

For some young adults, their health, education and economic outcomes remain disproportionately poor which can in turn affect their life chances. There have been many successes locally but there remains much to do to continue to improve the outcomes for sexually active young adults in Torbay. The sexual and reproductive health of 13-24 year olds is a complex issue in Torbay. Teenage conception rates are falling in Torbay but remain above the national average. Like all parents, teenage mothers and young fathers want to do the best for their children, most manage very well, but some need additional support.



Why is this important?

Addressing teenage conceptions is important because the outcomes for teenage mothers, fathers and children can be poor for some. While sometimes a pregnancy is planned, sometimes it isn't and where possible, we all want to support safe, positive and well informed choices about pregnancy and parenting.



What is the local context?

Torbay has reduced its Teenage Conception rate by 47% since 1998. The rate remains higher than the national average. In Torbay there were 148 conceptions to women under the age of 18 from 2016 to 2018.

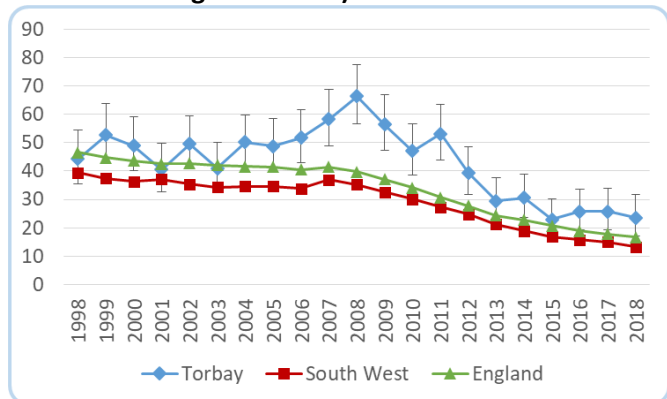


What should we do?

Ensure access to timely and friendly youth contraceptive and sexual health services as well as age-appropriate Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) in schools and colleges.

In Torbay there were 148 conceptions to women under the age of 18 from 2016 to 2018 (52 in 2016, 51 in 2017 and 45 in 2018). The conception rate in 1998 (start of the national teenage conceptions strategy) in Torbay was: 44.2 per 1000. In 2018, this had reduced to 23.6 per 1000 (fig. 1). Whilst this is still higher than the national and regional average it shows, that since 1998, Torbay has reduced its Teenage Conception rate by 47% (Source PHE Fingertips).

Figure 1: Estimated under 18 conception rate (per 1000 females aged 15 to 17)



Public Health Outcomes Framework (Indicator – C02a)

Age - The majority of under 18 conceptions in Torbay are amongst 16 and 17 year olds, which indicates that underage sexual activity is not necessarily the main driving factor.

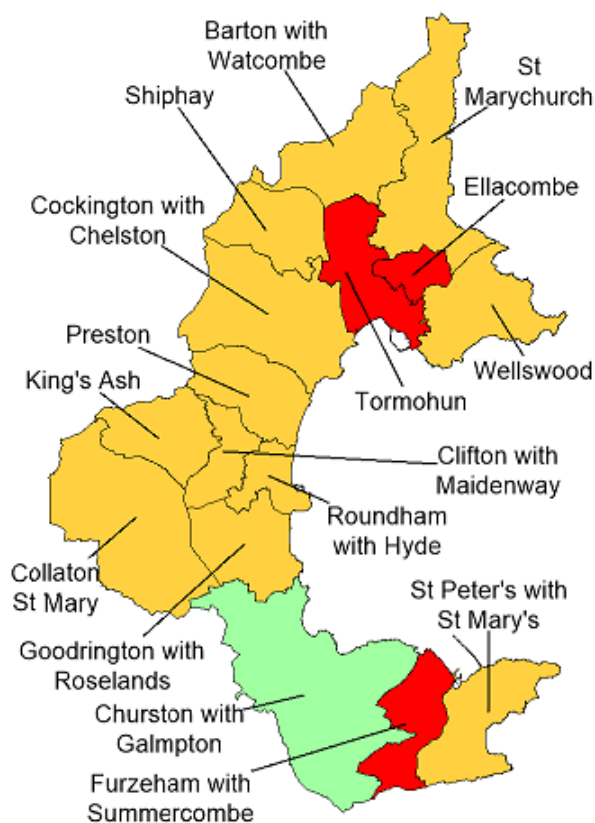
Deprivation - teenage conceptions are higher in wards that have higher rates of deprivation in Torbay (table 1). For more information about deprivation and the wider health of the population in Torbay and South Devon, please go to: <http://www.southdevonandtorbay.info/>

