



Your Education & Future

Being pregnant & being a parent are full-on tasks, & it may be pretty scary to think about carrying on or re-starting your education.

However, education & qualifications will provide a better future for you & your child. There are ways that you can continue with your education & this chapter outlines them for you.

Sticking at your education is worth it

Many young parents, especially mothers, face being really poor on the DPB for a long time. One way to prevent this from happening is to keep going with your education in some way, so you can get a job when the timing is right.

What if you are aged under 16?

If you're under 16 & are pregnant or a parent, you have to stay at school. This is because it's a requirement in the Education Act 1989 that young people must attend a registered school from their 6th to their 16th birthday. If you are willing to stay at the school you already go to, this may be the best option for you. If you are unwilling, your other options are outlined below. You should talk about your situation & your options with your school counsellor.

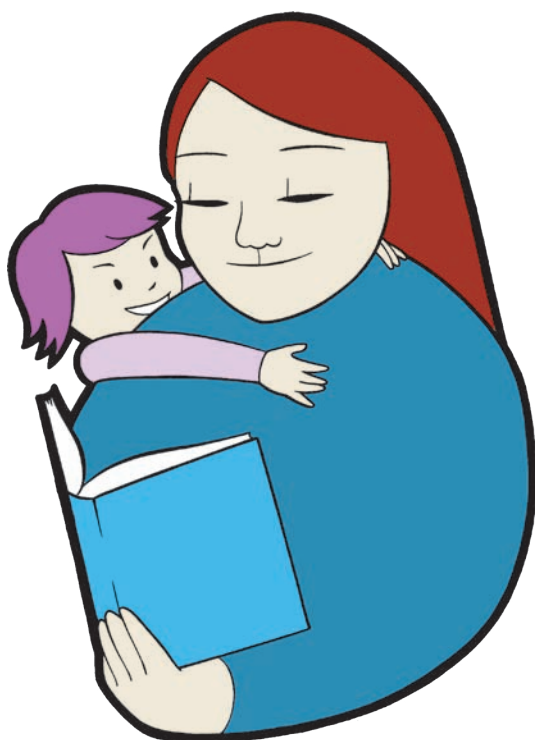
Are you allowed to stay at school when you are pregnant?

Yes. It is against the law for your school to ask you to leave because you are pregnant or parenting. If this happens to you call Youthlaw or your local Community Law Centre & talk to a free lawyer about your situation.

Lots of pregnant young women leave or stop going to school without telling the school that they are pregnant & are leaving to have a baby. You have a right to your education. **Many high schools realise how important it is for you to stick with your studies & will work with you to help you do this.**

Talk to a staff member or the school counsellor. You can take a friend, partner or relative along. Together you should be able to work out the next step to take & the kinds of ways the school can help you out so that you are comfortable & able to cope with school. **Here are some things you may like to talk about:**

- Changing your timetable
- Having time off for doctors' appointments etc
- Having time off to have baby
- Doing less subjects
- Childcare options for when you return
- Financial assistance from Work and Income



Can you return to school after your baby is born?

Yes. You may like to return to your existing school or enrol in a new school that suits you better. If you're aged over 16, you can discuss enrolling as an adult student. In some areas there are high schools that have childcare facilities on-site or nearby. The best person to contact about a new enrollment is the school counsellor. Discuss with the counsellor how the school can work with you to help you manage as a student with parenting responsibilities. For example, doing less subjects & time off when baby is sick or you have Plunket appointments etc.

What are your other options for continuing your high school education?

Teenage mother education units

In some areas there are education units especially for teenage mothers. Students can continue their education in a flexible & caring environment, usually undertaking 2 or 3 full time subjects. Students are offered career counselling & are supported as both parents & students by trained & passionate staff. Usually there is a crèche on site but sometimes babies go to class too. For units in your area, look under *Education* in the directory provided with this booklet & call your local Ministry of Education office.

The Correspondence School

Continuing your education by correspondence means that you study from home. Lots of young parents find this very handy because they can study at their own pace & fit it around caring for their child. You can enroll in one or more subjects per year up to year 13, gaining exactly the same qualifications you would if you were studying at high school. You study using books & tapes that are mailed to your home & you can talk to tutors on the phone.

The Correspondence School 0800 659 988

www.correspondence.school.nz

contact@correspondence.school.nz

Alternative education

Young parents aged under 16 can sometimes continue to study under the Ministry of Education's Alternative Education Policy. This is for young people who have become separated from the education system; for example, they are unwilling to attend a regular school or schools are unwilling to enrol them. Usually students study in small groups in specially set up units. Alternative Education will help work out the best way for you to keep studying & can sometimes help you sort out things like transport & childcare. For more information on this option you need to get in touch with the coordinator in your area. Call your local Ministry of Education office for the phone number.

Work and Income can help pay for your education & childcare costs. Ask your case manager about the Training Incentive Allowance

“I choose to do correspondence ’cause I left school at 6th form & didn’t have any qualifications. I thought it would be good since Tyrell was little & I still had some time for myself. I enrolled at ‘The Correspondence School’ & WINZ paid for the cost, it’s about \$80 a subject. Because I’d just moved into my own house, I found it hard to clean the house, cook, do baby & have time to study. I think that if you have some support & you’re motivated within yourself it’s a good choice. The school is really helpful & the books & tapes are easy to follow, so if you think it’s what you want to do, then do it!!!”

Mel (age 20)

your future!

Imagine your future. As well as doing the important job of being a parent, what else do you see yourself doing? What kind of career or job do you want? How much money will you need to earn to provide for your family? When is it a good time for you to enter some kind of training or further education – when your child is a baby or when your child is 3, 4, or 5 years old? When you are aged over 16, you have a variety of options for ongoing training & education. To help you work out what you want to do & how you can go about doing it, it’s a good idea to go to career counselling. Career counsellors are specially trained to work alongside you to help you decide & achieve your goals. They also have useful information on courses & training in your area.

For Free Career Counselling

Career Services 0800 109 901

For information on courses & training options in your area

Career Point 0800 222 733