventable Factors That Can Lead to Poor Birth Outcomes

1. Birth defects, maternal illness, medication, environment/lifestyle, age of mother, don't know
2. A
3. C
4. A, B, C, D
5. A, B, D
6. TRUE
7. TRUE
8. FALSE
9. FALSE



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Lesson 5: Reproductive Life Planning Pre/Posttest

Please circle the answer that you think is most correct for each question.

1. Do you have or intend to have a written Reproductive Life Plan now or in the next two weeks?
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
 - (c) Not sure

2. What does pregnancy intendedness mean?
 - (a) A pregnancy was planned.
 - (b) A pregnancy just happened.
 - (c) A pregnancy was not wanted.

3. How many U.S. births are unintended? Choose one.
 - (a) Less than 10%
 - (b) About 25%
 - (c) About half (50%)
 - (d) About 75%

4. North Carolina ranks ____ in teen pregnancy rates in the nation?
 - (a) 9th
 - (b) 15th
 - (c) 28th
 - (d) 42nd

5. How many adolescents between the ages of 10-19 become pregnant in NC each year?

- (a) 800
- (b) 2,000
- (c) 7,500
- (d) 19,000

6. Which health consequence is related to unintended pregnancies? Choose one.

- (a) Babies are more likely to die.
- (b) Babies are more likely to be born too big.
- (c) Babies are more likely to have asthma.
- (d) Babies are more likely to have hearing loss.

7. How well you take care of yourself now can impact the health of a baby you or your partner may have in 5-15 years.

TRUE FALSE

8. Teens in urban counties have a higher risk of pregnancy than teens in rural counties?

TRUE FALSE

9. Which group has the highest rate of teen pregnancy?

- (a) White teens
- (b) Hispanic teens
- (c) African-American teens

10. Teen mothers have a higher risk of premature labor, anemia and high blood pressure.

TRUE FALSE

11. Teen mothers have higher rates of smoking than non-teen mothers.

TRUE FALSE



Pre/Posttest Answer Key

Lesson 5: Reproductive Life Planning

1. A (ideally A, depends on the individual student)
2. A
3. C
4. A
5. D
6. A
7. TRUE
8. FALSE
9. B
10. TRUE
11. TRUE

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy
Classroom and Self-Study
Activities and Handouts

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Birth Outcomes Taboo Game

Divide students into small groups. Tell them this activity is a version of the common game Taboo™. In their groups students will take turns. The first player will draw a card and will try to describe the “Term to guess” to the other players without using any of the Taboo words. The other players try to guess the correct infant health outcome term. The player who identified the most infant health outcome terms by the end, wins.

Note: If the game is too hard, you can list the terms in random order on the board.



<p>Term to guess: infant mortality</p> <p>Taboo words: infant, mortality, die, baby, year</p>	<p>Term to Guess: birth defects</p> <p>Taboo words: birth, defect, wrong, baby, problem</p>
<p>Term to guess: environmental factors</p> <p>Taboo words: environmental, factors, pregnant, smoking, chemicals</p>	<p>Term to guess: prenatal care</p> <p>Taboo words: prenatal, care, doctor, early, pregnancy, trimester</p>
<p>Term to guess: premature birth (prematurity)</p> <p>Taboo words: premature, birth, prematurity, baby, born, soon, early</p>	<p>Term to guess: epidemic</p> <p>Taboo words: epidemic, rise, rate, problem</p>
<p>Term to guess: low birth weight</p> <p>Taboo words: low, birth, weight, small, early, born</p>	<p>Term to guess: unintended pregnancies</p> <p>Taboo words: unintended, pregnancies, pregnant, want, planned</p>



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Preconception Health Public Service Announcements

Small groups can create short TV, radio or print public service announcements describing the four things you can do to help ensure a future baby will have a healthy start. Give each group one of the four messages listed below. Each public service announcement should be brief and motivating, appeal to young people, and explain the link between the message and healthy babies. Have student groups “perform” their public service announcements for the class.

