



**UNEXPECTED SEASON 3** follows six teenage moms and their partners and families as they navigate teenage pregnancy and parenthood. We created this discussion guide with our partners at [Power to Decide](#), the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy, to help open the lines of communication between young people and their parents, mentors and champions.

We hope this will help spark meaningful, honest conversations about unplanned pregnancy, love, sex, relationships and the context in which

it all happens. Having the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child increases young people's opportunities to be mentally and physically healthy, to complete their education, and to pursue the future they want.

Check out the resources available at [TLCme.com/familyresources](https://www.tlcme.com/familyresources), and join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag #Unexpected and watch full episodes by downloading the TLC GO app or visiting [TLC.com/Unexpected](https://www.tlc.com/Unexpected).



### DISCUSSION TOPICS

After watching **UNEXPECTED**, discuss these questions with the young people in your life and encourage them to watch the show with you.

Note: Some questions are for adults, some for young people, some are for everyone. Watch the show together and add some questions of your own!

# 1 Do you think teen pregnancy and parenthood are inevitable?

- None of the young parents in **UNEXPECTED** planned to get pregnant. Most teen parents also say pregnancy “just happened.” Many believe that even if you’re on birth control, if it’s “your time” to get pregnant, you probably will. Do you agree? Disagree? What steps are necessary to take if you are not ready for pregnancy and parenthood?
- Some of the parents of the young moms and dads in **UNEXPECTED** feel that “kids will be kids” and their kids would have gotten pregnant no matter what they said. What do you think about this?
- Now that McKayla and Caelan are going to be parents for the second time, what do you think they will do differently? What do you think will be harder for them and their families? Will anything be easier?
- Matthew and Hailey confess that they had sex before they shared their first kiss. What do you think about this?
- Have you ever thought about how a pregnancy would affect your life right now? How would your daily routines change? How would your relationships change?
- What do you believe are important things to accomplish before pregnancy and parenthood? What kind of education do you want to have? What kind of relationship do you want to be in? What are the steps you need to take now to get there?
- The young moms in **UNEXPECTED** talk about feeling lonely and losing their friends because they don’t have anything in common anymore. If one of your friends or relatives became a teen parent, what would you do to support them? Did this show change the way you think about teen parenthood? How?
- Which family members in **UNEXPECTED** do you relate to the most? Why? If you could give relationship advice to one of the young couples this season, what would you say?



## TAKE AWAY

All young people should have the power to decide if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. This includes the power to say no to sex, even if they've said yes before. If you're not ready for a pregnancy right now, you can decide not to have sex at all; or make the choice to use contraception carefully and correctly—every single time. The best time to figure out how you'll handle a sexual situation is before you're in it. Parents and mentors can help young people make a plan and talk through the ways that they will stick to that plan in the heat of the moment.

## 2 It takes two: the role of guys in preventing unplanned pregnancy

- Caelan, Matthew, Max, and Alex are important influences in the lives of their partners and their babies. Yet they all express that they are not ready for the responsibilities of fatherhood. What advice do you have for these young dads?
- When the young dads in **UNEXPECTED** have relationship tension with their partners, how does that affect their roles as parents? How does that affect their relationships with their babies' grandparents?
- Do young men and young women get different messages from parents and society about sex? Pregnancy? Birth Control? Parenthood?
- Many guys say that they feel pressure to have sex –and the pressure can come from older guys, friends and girlfriends. Do the teen guys in your life feel pushed to be sexually active? What would you say to a guy who is not ready for sex?
- Where do you think guys most often learn about sex? About birth control? Where do you think they want to learn about sex, relationships and birth control?
- How do you think teen guys would define "responsibility" when it comes to sex? Birth control? Parenthood?
- What role to guys play in decisions about birth control? Some guys say if his partner doesn't insist on a condom he won't use one—even if he has one handy. Why do you think this happens? Can you relate?
- Do you think society treats teen dads differently from older dads? Why or why not? Who are some good role models for young men when it comes to sex and pregnancy prevention?
- What qualities do you think are "must-haves" to make a relationship strong and healthy? How do you build good communication in a romantic relationship?



