

I think that "Ready or Not?" is a very good program. It puts us teens in the driver seat of our lives and helps us with the decision of having a child at a young age. It really makes you re-think what you would do in the situation that causes babies! You never know what it is like to care for a baby until you either have one or you care for a fussy infant simulator for a long weekend. The infant is much easier then the lifelong experiences of having a child. My experience with "Ready or Not?" was great. It really showed me kind of what my Mom went through to raise me. I recommend offering "Ready or Not?" to every teen; it really is a moving experience.

L.D.
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Ready or Not?

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program

"4 out of 10 teenage girls get pregnant at least once before they reach 20, resulting in more than 900,000 teen pregnancies a year." NCPTP



Program Focus

The "Ready or Not?" program developed by Lutheran Family Services of Colorado in 1995 focuses on "why" not to get pregnant instead of "how" not to get pregnant, therefore filling a gap in teen education.



Program Description

Designed to provide teens with first-hand information about the realities of parenting, "Ready or Not?" is a two-week curriculum centered around students' experiences in "parenting" a "Baby Think It Over ©" infant simulator for a long weekend. The "Real Care" infant simulator closely simulates activities and behavior patterns of real infants. The infant needs fed, diapered, burped, and rocked. A computer chip

records if the infant was "neglected" or "abused". Each infant is equipped with a car seat, an infant carrier and a diaper bag full of supplies.

Through "parenting" the infant simulators, teens gain immediate experience that helps them de-romanticize their notions of parenting. Teens are made aware of the:

- *changes in their lives that will occur if they were to become a parent as a teen*
- *financial responsibilities of raising a child (especially for teen parent)*
- *amount of their time, attention, and energy parenting requires*
- *changes in their relationship (positive or negative) with their mate, friends and parents that might occur when they become a parent*
- *amount of love a child needs versus the amount of love a child gives back*

The project has been an experience. This is homework they will remember !"

Sherry Bowyer, Teacher
Thompson Valley High School
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Curriculum

The curriculum, which can be modified to fit the particular teacher's timelines, contains many exercises. For instance, the curriculum includes:

- an assignment completed by teens which helps them identify their own values and beliefs about teen parenting
- discussion that confronts the risk behaviors associated with teen pregnancy; namely, the myth of "it won't happen to me", the use of drugs and alcohol, dating relationships with older guys, and the lack of concrete future goals
- a video set is shown that features local teens telling their stories of dealing with crisis pregnancies
- work is sent home for the students to complete with their parents spurring communication between the parent and student concerning many issues surrounding teen pregnancy discussion of the many options available to pregnant teens and how each option might impact them, their baby and their family