1. Be in the habit of taking a daily multivitamin.
2. Make healthy food choices and be physically active.
3. Know how to protect yourself from unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections; have a plan for your emotional-personal experiences, physical and financial goals to be in place before becoming pregnant.
4. Have a plan for your life including education, finance goals, and relationship goals *before* becoming pregnant.

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Pregnancy Facts and Myths

Have students raise their hands to signify if they think the following statements are TRUE or a FALSE. You can allow for class discussion to explore each topic further.

	Statement	True	False
1	Guys are not only after “one thing” with girls and most will respect a girl for saying “no” or “not yet.”	✓	
2	Most young adults think they know a lot about contraception, but research says that they really don’t.	✓	
3	Using two condoms at once gives better protection against pregnancy and STIs.		✓
4	Girls can’t get pregnant during their period.		✓
5	People don’t really have control over whether or not they get pregnant; these things just happen when they happen.		✓
6	Most young people think pregnancies should be intended.	✓	
7	Babies born to teens are usually healthier than those born to older couples.		✓
8	Smoking and drinking alcohol during pregnancy is really not a big deal.		✓

Answers to review with students:

1. **FACT:** This is TRUE. National surveys show that many young men are hoping that a girl will set the sexual limits in a relationship.
2. **FACT:** This is TRUE. National surveys show that most young adults do not have basic knowledge about various contraceptive methods, how to use them, or how effective they are in preventing pregnancy.
3. **MYTH:** This is FALSE. Condoms are less likely to work correctly if “doubled up.” Use one at a time as recommended.

4. MYTH: This is FALSE. Females can get pregnant at various times in their menstrual cycle, including when they having their period.
5. MYTH: This is FALSE. You can take control over your reproductive life by abstaining from sex or using two methods (for example, condoms plus a more effective form) of birth control until you are ready for parenthood.
6. FACT: This is TRUE. National surveys show that young people think that pregnancies should be intended, but their sexual and contraceptive choices are not consistent with this belief.
7. MYTH: This is FALSE. Babies born to teen moms are at higher risk for a variety of poor birth outcomes.
8. MYTH: This is FALSE. Smoking and drinking alcohol puts a baby at a higher risk of SIDS and intellectual disabilities among other health issues.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Maternal Illness Research and Report

Students can create written summaries or mini visual presentations about various maternal illnesses. These could include: the name of the maternal illness, how common it is, how it can be prevented, and how it can be treated or managed. For visual presentations, have students do a gallery walk to see the displays. This can be done independently or in groups.

To get started, print the March of Dimes information on the following infections and diseases in pregnancy:

- [Amniotic Fluid Abnormalities](#)
- [Asthma During Pregnancy](#)
- [Chickenpox in Pregnancy](#)
- [Cytomegalovirus Infection in Pregnancy](#)
- Diabetes in Pregnancy: [Preexisting Diabetes](#) and [Gestational Diabetes](#)
- [Fifth Disease in Pregnancy](#)
- [Genital Herpes and Pregnancy](#)
- [Group B Strep Infection](#)
- [High Blood Pressure During Pregnancy](#)
- [HIV and AIDS in Pregnancy](#)
- [Liver Disorders in Pregnancy](#)
- [Placental Conditions](#)
- [Rubella \(German Measles\)](#)
- [Sexually Transmitted Infections in Pregnancy](#)
- [The Thrombophilias and Pregnancy](#)
- [Toxoplasmosis](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Birth Defects Q&A

Divide students into small groups and give them printed web pages from the March of Dimes website about specific birth defects. The March of Dimes information can be printed from the links in the Additional Resources section of Lesson Plan 1: Pathways to Poor Birth Outcomes, Section 3: Overview of Birth Defects.

Ask students to answer the following questions and then report back to the whole class.

1. Is this birth defect genetic (inherited)?
2. Is this birth defect caused by environmental factors? If yes, please explain.
3. Is this birth defect caused by a combination of genetics and environmental factors? If yes, please explain?
4. Can you think of ways a female could make choices to prevent this birth defect? If yes, please explain?
5. How common is this birth defect?
6. How could this birth defect affect a person's life (ability to learn, physical disability, social relationships, financially, etc.)?
7. What kind of medical care do you think a person with this birth defect might need?