Table 1: Estimated under 18 conception rate for wards (per 1000 females aged 15 to 17), 2016 to 2018

Ward (Most to least deprived)	Statistical Difference to the Torbay Average	Statistical Difference to the England Average
Tormohun	●	●
Ellacombe	●	●
Furzeham with Summercombe	●	●
Barton with Watcombe	●	●
Clifton with Maidenway	●	●
Cockington with Chelston	●	●
Collaton St Mary	●	●
Goodrington With Roselands	●	●
King's Ash	●	●
Preston	●	●
Roundham with Hyde	●	●
St Marychurch	●	●
St Peter's with St Mary's	●	●
Shiphay	●	●
Wellswood	●	●
Churston With Galmpton	●	●

Key	
Significantly higher	●
Not significantly different	●
Significantly lower	●

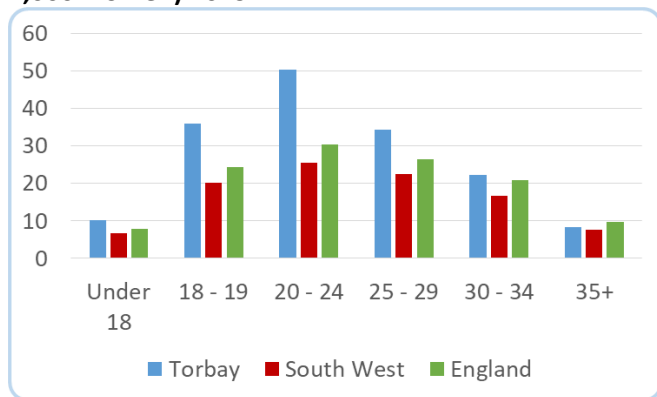
Figure 2: ONS – Conceptions to women aged under 18 in England and Wales by Ward, 2016 to 2018



ONS – Estimated Conceptions to women aged under 18 in England and Wales by Ward, 2016 to 2018

Abortion - The next stage of the challenge in supporting the sexual and reproductive health of young adults in Torbay is to address the rates of abortion. The abortion rate for under 18 year olds is slightly higher than the England rate but not significantly different (fig. 3). This changes for over 18's where abortion rates are higher than average. This higher rate could be as a result of a number of factors, including a shift in aspirations for young women towards education, potential stigma attached to being a teenage parent and successful early intervention programmes – it could also indicate unmet contraception needs.

Figure 3: Abortion rate by age group (crude rate per 1,000 women) 2019



For more information please visit our JSNA website: www.southdevonandtorbay.info or email: statistics@torbay.gov.uk

Contraception - Work is underway to improve knowledge, access and uptake of contraception for all populations, but in particular, young adults. Emergency Hormonal Contraception is available free of charge for 13-25 year olds in Torbay from Community Pharmacies. Long Acting Reversible Contraception. (LARC) as well as other forms of contraception are available in many GP surgeries as well as specialist contraceptive clinics. Torbay operates a condom distribution scheme aimed at young men and women called CCard.

Young Parents - Every young parent has their own individual story, but the local area and individual risk factors for early pregnancy highlight the vulnerabilities with which some young people enter parenthood. These have been shown to be family poverty, persistent school absence by age 14, slower than expected attainment between ages 11 and 14; and being looked after or a care leaver.



Some young parents will have missed out on the protective factors of high quality sex and relationships education, emotional wellbeing and resilience, positive parenting role models and having a trusted adult in their life. Compared with older fathers, young fathers are twice as likely to be unemployed, even after taking account of deprivation. Other health outcomes can include poor mental health, higher infant mortality rate, higher incidence of low birth weight and a higher maternal smoking prevalence. Mothers under 20 can experience higher rates of poor mental health for up to three years after the birth. (LGA, 2018)

Age appropriate sexual and reproductive health education, skills, behaviours and choices will continue to support a downward trend in teenage conceptions. There is still much to be done to tackle local and persistent health inequalities.

References and further information:

For more information about Sexual Health in Torbay, please see the Health Needs Assessment

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/health/srhna/>

LGA (2018) Good progress but more to do: teenage pregnancy and young parents <https://www.local.gov.uk/good-progress-more-do-teenage-pregnancy-and-young-parents>

Implementing the United Kingdom's ten-year teenage pregnancy strategy for England (1999-2010): How was this done and what did it achieve? <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5120422/>

Images: Sex by Yazmin Alanis / Teenage pregnancy by Anna Bearne / Love by Ker'is from the Noun Project