### TAKE AWAY

Once you have a child with someone, you are connected forever—even if the relationship doesn't last. Responsibility means avoiding pregnancy until you're ready – not just taking care of a child once you're already a parent. Babies need and deserve unconditional love, 24/7. Their needs come first, which makes young parents grow up fast. Young moms and dads need all the support they can get for themselves, their babies and their futures—including access to the right birth control methods to help them plan and space future pregnancies. Teen guys need their own support systems, role models and mentors—before and after they are parents.

3

### What makes someone an “askable” adult when it comes to sex, love and relationships?

- Teens say that parents are most influential on their decisions about sex; but parents underestimate how influential they really are. Why do you think that is?
- “The Talk” is not limited to just parents and guardians; any older champion, mentor, teacher, aunt, uncle or other trusted adult can have open, helpful conversations about sex, love and relationships. What advice would you give to a teen who is sexually active but afraid to talk to their parents or guardians? Who are some adults in your life — parents, mentors, allies — whom you can trust to talk to about sensitive topics?
- What makes an adult trustworthy to the young people in their lives?
- What do you think makes an adult easy to talk to about sex, love and relationships? What makes someone hard to talk to? What can adults do to be more “askable”? How can adults let the teens in their lives know their views about sex and pregnancy, and that they are listening, not judging?
- Many adults worry that talking openly about birth control encourages young people to have sex—in fact, it really encourages safer sex when young people are ready. What do you think? How can you help get rid of this myth?
- What is the best advice anyone has given you about sex, relationships and pregnancy? What is the best advice you could give a young person about sex, relationships and pregnancy?



**TAKE  
AWAY**

Talking is power. Communication and trust are the keys to a successful relationship at any age. Conversations about sex, relationships, pregnancy and birth control can be awkward, but they are always worthwhile, and can be life-changing. Don't wait for the young person in your life to come to you. If they have questions, don't assume they're already doing it. There's no such thing as “The Talk.” It's an 18+ year conversation that changes as young people and relationships change.



# KEY FACTS, TIPS, AND RESOURCES

- The U.S. has seen a 67 percent decline in the teen birth rate since 1991, including dramatic declines in all 50 states and among all racial/ethnic groups.
- Progress is not victory: Roughly 1 in 4 girls in the U.S. gets pregnant by age 20
- The vast majority of teen pregnancies are described by teens themselves as unplanned.
- Young people who have sex without protection on a regular basis have an 85% chance of pregnancy within a year.
- Daughters of teen mothers are more than 3 times as likely to become teen moms themselves.
- 30 percent of teen girls who drop out of school cite pregnancy or parenthood as a reason, and less than two percent of young teen mothers get a college degree by age 30.
- Ensuring that all teens have quality information and access to birth control is one of the best strategies to boost the graduation rate.
- 9 in 10 young people say it would be much easier to avoid sex and postpone pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations with their parents about these topics.
- More than 6 in 10 young people have learned something useful about sex, love or relationships from popular media such as TV shows or movies.
- Nearly 7 in 10 teens say the primary reason that teens don't use birth control is that they're afraid their parents will find out.
- 9 in 10 adults think that [young people should have a trusted adult or network](#) to provide them with information and guidance on topics like sex, love, relationships, or birth control. 7 in 10 adults consider themselves to be a trusted source of information for young people on these topics.

## IMPORTANT LINKS

[#TalkingIsPower: resources to have open, honest conversations. Start early, talk often.](#)

[#TalkingIsPower: 2019 Guide for Teens](#)

[Sexual Health Resources](#)

[Birth control from the boyfriend's perspective](#)

[How to be an "askable" parent](#)

[Access to birth control: clinic finder and contraceptive deserts map](#)

[What to do if birth control fails](#)



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**Power to Decide** is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live, or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Visit [www.PowerToDecide.org](http://www.PowerToDecide.org) for more information and tips on jump-starting open conversations about sex, love relationships and unplanned pregnancy.