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Birth Defects Research and Report

Students can create written summaries or mini visual presentations about various birth defects. These could include: the name of the birth defect, a general description of how it can affect a baby and on through his or her life, how common it is, and if and how it can be prevented. For visual presentations, have students do a gallery walk to see displays. This can be done independently or in groups.

To get started, print the March of Dimes information on various birth defects and genetics:

- [Cerebral Palsy](#)
- [Chromosomal Abnormalities](#)
- [Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate](#)
- [Clubfoot and Other Foot Defects](#)
- [Congenital Heart Defects](#)
- [Cystic Fibrosis](#)
- [Down Syndrome](#)
- [Fragile X Syndrome](#)
- [Genital and Urinary Tract Defects](#)
- [Hearing Impairment](#)
- [Marfan Syndrome](#)
- [Neurofibromatoses](#)
- [PKU \(Phenylketonuria\)](#)
- [Rh Disease](#)
- [Sickle Cell Disease](#)
- [Spina Bifida](#)
- [Tay-Sachs and Sandhoff Diseases](#)
- [Thalassemia](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Mapping NC Birth Outcome Statistics

Use the marchofdimes.com/peristats website to find birth outcome data organized by indicator* and state.

Ask students to create different maps of various states by indicators.

Have students give a short presentation of findings looking at how North Carolina and other Southeast states compare to the rest of the country.

Discuss the statistics as a large group.

Note: This activity pairs well with “Group Guided Discussion About NC Birth Outcome Statistics.”

* A health indicator is a measure that reflects, or indicates, the state of health of persons in a defined population. Examples - rates of disease, disability and death. Source: cdphe.state.co.us/ohd/glossary.html



Healthy Before Pregnancy

Guided Group Discussion About NC Birth Outcome Statistics

Lead a group discussion about why NC (and the South in general) has worse birth outcomes than other states.

Questions could include:

- Why are NC obesity rates high? How might these rates affect birth outcomes?
- Think of parts of the country that have better infant health outcomes; what is different about women and pregnancy in those states?
- How do you think the rates of teen pregnancy might affect birth outcomes?
- Do you think level of education could affect infant birth outcomes?
- Do you think having health insurance could affect infant birth outcomes?
- Do you think having a planned pregnancy might help a female have a healthier infant outcome?
- Now that you know about NC and its problems with infant health outcomes, what will you do differently? How do you think you could make a difference and motivate other young people help improve the health of babies in NC?

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Reproductive Life Trajectories

Using the character descriptions below, create visual reproductive life trajectories by creating a timeline marking lifestyle and health choices such as:

- Age when all pregnancies and births took place (for themselves or partner)
- Health events and outcomes
- Health choices/situations (put on weight, started smoking, crisis point in an abusive relationship, etc.)

Groups should name their character and describe to class what they think may have happened to their individual and their future children. Encourage students to think creatively but keep it realistic.

Hint: You may need to define the word “trajectory” for your students.



Character 1: Is a female who swam on varsity swim team in high school, ate healthy foods and drank water as primary beverage in high school, avoided smoking and alcohol, and did not use prescription drugs. Went to a four-year university where she continued to swim recreationally and started running five times a week. Continued healthy eating; no major illnesses. Two sexual partners by age 22; used condoms consistently. She has dreams of a career in finance and wants a family someday.

Character 2: Is a female who smoked in high school, drank alcohol regularly, and walked a lot. Went to a community college. Had six sexual partners by age 22 and used condoms, but not all of the time. Gave up drinking in her 20s but continued to smoke. By age 25 she was in a serious relationship that was sometimes abusive. She has a job that she doesn't like.

Character 3: Is a female high school student who is pregnant. She is overweight and her partner smokes. She occasionally tries illicit drugs. She is failing coursework. She has had three sexual partners by age 17 and did not use condoms at all. She has had no prenatal care and is trying to hide the pregnancy by not eating much.

Character 4: Is a male who is enrolled at a technical school. He works out a gym and prepares most meals at home. He has had one sexual partner by age 22. He uses condoms and his partner takes birth control pills. He does not smoke and has an occasional drink. He has dreams of running his own business and buying a house. He owns his car.

