

Your Life. Your Plan.



INSIDE

- **Dreams and Goals**
- **What do YOU want?**
- **Healthy Living**
- **Vaccinations**
- **Family History**
- **Emotional Well-Being**

What is a Reproductive Life Plan?

Why does it matter now?

A Reproductive Life Plan will help you live a healthy life physically, mentally, and emotionally so that you are able to make good decisions about if, when, and under what circumstances you might like to have children. Your Reproductive Life Plan is not set in stone. It can change as your dreams and ambitions grow and change.

**Having a
healthy family
starts NOW!**

Fast Facts

- **60% of teens say they wish they had waited to have sex until they were older.**
- **30% of girls in the United States will become pregnant before age 20.**
- **Half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned. (That's 3 million pregnancies!)**
- **Teen pregnancies cost New York State roughly \$377 million per year in healthcare costs.**

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**Mothers & Babies
PERINATAL NETWORK**
of South Central New York Inc.

Dreams and Goals

A happy life starts with having dreams and goals. Think about where you see yourself in the future. Take your time. Planning ahead will help you achieve your goals and create a reproductive life plan that will lead to a happy, healthy family in the future.



- What is your biggest dream in life? _____
- What are three steps you can take to make that dream come true?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- How much education would you like to complete? _____
- What kind of work or career path interests you? _____
- Will you continue to work after you become a parent? Yes No
- How will you balance work and family if you continue to work? _____

- How do you plan to manage your finances to pay for food, clothing, transportation, and medical care? _____

- What are your three best qualities?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

**Keep these in mind as
you develop your life
plan, they make you who
you are!**

What do YOU want?

The first step in creating your reproductive life plan is to think about what YOU want. Remember that you can change your plan at any time.

These are your choices. Take your time and think about what you want.

- Do you want to have children one day?

YES:

- At what age would you like to have a child? _____
- How many children would you like to have? _____
- How many years apart would you like your children to be? _____
- Do you plan to be in a committed relationship before you have children?
 Yes No

If you are sexually active, are you taking steps to prevent pregnancy until you and your partner are ready? Yes No

- What steps are you taking/will you take? _____
- Is there someone in your life who you feel comfortable speaking to about birth control options? Yes No
 - Who is that person? _____
 - If you answered “No” consider speaking to a parent, family member, doctor, or counselor.
- What will you do if you or your partner becomes pregnant before you are ready? _____

Remember to discuss this TOGETHER.

NO:

- Do you have a plan to prevent pregnancy if you are sexually active?
 Yes No
- What steps are you taking/will you take? _____
- What will you do if you or your partner becomes pregnant? _____

If you don't have a plan to prevent pregnancy, you have a plan to get pregnant.

Healthy Living

- Living a healthy life now will help improve your health and the health of your unborn baby. Everyone should work at improving their everyday habits. Answer the following questions honestly.
- Do you eat a well balanced diet? Yes No
- Do you see your doctor and dentist for regular check-ups? Yes No
- Do you exercise regularly (3-5 times per week) and try to maintain a healthy weight? Yes No
- Do you get between six and eight hours of sleep each night? Yes No
- Do you get tested regularly for HIV/AIDS and other STIs if you are sexually active? Yes No
- Do you work with your doctor to manage your current health conditions (asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, mental illness, etc)? Yes No
- If you are a young woman, do you take a daily multivitamin that contains at least 400 milligrams of **folic acid** to help prevent birth defects? Yes No

Try to eliminate negative health behaviors. If you answer “Yes” to any of the following questions try your best to quit. Taking these risks can harm you and your future plans.

- Do you smoke or use tobacco products? Yes No
- Do you drink alcohol? Yes No
- Do you use illicit drugs or abuse medications? Yes No
- Are you exposed to harmful chemicals and/or toxins regularly? Yes No
- Do you have multiple sexual partners? Yes No

Smoking during pregnancy can expose your baby to dangerous chemicals like nicotine, carbon monoxide and tar that can lessen the amount of oxygen the baby gets.

When women have enough folic acid before and during pregnancy, it can help prevent up to 70% of some birth defects.



Are you ready to quit smoking?

