

The Lived Experiences of Expectant & Parenting Youth

Messages from the Hear Our Stories Project



Young parents are...
resilient
motivated
proud
capable caregivers



3,219 young women ages 15-19 became parents in 2012 in Massachusetts¹

"He's not even here yet and he's already made me a better woman."

Pam, 19

"My daughter is smart because of me. She walks because of me. She eats because of me. Everything she's got is because of me."

Danielle, 17

"Now I know that I am not only mother material, I am a great mother."

Marta, 21

Young parents also experience...

HOUSING
INSECURITY

30%

of young families in Massachusetts were homeless in 2011 - 2012²

SURVEILLANCE

2/3

of participants experienced fears of having their children being taken away³

VIOLENCE

50 - 80%

of teen mothers experience relationship violence before, during or after pregnancy⁴

LACK OF FAMILY
SUPPORT

2/3

of young parents describe nonexistent or inadequate support from their families

What can you do?

Tips from #NoTeenShame

1. Conduct an internal reflection on your own views on young parenthood and challenge any negative perceptions.
2. Be inclusive of young parents in your vision for a safer world for women*, parents and children.
3. Respect young parents and believe in their ability to make the best informed choices for themselves and their families.

For more information, please go to umass.edu/hearourstories