Character 5: Is a male in high school. He smokes, does not exercise much, eats typical teen diet, has had three sexual partners by age 17 and does not use condoms consistently. He is not in a relationship. He is just passing coursework. His family smokes.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Multivitamins Facts and Myths

Have students raise their hands to signify if they think the following statements are TRUE or a FALSE. You can allow for class discussion to explore each topic further.

	Statement	True	False
1	Vitamins will make me fat.		✓
2	I should get all my nutrients from food.		✓
3	Vitamins can make my hair look and feel nicer.	✓	
4	Some vitamins make my stomach upset.	✓	
5	Folic acid is a type of acid.		✓
6	Chewable vitamins are just as good as the pill kind.	✓	
7	Vitamins don't cost much money.	✓	
8	Vitamins are really only necessary during pregnancy.		✓

Answers to review with students:

Question 4: If vitamins make your stomach upset taking ones without iron might help. Talk to your health care provider about which one is best for you.

Question 6: Just make sure you read the label to ensure you are getting 400 mcg of folic acid and enough of the other essential vitamins.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Remember to Take Multivitamins Brainstorm

1. Ask students to brainstorm ideas of what might help them remember to take their multivitamins every day. Answers might include: keeping the vitamins near something they use at the same time every day such as their toothbrush; or setting their cell phones to text them a multivitamin reminder.
2. Ask students to brainstorm ways they can reach other adolescent females at school with multivitamin message. Examples could include: PSA messages over school-wide broadcasts or “morning announcements”; ads or articles in the school paper or other media sources; or Folic Acid Awareness Week activities, such as hosting an information table near the cafeteria, wearing green, etc.
3. Help students take this a step further and ask them to carry out their plans. Survey students from time to time to see if they are remembering to take their multivitamin every day. Ask them to share ideas of what helps them remember.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Take Your Multivitamin Every Day Pledge

We have learned that in order for an individual to change a health behavior, like taking a multivitamin every day, it is important to feel that such a decision has been made with the support of and in the presence of others. As such, I would like to invite you to take a pledge.

PLEDGE

I, _____,
promise to take a multivitamin with folic acid every day as a way of improving my own health
and I promise to remind other women in my life to take their daily multivitamins as well.

Signature _____

Date _____



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Healthy Weight Presentations

Ask students to visit the Simple Tips section of myeatssmartmovemore.com and put together mini presentations about each tip. “The Healthy Habits For Life” tool is a helpful tool for this activity (order at everywomannc.com).

Have them keep in mind:

- Who is your audience (teens)?
- What supplies will you need for your presentation?
- What method will you use to deliver your message—skit, song, poster board display, etc.?
- How can your group brainstorm ways to elaborate a simple tip to make it more user friendly?

Eat Smart Move More Tips

Rethink your drink

Tame the tube and get moving

Right-size your portions

Choose to move more every day

Enjoy more fruits and veggies

Prepare more meals at home



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Healthy Weight Student Advocacy

Direct students to the Eat Smart Move More website (eatsmartmovemorenc.com) and/or provide some ESMM print outs with community examples. Ask students to develop or replicate a project that promotes healthy eating and exercise for young women in their own school, church, or community. Give them a planning worksheet to help them think through all the steps and potential strengths and challenges. You could assemble a judges panel to rate plans. Examples of community projects: school garden, advocating for better cafeteria options, walking trail installation, advocating for an after school dance club, after school cooking classes, field trips to local farmers markets, etc.