The American Cancer Society can help. Call **1-866-611-QUIT (1-866-611-7848)**/TDD **1-866-228-4327** 24 hours a day, 365 days a year OR register for Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network Quit Kit Program by calling **607-772-0517**. Medicaid and Family Health Plus members can also call the New York State Quitline at **1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)**.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations you received from your doctor when you were a child will continue to protect you and your baby during your pregnancy and the first few months after delivery. You should take steps to make sure your vaccinations are up-to-date.

Vaccines you might need include:

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Inactivated Polio Virus (IPV)
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Pertussis
- Gardasil (HPV)
- Meningitis

More information regarding vaccine administration can be obtained from the websites above or the CDC-INFO contact center:
800-CDC-INFO
[800-232-4636]

Family History

Health problems often run in families so it is important to be aware of health problems your close family members have experienced. Once you know what health problems for which you may be at risk, ask your doctor how you can reduce that risk. This is important for both men and women since babies get half their genes from each parent. Check to see if any of the following have occurred in your family tree:

- Gestational diabetes (diabetes that begins during pregnancy)
- Pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure in pregnancy) or eclampsia (seizures)
- Two or more miscarriages
- Problems getting pregnant
- A stillborn baby (a baby that was not alive at birth)
- Depression before, during or after pregnancy
- Low birthweight (less than 5 lbs. 8 oz.)
- A baby with a birth defect
- A baby born prematurely
- Asthma
- Heart disease or lung disease
- A history of stroke



Emotional and Physical Well-Being

Your emotional health is very important when you are thinking about your future. It is important that both your body and your mind are healthy. Set goals for yourself in terms of where you want your physical and emotional health to be before you start a family.

Consider the following:

For Yourself

- *Take care of your body*
 - *Stay positive*
- *Make time to do things you enjoy*
 - *Value your strengths*
 - *Learn from your weaknesses*

Maintain Balance

- *Think about what you want in your life*
- *Identify what makes you happy or sad*
 - *Have dreams and set goals*
- *Find healthy ways to deal with stress and/or conflict*

For Others

- *Maintain safe, healthy relationships*
- *Be respectful and respected at all times*
 - *Help whenever you can*
- *Identify with your background and learn from the backgrounds of others*
 - *Surround yourself with a strong support system*
 - *Say thank you*

There is no issue too small for you to seek assistance.

Professional and confidential counseling can be obtained immediately.

If you or someone you know needs help call 911 now.

Your Life Checklist

Make smart choices about your future.

- I will work hard to achieve the highest level of education I can.
- I will start thinking about what makes me happy that I might like to do as a career.
- I will make my own decisions about having sex and wait until I am ready.
- I will take the time to think seriously about how a pregnancy could affect my life and goals as a teenager.
- I will take steps to prevent pregnancy until I am ready to start a family.

Practice healthy living.

- I will visit my doctor and dentist for regular check-ups.
- I will talk to my partner about practicing safe sex and getting tested for STIs.
- I will ask my family members about the health problems they have experienced.
- I will avoid alcohol, smoking, and illegal drugs.
- I will eat better and exercise regularly.
- I will seek help if I feel depressed, anxious, or sad for longer than two weeks.
- I will seek help if I feel hopeless or have thoughts of hurting myself.
- I will get help if someone is physically or mentally abusing me.
- I will make a promise to live a healthy life for myself and my family.

Resources

For more information about

- **Feeling sad, depressed or anxious:**

Nationwide Hotline: **1-800-273-TALK** (1-800-2738255)

Girls and Boys Town National Hotline: **1-800-448-3000**, TDD line 1-800-448-1833

United Health Services: **(607) 762-2032** or **1-800-451-0560**

<http://imalive.org>

<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/help>

- **Eating right and exercising:**

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

<http://getupanddosomething.org/>

kidshealth.org/teen

- **Sexual health, birth control, and other issues:**

<http://www.teensource.org/ts/>

<http://www.stayteen.org/>

<http://www.sexetc.org/>

<http://www.scarleteen.com/>

<http://bedsider.org/>

- **Your right to learn about sexuality and practice safe sex in New York State:**

<http://www.sexetc.org/state/NY/>

- **Your reproductive life plan:**

Call Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network of South Central New York at **1-800-231-0744** or visit the office at 457 State St. Binghamton, NY 13901

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/preconception/QandA.htm>

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