Community Tools:

NC Walks to School

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCWalksToSchool/NCWalksToSchool.html>

Fundraising ideas that promote healthy eating and fitness

http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/SchoolFundraisingTlkt/Texts/070604_school_fundraising_kit.pdf

Teen education campaign on how to eat healthy when choosing fast food

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/FastFoodAndFamilies/FastFoodAndFamilies.html>

Community garden

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/SuccessStories/SuccessStory.html?snipit=Stories/GardenParty>

Elementary principle starts “steps to health” program for third graders (could be translated to a high school audience)

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/SuccessStories/SuccessStory.html?snipit=Stories/StepsToHealth>

Eat Smart North Carolina: Fruits and Veggies Challenge

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/FruitsAndVeggiesChallenge/FruitsAndVeggiesChallenge.html>

Archived success stories

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/SuccessStories/StoryArchieve.html>

Student Planning Sheet - Student Advocacy

Goal of project (What you are trying to accomplish)

We hope to _____

Target Audience (Who your project will affect). For example: We plan to promote this event to all students and hope that at least 50% will participate.

We plan to help _____

Objectives of the project (Quantify what, when and to whom you are trying to effect)

Our objective(s) is to _____

Strategies (How you will accomplish your goal and objective)

Action Steps (Who, where, when and what resources you need)

Strengths

Challenges

Evaluation (How you will measure the effectiveness of your project)

Example:
Student Planning Sheet - Student Advocacy

Goal: We are trying to jumpstart a Move More campaign so that students will begin to incorporate moving more into their daily routines.

Objective

- To have 50% of all students walk or bike to school every day for a week to jumpstart a Move More campaign.

Strategies

- We plan to advertise this event (media).
- Coordinate with school administrators and bus administrators (partner).
- Host a celebration event (reward participation).

Action Steps

- Establish a club/core group of committed students.
- Get buy in from school administrators.
- Coordinate buses to drop off half a mile from school.
- Advocate for bike racks.
- Promote through school media channels.
- Find student leaders to become Ambassadors for the event.
- Offer incentives.
- Plan a celebration at lunch.
- Find community sponsors to help with costs.
- Have plan in place for next phase of Move More campaign.

Strengths

- This project has been done successfully at other schools.
- Group of committed students are already excited.
- School Administrator and faculty are already committed.

Challenges

- Lots of coordination involved- time, people
- Lack of funds dedicated
- Hard issue to promote to students

Evaluation

- Have a team of supporters at entrance of school counting how many students walked or biked in each day for a week



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Preventable Factors Research and Report

Students can create written summaries or mini visual presentations about various environmental and/or lifestyle factors that can affect pregnancy and the health of a growing fetus. For visual presentations, have students do a gallery walk to see displays. This can be done independently or in groups.

To get started, print the March of Dimes information on preventable factors that can lead to poor birth outcomes:

- [Thalidomide](#)
- [Accutane and Other Retinoids](#)
- [Illicit Drug Use During Pregnancy](#)
- [Smoking During Pregnancy](#)
- [Drinking Alcohol During Pregnancy](#)

(Hint: If links do not work, copy terms and paste them into the search box at marchofdimes.com.)

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Lifestyle Cards Game

Cut out these cards with various lifestyle attitudes on them or write your own. Have students draw a card and ask them to argue the position stated on the card. Allow for class discussion to help students think through various perspectives, cultivating a sense of respect for various choices.



<p>Guy: I smoke and drink and I don't think it's a big deal as long as I don't do it while driving.</p>	<p>Girl: I'm not too worried about getting pregnant; my boyfriend and I use condoms most of the time.</p>
<p>Girl: I take medicine for my acne and I have a boyfriend. I heard that this medicine can mess up a baby pretty bad. Condoms are enough protection, right?</p>	<p>Guy: My sister didn't go to the doctor when she was pregnant and her baby turned out just fine; I don't see the point in prenatal care.</p>
<p>Guy: Having a kid gives you status; it shows that you can handle responsibility.</p>	<p>Girl: I think having a plan for when to have a baby is strange. Its' just supposed to happen when it happens.</p>
<p>Girl: I haven't thought too much about what I'll be doing after high school. I like to live in the present.</p>	<p>Guy: My baby nephew lives with us and the whole family smokes in the house. That can't be good, right?</p>
<p>Guy: My girlfriend and I eat what we want and we don't like to exercise much. Who likes to be sweaty? We're young so what difference does a diet of burger and fries make?</p>	<p>Girl: Two of my girlfriends have genital warts and one has herpes. I've only been with one guy, but I'm scared. Can that happen to me too?</p>



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Couples Case Studies

Read both case studies aloud. For each case study ask the students to discuss specific aspects of each couple and compare their choices.

Ask students to discuss the following:

- Which couple do you think has a better chance for a healthy birth outcome? Why?
- Which couple do you think has a healthier relationship? Why?
- How do you think physical health and health choices will play a role in the pregnancies?
- Which couple do you think is more emotionally ready for parenthood? Why?
- How do you think financial issues will play out for each couple? How could they be different?
- When the babies are each 3-years-old, what kind of life do you think each will have?
- What role do you think the two fathers will have in their kids' lives? What other information would you want to have to answer this question?
- How do you think these pregnancies will affect the personal goals of each mom?
- When do you think each mom will have another baby or will she have anymore? Why?

Case study 1: A 25-year-old unmarried couple has a baby. Both have 4-year college degrees and both have jobs that bring in a combined income of about \$65,000 a year. They have two car payments and rent a townhouse in a safe neighborhood. They have some student loan debt. The couple lives together and is expecting a baby in three months. Both are healthy young adults. The pregnancy was not intended; the couple was changing birth control methods, but didn't use a back-up method during the change.

Case study 2: A 17-year-old boy and 16-year-old girl are both in high school with no solid post-graduation plans. They each live separately with their parents. They both have minimum wage part-time jobs after school and on weekends. Both smoke socially and binge drink about once a week. The girl discovered she is pregnant and is due in five months. The boy considers this girl to be his girlfriend, but he has had short sexual relationships with two other girls while they were together and she doesn't know. The pregnancy was not intended; the couple used condoms some of the time.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Goal Setting

By next month I'd like to _____

By the end of the year I want to _____

I would like to finish _____

What I want to change the most about myself is _____

One thing I'd like from a boyfriend/girlfriend is _____

I'd like to have enough money to _____

One of my good qualities that I'd like to develop further is _____

One thing I'd really like to try is _____

Someplace I'd like to go is _____

I'd like to be the kind of friend who _____

Adapted from:
Smart Girls Life Skills Training Curriculum Part 1
Guilford County Health Department of Public Health
501 E Green Drive
High Point, NC 27260

Smart Girls adapted their version from:
March of Dimes "Rockabye" video resource sheet.

Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Personal Reproductive Health Risk Assessment for Females

Question	YES	NO
1. Do you go to your health care provider at least once a year for a check up?	Yes= 1	No=0
2. Do you go to your dentist at least every six months to get your teeth cleaned?	Yes= 1	No=0
3. Do you eat fast food at least three times a week?	Yes=0	No=1
4. Do you get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 times a week?	Yes= 1	No=0
5. Have you ever been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection?	Yes=0	No=1
6. Do you know when you intend to become pregnant (someday)?	Yes= 1	No=0
7. Do you take steps to handle your stress in a positive way?	Yes= 1	No=0
8. Do you smoke?	Yes=0	No=1
9. Do you take prescription medications?	Yes= 0	No=1
10. Do you have \$200 or more in credit card debt?	Yes= 0	No=1

11. Do you know your sickle cell status?	Yes= 1	No=0
12. Have you been immunized against human papillomavirus (HPV)?	Yes= 1	No=0
13. Do you or anyone in your immediate family have diabetes or high blood pressure?	Yes=0	No=1
14. Is your weight status overweight, obese, or underweight?	Yes=1	No=0
15. Have you ever been hit by a significant other?	Yes=0	No=1
16. Do you get at least eight hours of sleep most nights?	Yes= 1	No=0
17. Do you take a multivitamin with at least 400 micrograms of folic acid every day?	Yes= 1	No=0
18. Have you ever had a pregnancy scare?	Yes=0	No=1
19. Has anyone in your family had a poor birth outcome (infant death, premature baby, low birth weight baby, birth defect)?	Yes= 0	No=1
20. Do you consider yourself to be in excellent health?	Yes= 1	No=0

Add up your points and put the resulting number here: _____



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Answer/Scoring Key: Personal Reproductive Health Risk Assessment for Females

Points	Sheet Assignment
20-15	Low Risk
14-9	Moderate Risk
0-8	High Risk

*This exercise was designed to help adolescent females assess their personal risk of a poor birth outcome if they were to become pregnant today. It is by no means a medical recommendation. All females should talk with their own health care providers about their personal risk factors that could affect their own health and the health of any current or future pregnancies.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Explanation of Personal Reproductive Risk Assessment for Females

<p>1. Do you go to your health care provider at least once a year for a check up?</p> <p>Regular health care is important to your health. Regular care should include a pap smear, breast exam, review of family health history, weight, blood pressure check, diabetes testing and assessment of health habits that may be considered risky.</p>
<p>2. Do you go to your dentist at least every six months to get your teeth cleaned?</p> <p>Gum disease and other types of infections of the mouth affect can affect your overall health. It increases a woman's risk of heart disease, and can cause a pregnant woman to go into labor early.</p>
<p>3. Do you eat fast food at least three times a week?</p> <p>Fast Food is loaded with saturated fat and is low in essential vitamins and minerals. Eating fast food on a regular basis can increase your risk of obesity as well as poor nutrition.</p>
<p>4. Do you get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 times a week?</p> <p>Physical activity helps a woman to look and feel her best. Regular exercise and eating a healthy diet may help to prevent some illnesses, and decreases your risk for colds and other infections.</p>
<p>5. Have you ever been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection?</p> <p>Unprotected sex can put you at risk for infections of the reproductive organs. This can lead to internal scarring, and infertility later in life. In addition, some STIs cannot be cured and stay with you for life. Many STIs can affect the health of baby if not treated properly. Early prenatal care is a must.</p>
<p>6. Do you know when you intend to become pregnant (someday)?</p> <p>Putting down on paper your plan for when and if you want to have children decreases your chance of experiencing an unintended pregnancy. Infants conceived without planning are at a higher risk for poor health, and life long health complications.</p>
<p>7. Do you take steps to handle your stress in a positive way?</p> <p>Stress can increase a woman's risk for illness and infection. Ongoing stress can put you at risk for chronic diseases like high blood pressure. A woman who has high stress and gets pregnant is more likely to have a baby born too early and too small to survive.</p>

8. Do you smoke?

Smoking increased your risk of developing health problems. Women who smoke at a young age are more likely to develop serious lung disease in the future. A woman who drinks or smokes when pregnant has a much higher risk of delivering an infant who dies before its first birthday.

9. Do you take prescription medications?

Some prescription medications can harm a fetus and could lead to birth defects. Always ask your health care provider about the risks of taking a medication if you were to become pregnant. Also, some antibiotics can decrease the effectiveness of some forms of birth control, for example, birth control pills.

10. Do you have \$200 or more in credit card debt?

Young women who go into debt have a hard time getting out of debt. A poor credit score can affect your ability to buy a car, house or get financial aid in the future. Being financially healthy is a major protective factor for health. Financial insecurity is closely linked to chronic diseases.

11. Do you know your sickle cell status?

Sickle cell anemia and trait is one of the most common inherited conditions that African-Americans have. Both trait and disease can have health implications. Know what is in your genes, and how it can be passed on if you get pregnant.

12. Have you been immunized against human papillomavirus (HPV)?

HPV is a major cause of cervical cancer. Protecting yourself with this new vaccine decreases your risk of this serious health issue. HPV is the most common STI among all women.

13. Do you or anyone in your immediate family have diabetes or high blood pressure?

If you have a close relative with diabetes or high blood pressure you are at an increased risk to develop these health problems, both of which can cause severe debilitating conditions several decades after the initial diagnosis is made. Both of these diseases can cause serious complications when pregnant if they are not well controlled

14. Is your weight status unhealthy?

Being underweight or overweight can cause health problems. Underweight women are more likely to have weaker bones, and being overweight can increase your risk for diabetes and heart disease and poor birth outcomes.

15. Have you ever been hit by a significant other?

Domestic violence is a major danger to health. 1 out of every 4 women will experience an abusive relationship. Some will not survive it. If you are in need of help, you can call a domestic violence hot line. The risk of domestic violence goes up for women when they are pregnant. Abuse can happen in teen relationships, seek help immediately.

16. Do you get at least eight hours of sleep most nights?

It is essential for the body to have the opportunity to rest in order to rebuild, and rejuvenate. When you do not give your body this opportunity you increase your risk for illnesses and health consequences

17. Do you take a multivitamin with at least 400 micrograms of folic acid every day?

Some studies show that folic acid might decrease the risk of developing breast, cervical and colon cancer, helps prevent heart disease, and can help prevent neural tube birth defects if taken before becoming pregnant and through the first several weeks of early pregnancy. Get in the habit—start now and take them for life.

18. Have you ever had a pregnancy scare?

Infants born as a result of an unintended pregnancy are more likely to be born less healthy, increasing their risk for life long complications.

19. Has anyone in your family had a poor birth outcome (infant death, premature baby, low birth weight, birth defect)?

A family history of a poor birth outcome may put you at higher risk for one as well, though not necessarily. Talk to your health care provider well before planning to become pregnant to come up with a plan for optimal health for both you and your future baby.

20. Do you consider yourself to be in excellent health?

One's perception of health is very telling. If you do not think you are in excellent or good health, then there are probably health habits you have which you already know are bad for you. Once identified they can be eliminated.

*This exercise was designed to help adolescent females assess their personal risk of a poor birth outcome if they were to become pregnant today. It is by no means a medical recommendation. All females should talk with their own health care providers about their personal risk factors that could affect their own health and the health of any current or future pregnancies.



Healthy *Before* Pregnancy

Adolescent Reproductive Life Plan

My Life, My Plan

These are the years when you should be having fun and preparing for your future. Now is a good time to start to think about what you want out of life and set goals. Do you have dreams of a career, college, travel, and relationships?

As you make your plans, it's a good idea to think through the "ifs" and "whens" of how becoming a parent fits in to what you want. Making a plan and putting it on paper has been shown to help achieve life goals.

If and When

Do you want to become a parent someday? ____ Yes ____ No ____ Not sure, maybe

If yes or maybe... What life goals do you want in place first? _____

Decide what you want out of life:

- ____ HS diploma for sure
- ____ College diploma
- ____ A great job
- ____ A cross country trip
- ____ A committed relationship, maybe even married
- ____ A well-established career
- ____ Money saved in the bank
- ____ Own my own home and car
- ____ What else? _____

Pretend you are an artist. Draw a timeline for the next 20 years and show how old you will be for each of these life experiences. Be creative; add in what you want out of life.

Now answer these questions and add them to your timeline:

- How old do you want to be when you have your first baby?
- How many children do you think you might like to have?
- How old do you want to be when you have your subsequent babies?

There are steps you can take to be in the best health. Consider all of the following:

Develop Healthy Relationships

Surround yourself with family and friends that support you and help you be your best self. Don't let anyone pressure you to do anything you are not ready for like sex. Stay away from alcohol, smoking and illegal drugs.

Take Care of Yourself

Eating well, regular exercise and taking a daily multivitamin now can help you have a healthy baby later. Make sure if you are thinking about having sex that you use a dual method of protection- that means condoms to prevent STIs and another more effective form of birth control to prevent pregnancy.

Stay Out of the Fog Zone

So many young adults think that pregnancy should be planned, but they don't take the precautions to avoid unplanned pregnancy. Make sure you are living consciously, making active decisions to keep you on track for your goals.

Learn Your Family History

Ask your family members about any history of poor birth outcomes, diabetes, high blood pressure or other health issues. Share this information with your health care provider and make sure you get annual check-ups and visit your dentist regularly for cleanings.

Make a Promise...To Yourself

Promise yourself to stay healthy and seek healthy relationships. It will make you feel good about yourself now and will help give you the best chance of having a healthy baby if and when the time is right.

Have a plan, work hard for your goals, stay true to yourself and in the meantime...take a multivitamin every day, eat well and exercise regularly to look and feel great at a healthy weight.

Adapted from Delaware Teen Reproductive Life Plan/ Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium