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EDUCATION:
A YOUNG MOTHER'S
KEY TO SUCCESS,
A YOUNG MOTHER'S HOPE

A study of the impact of pregnancy
and mothering on the educational
participation and goals of young mothers.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
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at Massey University, Albany,
New Zealand

Nikki Hill
2004

For young mothers

Education is the key
to unlocking the door of hope
for the future
in the lives of teen parents
and the next generation,
their children"

(Kelley, 2002: 203).

Abstract

The overall purpose of this qualitative study is to highlight factors, during pregnancy and since the birth, which impact on educational goals and the motivational levels towards achieving these goals of young mothers. Barriers which hinder the continuation of education for young mothers, as well as supports which influence and encourage educational participation are of significance. The research has involved five young mothers in in-depth, semi-structured interviews, as the primary data gathering tool, and five high school counsellors in a questionnaire, to add to the analysis. The research is underpinned by feminist methodology.

Overseas and national research has found that adolescent parents and their children are often at risk of poor life outcomes, largely because of their lack of educational and employment opportunities. Many internal and external factors have been highlighted in the literature which can influence, positively or negatively, a young mother in continuing education. Despite the large amount of literature, there is limited research on the ways in which pregnancy and mothering impacts on a young mother's aspirations and hopes in regards to continuing education.

This research shows that the commitment to education changed quite dramatically for the majority of the young mothers interviewed, from conception to motherhood, an angle which has not been captured in the literature. Although the young mothers interviewed believe that education is their key to finding successful and rewarding employment, and they each conveyed a desire to continue with education, obstacles are evident. Two young mothers chose to overcome barriers, placing their educational needs as high priority. The research shows that family, school and peer influences can make a significant difference to continuing education, as well as personal goals and passion towards continuing their education. This research found that responding high schools, although they offer the pregnant student a degree of support, have not seen students who choose to parent, remain in the school system.

The findings raise issues about the need for the educational hopes and aspirations of young mothers, to be fostered in the early stages of mothering. This thesis makes

recommendations for educational policies and programmes, governmental welfare policies, and other programmes/agencies, such as a mentoring service and professional careers advice, to be constituted to ensure that young mothers are given every opportunity to continue their education and turn their educational aspirations into workable goals.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

There are almost 4,000 babies per annum born to teenagers in New Zealand and the majority of these babies are parented by the adolescent mother (Condon & Corkindale, 2002: 45; Heaven, 1994: 167). In recent years there has been a growing political, professional and public concern as young mothers and their children are at risk of poor outcomes, including long term benefit dependency, loss of opportunities, educational under-achievement, and poor health and developmental outcomes (Clarke, 2001: 4; Bissell, 2000: 11; Woodward et al, 2001b; Romans et al, 1997: 30; Brooks-Gunn & Chase-Lansdale, 1995, et al, cited Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 1; Schofield, 1994: 45, 47). All of this, in addition to the immaturity of the developmental timing for parenting, has significant consequences for their children (Cheesbrough *et al*, 1999, cited Woodward et al, 2001b: 1-2; Osofsky, 1990, cited Cray, 2002: 26). It can be difficult for adolescent mothers to achieve better outcomes because of the lack of resources and opportunities presented to them.

Sadly, young mothers face considerable barriers to entering the labour market, and as a result, the chance of achieving financial independence is reduced. Part of the difficulty lies in the young mother's lack of education (Dusek, 1996: 220). It is believed that education can provide a vehicle for better life outcomes and opportunities for young mothers and their children (Baragwanath, 2000: 5; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12; Lynch, 1999: 1, 47; Baragwanath, 1996a: 18; Dusek, 1996: 222; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Cray, 2002: 27; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). Education can assist with preparing young mothers for the workforce, in order to be self-sufficient, and can assist them in gaining the necessary life skills to solve everyday problems in their personal and societal relationships. One young mother interviewed expressed,

I want to continue my education, but I need lots of help with a young baby. It's not that easy to "just get up and go to a course" (Rochelle).¹

¹ Pseudonyms have been used throughout this study to protect the identity of participants.

Pilat (1997: 117) states, "continuing education is an important goal for pregnant and parenting teens and as a society we need to encourage pregnant and parenting teens to complete their education". However, there can be significant barriers for young mothers to continuing education, and findings highlight the need to develop more effective educational programmes to improve the life chances of young mothers and their children (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12; Woodward *et al*, 2000b: 2). If barriers can be addressed and eradicated then the risk of poor outcomes can be reduced and life opportunities for young mothers and their children increased. By removing obstacles and putting in place good supports, young mothers may be more inclined to take up the challenge of setting and achieving educational goals.

The Research Aims and Objectives

This thesis had five primary objectives, which were to examine the following in relation to young mothers:

- (1) The impact of pregnancy and mothering on the educational goals and the motivation to achieve educational goals.
- (2) Barriers to the continuation of education, during pregnancy and from the birth.
- (3) Resources and supports which influence educational participation, during pregnancy and from the birth
- (4) The level of support offered in North Shore (Auckland) high schools for pregnant students and student mothers.

These factors were examined in the literature review and compared to the data found in the examination of the research sample. To achieve the research aims and objectives, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were carried out with five young mothers aged 16 to 17 years, living in the North Shore District, Auckland. Fergusson and Woodward (2000: 11) contend that in order to measure the impact of pregnancy and parenting on a young mother's education, there must be a consideration of factors in the woman's life prior to conception taking place. The interviews therefore focused around educational decisions and goals, as well as internal and external resources and barriers which have had a significant impact on education "*prior to conception*", "*during pregnancy*" and "*since birth*".

To add to the analysis of the fourth aim, self-completion questionnaires were sent to counsellors of North Shore High Schools. By exploring the level of support provided in North Shore High Schools for pregnant students/student mothers, strengths and weaknesses were able to be identified. When areas of weakness are addressed, students who become pregnant in the future (and we can be assured some will), and young mothers of school age, may have better opportunities to continue their education.

This research is underpinned by developmental, learning and feminist theories. Theories of development contend that the adolescent (whether she is a mother or not) is in a process where identity formation is important. Developmental tasks which are important in achieving a healthy identity, include becoming independent from parents and other adults, building mature relationships with peers and planning for an economic career, which usually involves setting and achieving educational goals (Havinghurst, 1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34). Achieving these tasks assists in attaining the developmental task of preparing for marriage and family life. Pregnancy and mothering can have an impact on the adolescent attaining these developmental tasks and moving into early adulthood without a means of achieving emotional and financial independence.

Learning theories provide understanding of factors which impact on the adolescent's desire to continue her education and attain educational goals. Factors, such as self-efficacy (self-belief), past educational success or failure, educational aspirations, the expected reward/outcome for achieving goals, as well as pregnancy and mothering, can largely affect motivation towards formulating and achieving educational plans. These factors can act as internal resources or barriers which impact on continuing education. External resources can also provide opportunities for furthering education. An ecological perspective locates the adolescent mother within her environment and is useful for understanding influences on both development and learning. Resources and supports can be identified which can provide the young mother with better opportunities to continue her education, along with resources which are lacking or needed.

Feminist theory locates the young mother in a relational context, where she is developing empathy and caring orientations towards others, and in relation to this study, towards her child. As an adolescent, Gilligan (1982, cited Seifert & Hoffnung, 2000:

473) claims that the young mother is moving out of an egocentric stage, to caring more for others and herself equally. The young mother can be in a dilemma about whether it is best to be full-time caring for her child or achieving her own educational goals. Her desire to become financially independent can be in conflict with her desire to nurture and care for her child, and at the same time, her caring orientation towards her child can increase her desire to become self-sufficient. The impact of pregnancy and mothering may inspire her towards setting and achieving educational goals or she may choose to discontinue her education and place more emphasis on mothering.

Definition of Terms

This thesis uses the terms "*adolescents*", "*teenagers*", "*young people*" and "*teens*" interchangeably. In relation to this research, these terms refer to young people aged between 12 to 20 years of age, as defined by Papalia & Olds (1998, cited Drummond, 2001: 68), and also because it relates to the Statistics New Zealand's age grouping for teenage pregnancy and birth rates. The young mothers who participated in this research fall within "*early adolescence*" as they are 16 to 17 years of age, and two who participated in the pilot interviews were 15. Newman and Newman (1998, cited Drummond, 2001: 68) define the ages of 12 to 18 years as "*early adolescence*".

The terms "*young mothers*", "*adolescent mothers*" and "*young women*" are also used interchangeably in this thesis. These terms describe and specify "*mothers*", who fit in the adolescent age category as stated above. When discussing the young mothers who were interviewed, these terms are used interchangeably whether the text is talking about "*prior to conception*", "*during pregnancy*" or "*since the birth*".

"*Developmental tasks*" can be defined as "a set of skills and competencies that contribute to increased mastery over one's environment, that define what is healthy, normal development at each stage in a particular society" (Havinghurst, 1972, cited McGachie, 2000: 6). For the adolescent, the successful achievement of certain developmental tasks, such as "preparing for an economic career", "preparing for marriage and family life", "attaining emotional independence from parents and other adults" and "achieving new and more mature relations with peers of both sexes", adds to

the success and fulfilment in later tasks. The mastery of these tasks helps with positive identity formation (Havinghurst, 1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34).

"Goals" is defined as "something that a person would like to accomplish by engaging in a particular activity" (Stipek, 1993, Wentzel, 1991, cited Brynes, 2001: 95). Goals can be understood in cognitive and emotional terms, as they are something mentally desired in the future and the outcome has an affective factor (Bandura, 1986, cited Brynes, 2001: 96; Brynes, 2001: 106).

"Methodology" is defined as "a theory of how research is carried out or the broad principles about how to conduct research and how theory is applied" (Harding, 1987, cited Jayaratne & Stewart, 1995: 223). The methodology related to this research is based on feminist principles of equality, respect and honesty in the research relationship. "Methods" are particular procedures used in the course of research (Ibid). The methods used for this research were in-depth, semi-structured interviews and self-completion questionnaires.

Limitations of this Research

In particular, the limitation of this research was the time factor for me as a mother of baby who was born in early May this year, along with my employment until that time. The initial plan was to interview 6 to 8 young mothers, but only 5 interviews were completed. Not only were my own mothering responsibilities an issue to this, but I had great difficulty in collecting a sample of young women who fitted the criteria. Many services that I phoned had a client base who were older than 17. However, although I only interviewed five, the thoughts and aspirations that the young mothers shared were insightful and very much valued. I have not lacked in having enough to write about!

A methodological limitation is that the research cannot maintain any degree of generalisability, nor was it the aim of this study. (This is discussed in more detail in chapter five). The sample group is not in any way representative of the total number of adolescent mothers in this age and ethnic group within New Zealand or even the North Shore. The aim of this research is to present the voices and opinions of five young

mothers and five school counsellors, with the hope that their expressions can help young mothers in the future.

A further limitation of this study is that the interview participants all identified themselves as New Zealand European, which was a criteria for participation. There were two particular reasons for this. First, there would be very diverse cultural variables to take into consideration if ethnicity was open. Very different values and social norms in regard to early motherhood exist across cultures. I did not feel this study was appropriate for such cultural diversity. Second, the fact that I am New Zealand European. Because I interviewed young mothers who were of the same culture, there was a general understanding of expressions, words and humour. I did not want to claim to be an expert in any sense of another culture.

A final limitation of this study is that this research does not consider mental health issues, such as post natal depression, which can have a profound effect on educational participation and setting and achieving educational goals.

Locating the Researcher

Feminist research acknowledges that social research cannot be objective. The researcher's values, biography and political perspective are brought into each stage of the research, from choosing the research topic, to the interpretation of the data and to writing up the final report. My own personal interests, culture, values, goals and life journey, must be acknowledged and accounted for in research such as this.

There are a number of factors which motivated me to undertake research in this field. On a professional level, I work with pregnant teenagers and young mothers as a social worker and life skills educator. I am concerned about the high rate of adolescents who become pregnant annually in New Zealand, who choose to parent their child, who do not continue with their education, and consequently are at greater risk of poor outcomes. I share the belief, along with other researchers outlined at the beginning of this chapter, that education can provide the foundation to better outcomes for young mothers and their children. Education can increase self-determination and can act as a vehicle to employment opportunities that provide better than government assistance.

On a personal level, I am a Pakeha woman who values education and believes strongly in women continuing their education if it provides better life outcomes and personal satisfaction. However, even more than this, I value the role of mothering. I also have been an adolescent mother. I raised my daughter as a single parent for 15 years, recently marrying. I left school at the age of 15 years without any qualifications. I began my academic social work journey when my daughter was eight years old. It is my personal belief that if young mothers are encouraged to continue their education, if they are supported enough and believed in by those who care about them, if they are encouraged to even take a little step to begin with, then they too could begin a journey that rewards them and their children emotionally and practically.

Reading through the Thesis

Chapter two sets the scene in the New Zealand context, with statistical evidence on teenage pregnancy, abortion and birth rates. It includes a discussion on the number of those who adopt their babies out and those who choose to parent. This is followed by an examination of the impact of adolescent pregnancy and parenting on educational participation, with a brief discussion on the implications it has on employment opportunities. Barriers to the continuation of education are then explored, which include internal and external factors. A discussion follows on the supports which are considered vital to a young mother's educational success, which include family, peer, mentor, school and government and agency support. This chapter ends with an exploration of alternative options to high school, examining both an overseas example and examples in New Zealand.

A theoretical analysis is presented in chapter three. This involves an examination of developmental, learning and feminist theory. In considering developmental theory, the psychosocial domain is explored, which includes an analysis of identity formation. Developmental tasks which the adolescent needs to achieve for healthy developmental outcomes are examined. Learning theory examines factors which contribute to an adolescent's motivation to continue education. An analysis of how an ecological perspective can help assess the resources available and needed for a young mother to continue her education is undertaken. Feminist theory ends the chapter, with a particular

look at an *'Ethic of Care'* perspective. It is shown how 'care' can encourage and motivate a young mother towards her education or can place more emphasis on mothering.

Following the literature and theoretical examination, chapter four discusses the methodology of this research. This involves a discussion of feminist methodology and presents the particular qualities which allow this research to be characterised as *'feminist'*. The methods undertaken, in-depth interviews and self-completion questionnaires are discussed, along with the steps taken to carry out this research. Ethical considerations in feminist research and in this study are discussed, followed by a look at the place of validity, reliability and generalisability within this study. Finally, the process for analysing the data is discussed.

The following three chapters set out the results of the interview data, which is presented in chronological order: Prior to pregnancy (chapter five), during pregnancy (chapter six) and since the birth (chapter seven). The findings in relation to support systems (family, peers/partner, educational, agencies and governmental) and the impact these supports have on the young mothers' education are presented, as well as the findings of educational goals and levels of motivation for achieving these goals. This includes an examination of levels of self-efficacy and the perceived benefits of continuing education which are linked to motivational factors. Chapter seven also includes the findings of what the young mothers see as barriers to continuing education, along with the supports and the type of learning environment that the young mothers would prefer to enable them to continue their education. Chapter eight presents the findings of the questionnaire to school counsellors.

The final chapter, (chapter nine) brings together the interview and questionnaire results in a critical analysis with the literature review and theoretical analysis carried out in chapters two and three. The objectives set out at the onset of this study are used as a framework for the discussion. The thesis ends with suggestions for further research and recommendations are put forth, with the hope that barriers will be addressed and appropriate supports be put in place, so that the educational aspirations and goals of young mothers can become a reality.

Chapter 2: Pregnancy, Parenting and Educational Participation

Introduction

Many researchers have found a strong correlation between adolescent pregnancy and educational underachievement. Although there are many adolescents who become pregnant that drop out of school before conception (Bissell, 2000: 3; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin and Hayward, 1993: 23; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159), the literature also gives evidence that there are those who abandon their schooling when they become pregnant (Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin and Hayward, 1993: 23) and do not return after birth (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Berk, 1996, cited McDonagh, 2001: 58; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78; Dawson, 1987, cited Schofield 1994: 56, 76). Those who do remain motivated to continue with their education during pregnancy are at risk of not returning after the birth.

This chapter first discusses the teen pregnancy and parenting situation in New Zealand. Statistical data on teenage pregnancies, abortions, confinements (birth rates) and a speculated discussion on the number of those who adopt their babies out and those who choose to parent is provided. A discussion of the impact of pregnancy and parenting on educational participation follows. This chapter then discusses what the literature says is needed to encourage young mothers to continue their education. This firstly necessitates a discussion on the barriers, both internal and external, to the continuation of education for young mothers. The literature highlights various barriers that may hinder the continuation of schooling for adolescent mothers, thus impeding the life chances and outcomes for them and their children. Supports deemed necessary to assist young mothers in continuing their education are then articulated. This consists of family, peer, educational and mentoring support, along with a discussion on the need for government support and inter-agency liaison. An exploration of special educational programmes is then put forward. This includes an examination of an overseas example, as well as New Zealand examples.

The New Zealand Statistics

New Zealand has the second highest teenage pregnancy rate in the Western world (van Rutte, 2001, cited Cray, 2002: 21; Coddington, 2001: 37; Woodward, *et al*, 2001b: 301; Dickson *et al*, 2000: 241). There are approximately 7,000 recorded pregnancies² to young women aged 11-19 years per annum (Statistics New Zealand, 2003: 138; Condon & Corkindale, 2002: 45; Middlebrook, 2002: A6; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 3). There are also pregnancies which are not recorded that have resulted in a miscarriage³. Although teenage pregnancy rates have been on the increase since 1990, birth rates have declined (Statistics New Zealand [Statistics NZ], 2003: 127; Greer, 2001, cited Coddington, 2001: 37). The decline is largely due to an increase in abortion rates.

Since 1992 there has been an increase of over 1,000 abortions per annum in the 11-19 year age group. In 1992 there were 16.04 abortions per 1,000 estimated mean female population, a total of 2,274 abortions. In contrast by 1996 there were 31.4 abortions per 1,000 estimated mean female population, a total of 2,969 abortions. Further, in 2001 while the average number of abortions had declined to 24.7 abortions per 1,000 estimated mean female population, there was a rise in overall figures, with a total of 3,306 abortions (Report of the Abortion Supervisory Committee, 2002: 1; Statistics NZ, 2001: 131). The latest figures represent almost half of the recorded conceptions. However, regardless of the decrease in teenage births, the 'live' birth rate is a high rate of approximately 4,000 per annum (Statistics NZ, 2003: 37) and most of the babies born are parented by their young mother (Condon & Corkindale, 2002: 45).

Statistics New Zealand publishes yearly the number of recorded births, known as 'confinements'⁴. Table 2:1 (p.11) presents the latest statistics available, showing the total confinements in the year ended December 2001 to those under the age of 20.

² Recorded pregnancies "include the number of legally induced abortions, live births and stillbirths occurring in a year." (Statistics NZ, 2003: 127).

³ As miscarriages are not a notifiable event in New Zealand, the number of miscarriages in a given year are not known (Ibid).

⁴ The definition of 'confinements' is "a pregnancy resulting in either live or stillborn children. Such an event is counted as one confinement irrespective of whether a single or multiple birth results" (Statistics NZ, 2000: 47).

Table 2:1 Total Confinements Resulting in Live and Stillbirths (Year Ended 31 Dec 2001)

Age of Mother (Years)	Total		Single Cases		Cases of Twins			Cases of Triplets			
	Live	Still	Live	Still	Both Live	Both Still	1 Live 1 Still	All Live	All Still	1 Live 2 Still	2 Live 1 Still
13	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	23	1	23	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	121	-	121	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	352	4	348	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	658	4	652	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	1,081	9	1,072	9	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	1,501	3	1,488	3	13	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Under 20	3,741	21	3,709	21	32	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Demographic Trends, Jan 2003: 37.

In the year ended 31 December 2001, there were 3,741 live births in the 11-19 year old age group (13 years being the youngest who gave birth) and 21 stillbirths recorded. There were 32 cases of twins. Those who gave birth in the 15-17 year age group totalled 1,140, 9 of which were still born. There were 10 sets of live twins in this age group (Statistics NZ, 2002: 37).

Out of the approximate 4,000 births to teenagers per annum, it is hard to calculate exactly how many parent their child. Some babies born to teenagers are placed under court approved Guardianship arrangements, some are placed with family or whanau without going through the legal system (Adoption and Information Services Unit [AISU], Telephone conversation, 30 April 2003), some do not survive for a variety of reasons (Brooks-Funn & Chase-Lansdale, 1995, cited Paewai-Young, 2001: 52; *et al*) and some children or teenagers are placed in family homes by Child, Youth and Family, usually for reasons of neglect and/or abuse, or other risk factors (Adoption and Information Services Unit [AISU], Telephone conversation, 30 April 2003).

It is known that very few are placed for legal adoption (AISU, 2003: 6; Baragwanath, 2001: 2). The total adoption placements in New Zealand (for all ages) was 74 in 1999, 55 in 2000, 45 in 2001 and 66 in 2002 (AISU, 2002: 6). The figures are calculated from July of each year to July the following year. A breakdown of the ages of the birth mothers was requested from the Auckland AISU, however, ages are not recorded with

the monthly statistics. Ages could only be retrieved from going back through files (AISU, Telephone conversation, 30 April, 2003). Statistics New Zealand do not gather these statistics either (Ibid). Still, it can be concluded that very few adolescents adopt their babies out as the total number of adoptions for all ages is very minimal in comparison to the number of births each year. It can be assumed that of an average of 60 adoptions per year over the past 4 years, only a minority of the adoptions were to teenagers.

The Impact of Adolescent Pregnancy on Educational Participation

There is consensus among authors and researchers of a consistent association between adolescent conception and lower educational achievement (McDonagh, 2001: 58; Woodward *et al.*, 2001b: 301; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Woodward, *et al.*, 2001a: 2; Klepinger *et al.*, 1995, cited Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 2; Romans *et al.*, 1997: 31; Zabin and Hayward, 1993: 23; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159), in both secondary schooling and tertiary education (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 1). Research has highlighted an association between adolescent pregnancy/parenting and low academic achievement, motivation towards schooling and educational aspirations.

"Strong links have been established between educational under-achievement and early parenthood. In particular, there is clear evidence to suggest that girls who perform poorly in school and who have lower educational abilities, aspirations, and motivation are more likely to become pregnant early" (Woodward *et al.*, 2001a: 4).

Some claim that teenage pregnancy may even be a direct result of poor educational achievement (Baragwanath, 1996a: 16; UNICEF, 1996: 15) or educational failure (Clarke, 2001: A4). It has been suggested that those who are less likely to progress with their pregnancy have higher achievement levels and better educational and occupational prospects than those who continued with their pregnancy (Woodward, *et al.*, 2001b: 302). "This could be due to the greater personal costs that these young women perceive to be associated with early parenthood" (Ibid), such as the loss of educational and career opportunities.

There is evidence that many pregnant adolescents have left school prior to conception taking place (Bissell, 2000: 3; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin and Hayward, 1993: 23, also cited in Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 3; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159). Fergusson and Woodward (2000: 3, 9) found in their research of a New Zealand Birth Cohort that 61.9% of the 42 women studied who became pregnant before the age of 18 years, had actually left school before conception. They speculate that premature school leaving actually increases the risk of adolescent pregnancy (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 3). Their analysis suggested that "in these cases, it is likely that the pregnancy did not act to disrupt the young woman's educational career" (Ibid: 11), since education has already been interrupted.

Although there are many adolescents who become pregnant that have already left school, the literature also gives evidence that adolescent pregnancy often brings about a disruption to education and results in underachievement or abandonment of education (Clarke, 2002: A4; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 1, 11; Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 23). Fergusson and Woodward's (2000: 11) study mentioned above, revealed that of the 16 (38.1%) who were at high school when they became pregnant, there were 7 (16.7%) who left school as a direct result of the pregnancy. The percentage of young women whose pregnancy had an impact on educational decisions, to the point of leaving school, was only small. Nine (21.4%) out of the 16 who were at school when they became pregnant continued with their education. The researchers concluded that "for this group, it appears that, although pregnancy might have disrupted their education, it did not do so to the extent that it led to school withdrawal" (Ibid: 11).

In a Canadian long-term study it was revealed that those who were still in high school when they conceived were more likely to return to school after the birth than those who had already left school before pregnancy (Bissell, 2000: 3). Moore & Rosenthal (1993: 158) also claim that for those who were still motivated towards achieving their schooling at conception, pregnancy and childrearing does not necessarily interfere to the point of abandoning their education altogether (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 158). However, there is evidence that some young mothers abandon their education after the birth of their baby (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Berk,

1996, cited McDonagh, 2001: 58; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78; Dawson, 1987, cited Schofield 1994: 56, 76). Baragwanath (2001: 3, 1996a: iv) claims "that of a total of 2,929 girls (in New Zealand and aged 16 years and under) who gave birth over the period 1991-1995, schools were able to trace only 449. Of those 449, only 104 returned to continue their basic formal education".

Research shows that adolescents who take up the role of motherhood, do not do as well in their education as adolescents who do not become parents (Hofferth 1987, cited Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 158). In Fergusson & Woodward's (2000: 10; also cited in Cray, 2002: 24) study results showed that adolescents who became pregnant had a higher risk of under-achievement in the national School Certificate examinations than their non-pregnant peers, and were 10 times more likely to leave high school without qualifications and of failing to enter the sixth form. The 1996 Census showed the following: "52 percent of sole parents aged 15-19 had no formal qualifications compared to 31 percent of all 15-19 year olds, (and only) 17 percent of sole parents had School Certificate or above, compared to 58 percent of all 15-19 year olds" (cited Lynch, 1999: 12, cited DPB Review, 1998).

In addition to Fergusson and Woodward's (2000: 10) study, the odds of entering tertiary education was 5 times higher for those who did not become pregnant (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 10). Berk's (1996, cited McDonagh, 2001: 58) research showed only fifty percent of adolescents who became mothers under the age of eighteen completed their high school education, compared to ninety-six percent who were not mothers, although some resume their education later in life (Cray, 2002: 24, 25; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 158).

Furthermore, Klepinger *et al* (1995, cited Fergusson & Woodward: 2001a:2) found in their twelve-year follow-up study of 2,795 women, that those who had a child when under the age of 20, completed fewer years of schooling than those who had not. It was concluded that "early childbearing reduced the educational attainment of pregnant women by one to three years" (Ibid: 2). Cray (2002: 24,25) claims that adolescent parents generally do not catch up with peers who did not become teenage parents. The longer the young mothers are disconnected from education, "the chance to complete secondary education, access post-school training, and secure stable, well-paid

employment becomes more remote" (The Association of Women Educators, 2003: 1). Research carried out in New Zealand by Woodward *et al* (2001b: 302), which consisted of 74 young women who were mothers by the age of 21 years, showed that only 12% of the research group were involved in education or training, while 68% were dependent on welfare assistance (Ibid).

Many studies show that teenage mothers are unlikely to find stable and well-paid employment (Kenney, 1987, cited Cray, 2002: 25; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159), as educational and career opportunities are limited (Condon & Corkindale, 2002: 47; Dusek, 1996: 224; Ritchie and Ritchie, 1984, cited Baragwanath, 1996a: 20). The New Zealand 1996 Census (cited Lynch, 1999: 12) "showed that the large majority of sole mothers under 20 years with dependent children are not employed". Only 5% were working full-time, 7% part-time, 14% were unemployed and seeking work, and 74% were classed as "non labour force" (Ibid). The large number of teenage parents who are unemployed and in need of welfare assistance has engendered political and public concern.

With the right supports, education can provide positive steps towards curtailing the negative outcomes often associated with teenage parenting, such as lack of education, unemployment, long-term benefit dependency, and poor health and developmental outcomes for young mothers and their children (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Cray, 2002: 27; The Depart. of Health, 1990: 34). However, there are often obstacles which can impact on a young mother's educational success.

Barriers to Continuing Education

There are factors that have been recognised as barriers, which affect young mothers in continuing their education and achieving educational goals. Literature claims that the motivation to continue education can be significantly curtailed because of individual and external obstacles (Lynch, 1999: 45; Pilat, 1997: 47; Baragwanath, 1996a: 31). Individual factors can include the psychological status of combining motherhood and being a student" (Wilson, 1997, cited Hughes, 2002: 116); feelings about childcare options (Lynch, 1999: 48); low academic ability; lack of direction and goals; lack of

ambition; and low self-efficacy (Brynes, 2001: 93; Cullen, 2001: 640. Self- efficacy is about the degree to which an individual believes in herself to achieve a particular task (Bandura, 1986, cited Brynes, 2001: 100). Past educational success or failure can significantly impact on self-efficacy and the continuation of education (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 3; Cullen, 2001: 65). This will be analysed in more detail in the following chapter.

Mothering responsibilities

Mothering itself can impact on a young mother's motivational levels to continue her education, as the responsibilities of mothering takes their focus. Hughes (2002: 116) states, "the responsibilities of motherhood impact on the choices young women make in terms of their education and employment". Children are demanding of their mother's time and finding the time to study as well can be an overwhelming consideration (Benn, 1998: 62; Wilson, 1997, cited Hughes, 2002: 116). Often the young mother, who is not emotionally and psychologically ready to parent (Bird & Drewery, 2000: 167), is unable to give her attention to both. In an evaluation carried out by Lynch (1999: 48) on '*Teen Parent Education Support Demonstration Projects*' in New Zealand, it was found that "young parents are often distracted by their life circumstances, coming to grips with an adult responsibility while barely an adult themselves, to focus on the hard work of continuing with their education".

In his evaluation, this was particularly noticeable with the mothers in the early adolescent stage (12-18 years) (Ibid: 48). The developmental timing for parenting at this stage in a young women's life, and its impact on education, will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Childcare issues

A young mother can also be extremely anxious about leaving her child in the care of someone else to the point of making a decision not to continue with her education (Lynch, 1999: 46). In Lynch's (1999: 46) evaluation, young mothers interviewed "indicated that they were quite reluctant to be separated from their babies, and were not prepared to use community childcare facilities". For those who are prepared to leave their child in the care of someone else while they continue their education, the cost and accessibility of appropriate childcare is of considerable importance to a young mother.

Even with a childcare subsidy from Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), it can seem unaffordable to a young mother as the subsidy does not cover the total costs. The subsidy cannot be used for private childcare arrangements, i.e. with family members (WINZ, 2003c: 4; WINZ, 2003b: 2-3; *et al*). Lack of appropriate childcare can hold a young mother back from continuing her education (Wilson, 1997, cited Hughes, 2002: 116). In Pilat's (1997: 55) American study of 27 teen mothers, finding affordable and suitable childcare was often "seen as a hopeless situation" and it hindered educational participation. In Lynch's (1999: 49) evaluation the majority of students interviewed wanted a childcare centre on the same site as where they were studying.

The majority of high schools in New Zealand do not have childcare facilities (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 14). In Bargawanath's (1996a) survey of 86 high schools in 1995 on tracking the number of teenage mothers who were in school and what could be done to encourage young mothers to continue their education, only 17 percent indicated that childcare was available and only 10 percent had childcare on site. Unless a childcare centre is in walking distance for the young mother, the young mother is often discouraged from attending school. The same issue is apparent for any educational facility the young mother may be interested in attending (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 11).

Transportation issues

The issue of transportation is also of utmost importance when a young mother considers continuing with her education. In Pilat's (1997: 55) study (as mentioned above), evidence showed that the issue of transportation was seen as a major barrier, unless provided by the school. Likewise, in Lynch's (1999: 46) evaluation, it was found that transport was a real issue for young mothers. It was likely to affect educational participation if it was not provided by the special education projects. Lynch's (1999) evaluation pinpointed that the young mothers interviewed found "travelling by public transport ... difficult with a baby/child and ... costly" (Ibid). The young mother may need to get to a childcare centre and then to school or the course being attended and back again at the end of the day. The cost of transport on top of childcare and other costs and the amount of time it takes to actually get to school or the course being attended, can place continuing education in the "too hard basket".

Educational costs

Often the financial cost of childcare, transportation, in addition to the cost of the education and necessary resources, is a major hurdle (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 10; Lynch, 1999: 45). The cost of high school fees (although not compulsory), course fees, school uniforms (if not an adult student), books, stationery, field trips, photocopying and other unexpected costs (Baragwanath, 1996a: 31) can be unaffordable to a young mother, particularly those who are not entitled to a WINZ benefit of some kind. Although WINZ offer a Training Incentive Allowance (TIA) for some young mothers, which helps significantly with course fees and other costs, for those who are not entitled to a single parent benefit (because of parental income or because they have a partner), there is no government assistance with educational costs (WINZ, 2003e; Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.).

Barriers to continuing education in high school

Although current legislation in New Zealand does not exclude a pregnant teenager or young mother from attending school (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 6), there are significant barriers identified in the literature that may impede the continuation of their education in mainstream services. The literature suggests pregnant teens and young mothers may prematurely discontinue their education as high schools can be "hostile and difficult environments for pregnant young women so that there is little incentive to remain at school or to return after the baby's birth" (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159). For those who keep the baby and want to continue their education after the birth, there is literature which states that "teen parents are unlikely to access mainstream services because they do not feel that these services meet their special needs" (Lynch, 1999: 54).

There is no specific policy developed in New Zealand to encourage young mothers to continue with their education (Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 8, 13), although there is a legal requirement for those under 16 years to be attending school unless an exemption is granted. An exemption only applies if the young person is attending another full-time course (including correspondence schooling) or has full-time employment. However, when a young person just stops going to school, often there are no consequences. In Baragwanath's (1996a: 31) study, out of the 11 high schools who had reported an excess of 15 pregnancies since 1991, only three of these schools devised educational strategies with the students. Only one school had a formal initiative.

The literature highlights that one of the most significant factors for pregnant teens/young mothers in continuing their education at high schools is the lack of flexibility with regards to the timing of classes. The demands of mothering can be unpredictable, time consuming and can interrupt a daily school schedule. For example, the adolescent's child may be in need of care due to sickness or the mother may need time aside for breastfeeding/feeding, the baby may be 'demand' feed, or the child's caregiver while the mother is at school may be unavailable for some reason. "If there is insufficient flexibility, there is a risk that the teen parent may not continue her education" (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12).

Lack of support from school staff can also present as a significant barrier. As schools attempt to establish a basic moral code, i.e. of 'good' and 'bad' behaviour (Schofield, 1994: 72), they are often unable to cope with pregnant girls because school age mums are "not a good look" (Baragwanath, 2000: 5). Schofield (1994: 72-73) found in his American study that it was common for school staff to be concerned that pregnant students would be a bad influence on other students. The young women received negative messages from teachers and other staff, such as "getting pregnant is a disgrace" and "being pregnant reflects on the honour and reputation of the school" (Ibid: 72). In Schofield's (1994: 72) study, pregnant teens were threatened with exclusion from school if they continued with the pregnancy. Some recounted being pressured into considering options such as abortion and adoption, which were seen by school staff as more appropriate options than parenting. Power struggles between what adolescents girls wanted to do with the pregnancy and what school staff expected existed (Ibid).

Lack of support from peers is also a significant issue highlighted in the literature. Some research indicates that pregnant teens still at school have felt rejected by their peers once the pregnancy is obvious. Often pregnant adolescents and young mothers experience feelings of isolation from other students and are not accepted by their peers as equals (Kelley, 2002: 203; Baragwanath, 2000: 5, He Huarahi Tamariki, 1999: no page number; Schofield, 1994: 74). It is common for pregnant teens to suffer rejection name calling and ridicule by peers (i.e. 'slut') (Baragwanath, 2000: 5; Schofield, 1994: 74). As there is no denying that the adolescent has had sex, the young woman is open to value judgments. Keeping the baby opens the young mother up to even more judgments from others (Schofield, 1994: 72).

In Schofield's 1993 study (1994: 74-75) of young mothers who were attending a special school for young mothers in Ipswich, young mothers recounted the resentment they felt towards other students because of the hypocrisy of the students and because of the embarrassment their ridicule caused. Some recalled that not only was it difficult to come to terms with the reality of the pregnancy themselves and face their parents, but having to also face the reactions of peers and school staff, who only added to the feelings of guilt and shame, was devastating. Schofield (Ibid) states, "for those who hated school anyway, this only made leaving easier and more justifiable" (Ibid). Although not all of Schofield's (1994: 75) research showed negative memories towards being pregnant at school, the majority of those interviewed only stayed at school for a short time once their pregnancy became known to others (Ibid). Baragwanath (2000: 5) states, from her experience of working with pregnant teens and teenage parents,

that school becomes a thing of the past and bad memories prevent it from being much else ... In her fragile state ... the girl usually disappears into the community only to be seen much later pushing a pram at the shopping mall on benefit day.

Although a number of barriers have been explored within high school, it is imperative to recognise that "it would be unrealistic for a regular secondary school to be expected to provide all the services that a young vulnerable parent would need" (Baragwanath, 2001: 4). Rae (1996: 18) states that "schools can't support a student and her baby without extra resources". Extra resources would be needed to meet the specific needs of young mothers, such as extra funding for childcare centres on site, transportation to assist in getting a young mother and her child to and from school, extra tutoring support and flexible and relevant curriculum.

The correspondence schooling option

"Provision is given in the education legislation for teenage mothers to enrol at the Correspondence School if they are no longer able to attend their local secondary college" (Baragwanath, 2000: 5). Baragwanath (Ibid; also cited Rae, 1996: 18) believes correspondence schooling is rarely successful for young mothers, although "72 percent of schools in a recent survey indicated that was how they addressed the educational requirements of their student mothers" (Baragwanath, 1996, cited Rae, 1996: 18).

Baragwanath (2000: 5) claims one of the most significant reasons for the lack of success is the issue of self-motivation. Self-motivation can be a real barrier for these young mothers and the support of co-ordinators and peers is very much vital to their success (Lynch, 1999: 45). Another significant reason is some young mothers have lower than average academic and/or reading ability and struggle with self-directed learning (Baragwanath, 2000: 5). Furthermore, many hate school prior to becoming pregnant and use the excuse of having a baby as a way to have academic freedom (Ibid). In Lynch's (1999: 45) evaluation, one 17 year old mother stated, "I tried correspondence when I was pregnant. I was 15. I just gave it all up when my baby was born. Then I tried again, but couldn't keep it up".

The literature highlights individual and external barriers for young mothers in continuing their education. The literature also discusses supports and resources which influence and encourage a young mother to successfully continue with her education.

Supports to Encourage Educational Success

It is believed that education is critical to a young mother's and her child's quality of life. For young mothers to have the best opportunity to complete their basic education and/or go on to further education, appropriate supports and resources need to be in place. Literature claims that what is vitally needed for young mothers to be able to continue with their education is encouragement; practical and emotional support; suitable and affordable childcare and transportation; financial assistance (Bissell, 2001: 3; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001; Lynch, 1999: 45, 46); and a learning environment which meets their special needs and encourages their education (The Association of Women Educators, 2003; Bissell, 2001: 3; Walsh, 2001: A13; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 7; Woodward *et al*, 2001a: 2; Dusek, 1996: 224; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105).

The literature makes suggestions as to how these needs can be met. Research has shown that good, positive family support (Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Cray, 2002: 27; Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 79; The Department of Health, 1990: 34); the development of a positive peer group system (Cray, 2002: 26; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12; Lynch, 1999: 45, 46; O'Connor, 1998; cited The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105; The Dept. of Health, 1990: 34);

positive mentoring (O'Connor, 1998, cited The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12); appropriate curriculum, modes of teaching and flexibility in the educational environment (Walsh, 2001: A13; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12); and support from governmental and nongovernmental services (Cray, 2002: 27; Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 17; Drummond, 1998: 15; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Schofield, 1994: 130) can make a significant difference.

Family support

As highlighted in the literature, one of the most significant supports needed in order for a young mother to have positive outcomes in education is strong family support (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Cray, 2002: 27; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). Family support "can counteract many of the adverse consequences of early childbearing on the life of the young mother" (Furstenberg & Brooks-Gunn, 1987, cited Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 85). In Lynch's (1999: 45) evaluation of young mothers enrolled in the New Zealand Correspondence School, it was apparent that those who had a supportive parent/guardian had considerably higher levels of work return after the birth of their babies than the young mothers who did not have the same level of support. The most beneficial support offered by families was help with childcare, emotional and practical support.

Likewise, in a longitudinal study by Furstenberg *et al* (1987, cited Baragwanath, 1996a: 18; also cited in Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 79), of mothers under the age of 17 in Baltimore who bore children, it was found that young mothers who were able to continue to live with their parents had a better chance of completing their schooling "and be less dependent on welfare in the long term" (Ibid). It was found that what makes it possible for young mothers to return to school is family support, both financially and in childcare (Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 79).

Peer support

Literature shows that a young mother can also be more successful in her education with positive peer influences and support (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12, 13; Lynch, 1999: 45; Baragwanath, 1996a: 27; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). Lynch (1999: 36-37, 45) found in his study that it is important for adolescent mothers to be able to have friends who are of similar age and maturity, who they can share

experiences with and support each other. This can provide a positive support system for continuing education and attaining successful educational outcomes.

Melania Taoalii, a young mother attending *He Huarahi Tamariki* with other young mothers in 1995, expressed that continuing her education with other young mothers in the same situation and experiencing similar problems made her "want to get up off the couch!" and resume her education, which she did. (He Huarahi Tamariki, 1999: no page number). Destiny, also a student of *He Huarahi Tamariki* in 1995, left school at 15 years and became pregnant at 17. Destiny felt she was no good at school and preferred her social life over her education. Having the support of peers who encouraged her to return to her schooling made a difference to her decision to continue her education and work towards achieving a school certificate qualification. Destiny has realised she has the ability to be successful.

I am now back at school getting back my lost education because I dropped out of school when I was 15 years old and just stayed home, sleeping all day and roaming all night, getting on whatever buzz that was around at the time. When I was sixteen going on seventeen a few of my mates came over and dragged me out of my warm bed to go to school one fine morning, it wasn't actually a school, there were only a handful of people there and all were doing correspondence work, and work at your own pace. I thought that was cool so I joined and quite enjoyed myself and found that I wasn't as dumb as I thought I was...I am soon to be sitting exams for school cert[ificate]. Accounting and Human Biology. I am teaching myself to teach my child in the up and coming future (Ibid).

Lynch (1999:12) claims "research has shown that (young) parents often need support initially and, as their self-esteem and confidence improve, their interest in education starts to become important to them". According to Young (1990, cited Pilat, 1997:119) and Baragwanath (1996a:28), positive peer relationships should be encouraged by school staff for effective educational outcomes.

Support in the educational environment

The Association of Women Educators (2003: 3) asserts that young mothers have the right to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to find rewarding employment, in a flexible and responsive school environment. Flexibility within a programme can allow a young mother to still meet the demands of mothering, i.e. breast

feeding. Ideally, the educational environment would provide childcare facilities within the school or close by (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 11; Bissell, 2000: 3; The Depart. of Health, 1990: 34). Kelley (2002: 204) asserts that pregnant adolescents and young mothers must enter into a "supportive partnership" with the school if there is to be educational success.

There is literature on the need for 'student-centred' curricula, which includes flexible programmes that teach young parents about child development, parenting and life skills, and allow them to continue their general education and gain vocational skills (Kelley, 2002: 205; Walsh, 2001: A13; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 7; Pilat, 1997: 119; Dusek, 1996: 224; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105). Research has shown that parenting education "improves the parent-child relationship and has positive long-term results, such as reductions in child abuse and better educational outcomes for both parent and child" (Hurlburt, 1997: 642).

In the survey of high schools carried out by Baragwanath (1996a), as already mentioned, the majority of schools indicated a high level of support to pregnant teens attending their school. Most schools tended to encourage the continuation of schooling, offered counselling and information, and encouraged any pregnant students to talk with their families (Ibid: 10-11). Lynch (1999: 47) claims that when young mothers are "given a happy and caring (educational) environment they can achieve just as well as their peers" who do not have children. Pilat, (1997: 119) contends that positive student-teacher relationships, where there is understanding and respect, is also important if young mothers are to be encouraged to participate in education. When adolescents feel that their teachers care about them, motivation can be enhanced and positive academic and social outcomes can be attained (Lerner, 2002: 2714; Brynes, 2001: 106). Schofield (1994: 26) claims that young mothers need to feel they are treated 'as mothers', rather than a 'wayward child'.

Mentoring

Literature suggests that mentoring is needed to support young mothers (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12; Lynch, 1999: 45, 46). Bronfenbrenner (1985, cited Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 345) asserts that with supportive mentors, young women tend to "blossom". Through one-on-one, practical, emotional and educational support, a young

mother's educational outcomes can be more successful (Lynch, 1999: 24-25; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105). There is evidence that a positive and healthy social connection can help improve a young mother's confidence, by assisting her in acquiring parenting skills and gaining educational qualifications (O'Connor, 1998, cited The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12). Zabin & Hayward (1993: 105) claim that a mentor can act as a role model "from whom to learn parenting skills that they may not have ... acquired through their own early experiences". Lynch (1999: 38) contends that a mentor can be supportive in helping a young mother with educational goal setting which is realistic, practical, and affordable.

Educational and careers advice

In writing about devising appropriate educational programmes for young mothers, Kelly (2002: 205) states that "access to career, academic, and personal guidance is fundamental for student success". This can be extremely beneficial in setting and achieving educational goals that provide the young mother with positive outcomes financially and personally. Apart from this slice of literature, the literature appears to be scarce on the need for young mothers to have access to educational and employment planning.

Government assistance

The literature suggests it is important for government and non-government agencies to be responsive to specific needs of these young people to ensure that young women have every opportunity to continue education (The Association of Women Educators, 2003: 1; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 17; Drummond, 1998: 15; Schofield, 1994: 130). There are a number of government benefits available to adolescent parents, aged 16 to 17 years. Benefits available can be for assistance with accommodation, medical issues (child and adult), childcare (preschool and school age), special needs, an advance payment, single parenting and for training and education (WINZ, Telephone conversation with the Call Centre, 3 June, 2003; Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.). Young mothers under the age of 16 years are not offered any WINZ benefit as it is expected that parents/guardians will meet their needs (Ibid; Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.). Inland Revenue also provide assistance to low income families and to those who have been working for 12 months and are on maternity leave, including those who are parenting under the age of 16 years (Inland Revenue, 2003).

The most common benefit to single parents aged 16-17 years to be in receipt of is the Emergency Maintenance Allowance (EMA), which is an emergency benefit particularly for those who are 16-17 year with dependents. The EMA can be applied for whether or not the adolescent mother lives with her parents/guardians. The young mothers' parents are however, income tested and the level of hardship is considered. This benefit is not therefore available to all single parents in this age group. It needs to be proven that the primary family cannot afford to support the young mother and her child (Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.; Coddington, 2001: 40). Once a young mother who is receiving the EMA turns 18 years of age, the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) can be applied for. Any person who receives the EMA or DPB needs to attend a yearly meeting with WINZ to devise an educational and employment plan (WINZ, 2003a: 2; Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.). The provision of professional careers advice and goal setting is not included.

On the North Shore there are currently 62 recipients of the EMA on the North Shore. This consists of a caseload of 20 in the Glenfield office, 8 in the Browns Bay office, 17 in the Birkenhead office and 17 in the Takapuna office (WINZ, Telephone conversation with the Public Relations Advisor, WINZ, 30 April 2003). This does not convey the total number of 15 to 17 year old adolescent parents on the North Shore, as not all in this age group are entitled to the EMA due to parental income, and those under 15 years are not entitled at all, as already discussed (Ibid; Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.).

To assist with education, a Training Incentive Allowance (TIA) can be applied for if the young parent is receiving the EMA. The TIA can be paid out at a maximum of \$81.98 per week, or \$3,279.20 annually, depending on course costs and the length of the course. The course must also be recognised by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (WINZ, 2003c: 8). The aim of the education must be to develop skills and improve prospects for sustainable paid employment (Ministry of Social Policy, 2001: 42). For WINZ to accept the application, the education must meet the objectives of the client's employment plan which has been discussed with her WINZ case manager. A young mother, who is not receiving a single parent's benefit, will need to apply for a student loan (WINZ, Telephone conversation with the Call centre, 3 June 2003).

In addition, to assist with education or employment, a young parent may be entitled to a Childcare Subsidy, whether receiving a benefit or not. The applicant, who has one child

under the age of 5 years (6 years if receiving a Child Disability Allowance) and whose weekly income is up to \$520 before tax, can claim up to \$2.54 per hour for childcare (with a licensed childcare centre only), for up to 9 hours per week and in some cases up to 37 hours per week (Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.). The income rate is slightly higher for parents of more than one child (WINZ, 2003c: 4; WINZ, 2003b: 2-3).

An Out of School Care and Recreation Subsidy (OSCAR) may also be applied for a child/children aged 5 to 13 years, which "helps towards the costs of before and after school care of up to 20 hours a week, and school holiday programmes of up to 37 hours a week" (WINZ, 2003b: 3). Child Youth and Family must approve the service that provides the care. The rate is slightly lower than the Childcare Subsidy, for example, with one child and a weekly income of up to \$520 before tax, the amount paid is up to \$1.96 per hour (Ibid; WINZ, 2003c: 4).

Government and agency collaboration required

Schofield (1994: 130) argues that agencies need to "work together to provide appropriate responses from the point at which pregnancy is confirmed through to the child becoming a toddler and perhaps beyond". Although disadvantages may be associated with the age and life development stage of young mothers, "there is no evidence that age would continue to be decisive if various Government and local authority departments were to respond more appropriately to the specific needs of young mothers" (Schofield, 1994: 48). Schofield (1994) suggests that the disadvantages associated with teen pregnancy and childrearing, such as loss of educational and career opportunities and financial hardship, could be lessened with appropriate response.

Max (2001, cited Walsh, 2001: A13) states what is needed is "a more active, focused approach to ensure young people leave school with greater knowledge about children's development". Baragwanath (1996a: vi) states that there is a need for close liaison between the Boards of Trustees and the Ministry of Education regarding school policies, which "should target the education provisions for students at-risk and should include support for peer programmes as well as more relevant curriculum in secondary schools". Baragwanath also states, "The Ministry of Education needs to take overall responsibility for school-age mothers who drop out of school and make specific provision for them to ensure their continuing education" (Ibid). Angus (2002: no page no.) claims that;

the Ministry of Education is seeking to raise achievement and reduce disparity for all students...to meet the needs of different groups, such as teen parents... Officials are working together to develop a vision for parent support and development.

According to Walsh (2001, A13), The Ministry of Education is working on developing more resources on families to incorporate into the school curriculum.

Exploring the Place of Special Educational Programmes.

Appropriate educational programmes, whether in high school or set up as alternative services, can provide positive steps towards curtailing the negative outcomes often associated with teenage parenting (Kelley, 2002: 203; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Cray, 2002: 27; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). Findings highlight the need to develop more effective programmes to minimize the disruptive effects of pregnancy and childbirth on the educational progress of young women (Allen *et al*, 1997, Christopher, 1995, *et al*, cited Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 2) and improve life chances of young mothers and their children (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 12; Woodward *et al*, 2000a: 2). Moore & Rosenthal (1993: 158) state that special educational programmes will only be appropriate those who were still motivation towards their education at conception. Pilat (1999: 125) suggests that;

an array of options in education are necessary for pregnant and parenting teens to succeed.....School districts should be encouraged to offer an array of educational options (including regular and alternative education opportunities) to meet the varying needs of students.

"Pregnant and parenting students may be served at a traditional high school, a school within a school, or at an alternative campus" (Kelley, 202: 204). There is discussion globally and nationally around whether it is better to provide more education centres for young mothers or whether it is better to provide better resources in local schools (Kelly, 2002: 204; Baragwanath, 2001: 6; Dusek, 1996: 224; Schofield, 1994: 57; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 164; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105).

A few high schools nationally are endeavouring to meet the needs of parenting teenagers by providing childcare facilities. According to the Teen Parent Focus Group (2001: 6), three of these schools are in Auckland. There are also schools offering programmes on childcare, nutrition and child development (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 6; Lynch, 1999: 12). Plunket, a New Zealand infant care organisation, operates a programme in just over 100 high schools called 'Tots and Toddlers', where issues such as childcare, nutrition and development are covered (Plunket, Telephone conversation, 6 June 2003; Walsh, 2001: A13). The programme is of eight weeks duration and is currently operating in 3 North Shore high schools in Auckland (Ibid).

A number of researchers and authors claim that pregnant adolescents and young mothers require special programmes in an alternative environment to high schools, which include health and parenting programmes, as well as being directed at promoting educational and occupational opportunities (Dusek, 1996: 224; Schofield, 1994: 57; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 164; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105). Baragwanath (2001: 6) believes it is better to have a special unit which is adjacent to a 'Host School' (local high school) for transport and communication reasons, although Baragwanath claims in some communities educational units work better in isolation. Providing the focus is educating the young parents, Baragwanath (Ibid) claims that "any space acceptable to the Ministry of Education will work". Kelly (2002: 204) asserts that a small alternative programme to high school meets the needs of pregnant and parenting students.

An overseas example

In Ipswich, in 1982, a unit specifically for pregnant teenagers and young mothers was established, with the intention of bringing pregnant school girls together for peer support as well as for educational purposes. It was found these young girls had emotional and practical needs, as well as educational needs. The school which the unit is connected to, makes a referral as soon as the young woman's pregnancy becomes known. As the unit developed, this basic principle of peer support continued alongside the development of the unit's educational aims. The girls study a core curriculum of mathematics, English and child care, and can also choose subjects of interest. There are sessions on pregnancy, childbirth, advice on welfare rights, first aid and more. By necessity, there is flexibility around attendance and the number of examination subjects taken, according to the mother's social situation and pregnancy/childrearing stage (Schofield, 1994: 57).

In Schofield's (1994: 76) evaluation of this tuition unit in 1993, she found that most of the students found the unit to be "a safe haven in which their pregnancy was not seen as something to be ashamed of" (Ibid). Teachers did not lower their expectations in terms of education. Research found that those who attended found the curriculum (which included parenting, life skills and child development education, as well as general schooling) more appropriate and beneficial than high school. They were much more eager to learn and were achieving more at the unit than they had at school (Ibid: 76-77).

In addition to the importance of their academic work, the students felt that the need to be supported and accepted, by both teachers and peers, was just as imperative. The peer support was very reassuring. One young mother commented that;

it was nice because you didn't have to not talk about certain things. I felt that I was a bad influence on all the other girls at school because I was the one who was pregnant... You could talk more openly ... You had more in common (Ibid: 78).

The young mothers felt more accepted by staff and felt they were treated more like adults than 'wayward' children. Being treated as responsible adults, with good peer, teacher and educational support, encouraged the young mothers to continue with their education. It was possible for the students to keep on learning, to set goals and to achieve more than they had at secondary school (Ibid: 77-78).

New Zealand examples

There are a number of special schools set up in New Zealand aimed to meet the educational, social and practical needs of young mothers. This thesis looks at two special programmes in the Auckland area, as well as one outside of Auckland which has gain special attention in the literature.

Schools for young mothers in the Auckland Area

A special educational unit is operating for young parents in South Auckland. The policy of the unit is to "encourage young mothers to continue their schooling at school" (Principal, James Cook High School, Telephone Conversation, 25 Feb 2003). The unit has its own van which is used to pick up young mothers and their children and take them home again. There is a crèche next door which the young mothers use for childcare. In

2002 some of the resources at James Cook High School were available for the young mothers to use, such as the home economic classroom for cooking. However, this is no longer available due to an increase in the high school's roll.

The '*Strengthening Families*' programme was used to set this service up in 2001. The programme is partly funded by the Ministry of Education, and operates under the umbrella of '*Alternative Education*' (AE). The disadvantage of this is that students must meet the AE criteria, which includes two school exclusions, an absence from school for 2 or more terms, and is for students aged 13 to 16 years (Jorgensen, 2001, no page number). Under AE Policy, funding is only available for this age group, although, once a young person is enrolled, support can be received until he/she is 18 years (Jorgensen, 2001, no page number). With additional funding from elsewhere, the school is able to offer up to 8 places to young mothers. Review was to take place at the end of 2003, where funding could be granted again for a further year.

A school for young mothers, the '*Alternative Education Unit for School Age Mums*', operates in the West Auckland area. The school was established in July 2001 by "*Creative Solutions*", a committee group which consists of people who work in education and who saw a need for an alternative school for young mothers. The unit runs totally separate from any high school and only takes young mothers and pregnant teenagers who are serious about continuing with their education. The school runs from Monday to Friday 9.30am to 3.00pm. The Correspondence School is used to provide formal education and parenting education is also offered. Students can look after their babies on site, up until crawling stage. Once a baby is crawling, other childcare arrangements must be sought by the mother. Transportation is not able to be provided at this stage due to funding issues, although the co-ordinator feels this would be beneficial (Co-ordinator, Alternative Education Unit for School Age Mums, Telephone Conversation, 24 Feb 2003).

Alternative Education (AE) funds up to 3 student placements and the Correspondence School funds up to 5 placements. As at 24 February 2003, 6 young mothers aged 15 to 18 years were enrolled (Ibid), a considerably small number, given that this is the only specialised school for young parents in the West Auckland area.

Another school specifically for pregnant adolescents and young mothers was due to be established in Central Auckland in February 2004 (Fraser, Telephone conversation, 24 Feb 2003).

He Huarahi Tamariki - Porirua

The school for teenage mothers, *He Huarahi Tamariki*, has gained special attention in the literature (Drummond, 1998: 13; Baragwanath, 1996b: 43). *He Huarahi Tamariki* is situated in Porirua and came about in 1995 as a response to a need for young parents to continue their formal education. Some young parents had identified issues with continuing their education at mainstream schools. The school's aims are "to break the cycle of benefit dependency and improve the life chances of the children (by) filling a vacuum in the education of their mothers" (cited Drummond, 1998: 13). Young mothers are given the opportunity to achieve educational and employment goals, and they are helped towards independence by gaining school qualifications (Cray, 2002: 25). The school is held within Porirua College, and in the year 2003 fifty students aged 14-19 years were attending the school (De Renzy, 2003: 2). It is funded by the Ministry of Education, Child Youth and Family and various charitable trusts (De Renzy, 2003: 2; He Huarahi Tamariki, 1997, cited Drummond, 1998: 14).

The school provides transport, free food, help with accessing services and a preschool. For many students it is important they can have their babies with them (Baragwanath, 1996, cited Rae, 1996: 18). Others have private arrangements or use Barnardo's, a private home-based care early childhood provider (De Renzy, 2003: 2). Students also have access to the college's facilities (i.e. the library) and services such as eye tests are provided. Baragwanath (1996b: 45) claims that by providing incentives and a service which meets the practical, emotional and educational needs of young mothers, young mothers are brought back into the education system and encouraged to achieve their goals. Baragwanath (1996a: 29) states, "The culture of at-risk students is such that they may be able to be 'bought'".

Interactive informal and formal modes of teaching and learning are used. The curriculum links up with the Correspondence School and a range of topics are covered alongside basic education, such as nutrition and parenting. The programme is flexible and students work at their own pace (He Huarahi Tamariki, 2002; Baragwanath, 1996b:

43-44; Drummond, 1998: 13; Lynch, 1999: 27). Evaluation carried out has shown that this school's programme has been successful in helping young women who have dropped out of school and/or failed school complete their high school education (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Lynch, 1999: 67). Some young women who have attended He Huarahi Tamariki, have claimed "that carrying on with their schooling in an encouraging environment makes them better parents" (Baragwanath, 2001: 2). Students tend to be positive about their future (Ibid: 3).

In *'He Huarahi Tamariki - A Chance for Children, Book of Stories'* (1999) is a collection of true stories written from the hearts of young mothers who were attending *He Huarahi Tamariki* in 1995. Their hopes and dreams for achieving education are inspiring, particularly when it is evident that before the birth of their baby, many of the young mothers in this literature had no sense of educational direction, no motivation for achieving in school and felt they had no real hope for their future. Mothering has made a positive impact on the educational decisions and goals of some of the young mothers. Their voices have expressed their hopes of providing well for themselves and their child/children by continuing their education as a way to sustainable employment. This is evident in Alicia's words when she wrote,

....I feel really proud that I am actually doing something for myself and for my babies. I feel more in control with my life and what I am doing and yeah, I am happy....I want my kids to be raised in a good environment and a happy home and are never in need of food or anything. Neither my partner or myself had those things....You'll be hearing from me one day as I want to be a big shot lawyer! (Ibid: no page number).

Alicia's educational goals are linked to her career goal and her hope of being able to provide well for herself and her children.

The voice of another young woman expressed of how the school has been a positive influence on her life is very inspiring. Gemma had left school and had a baby at 16 years. Gemma felt inspired by a friend to continue her education and enrolled in He Huarahi Tamariki. Gemma lacked confidence in her own ability, but the support from the school has given her the encouragement to reach out for her goals. Gemma has hopes for her future that she never used to have. In her own words she wrote,

a friend of mine was going to HHT and I was noticing changes in her whole attitude and it made me want to come too. So I asked her if there was a chance for me to join and she said "yes!". I felt really nervous when I walked in and I was worried because I did not know what to expect on the work front. I thought it might be all too hard for me and was not sure if I could do it. I enjoyed my first day and (from) then on I could wake up in the morning and have something to look forward to ... I feel my confidence growing and I now know there is a future ahead of me...My goal is (seriously) to be an accountant. I have started well with my maths and next year I want to do School Certificate accounting...If the school was not here I would be watching soapies at home and relying on the benefit to get me through life. But that is not what I want (Ibid: no page number).

Grace has also been inspired by He Huarahi Tamariki to complete her education. Grace had left school prior to becoming pregnant, but enrolled in this school after the birth of her baby. About returning to school, Grace expressed,

Coming back to school has given me a second chance. If it wasn't for this school I would be staying at home watching soap operas on television and having no hope for the future. Now I have decided what profession I want to go in to and plan to pursue my goals to the end. I don't want to stay being a no-body. It may sound sugary but the best thing I ever did was come back to this school. It has built my confidence up a bit and I am happier than I have been for a long time (Ibid).

Grace has passed four School Certificate subjects since being at the school and was working part-time for the school at the time of writing her story.

Summary

Adolescent pregnancy is a significant problem in New Zealand (Cray, 2002: 27), with one of the highest rates in the western world. With approximately 4,000 adolescents giving birth each year, and most choosing to take on the responsibility of parenting, the financial and social cost on the wider community in the immediate term and its impact on future generations is huge (Condon & Corkindale, 2002: 45; Baragwanath, 2001: 2; Baragwanath, 1996a: 1). Pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers often abandon their education, if they have not already done so, thus increasing the risk of unemployment both in the short and the long term. The risk of welfare dependency is

increased and life opportunities for young mothers and their children can be significantly curtailed.

There is a consensus among authors and researchers that education can provide a vehicle in which young mothers can gain better outcomes for themselves and their child/children (Baragwanath, 2000: 5; Lynch, 1999: 1, 47; Dusek 1996: 222, *et al*). However, it has been found in the literature that significant individual and external factors have hindered young mothers from continuing their education. These include school and peer responses to the pregnancy, financial costs of childcare, transport and education, along with mothering responsibilities and not wanting to separate from their child.

Without the encouragement from supportive family, peers, school staff, government and non-government agencies, the chance of successful educational achievement is limited. For some young mothers, the opportunity has been given to continue their education in an environment of support, understanding and flexibility. For others, there are factors which hinder the continuation of education. Baragwanath (1996a: 34) states, "We must look for ways and means to bring the young mothers back to a learning situation and find out what motivates them to do so". Unless adolescent parents are given an opportunity to continue their education with the right kind of supports, the risk of long-term benefit dependency and other poor outcomes is increased (Ibid: 18). With the right support and resources, the literature claims that young mothers can be encouraged to continue their education and achieve educational goals.

Chapter 3: Seeking a Theoretical Understanding

Introduction

This research is underpinned by an understanding of developmental and learning theories in relation to the life stage of adolescent mothers. Adolescence is a period where biological, psychosocial, cognitive/moral and environmental factors relate together and influence development (Mansfield, 1998: 35). "Change" marks each of these domains, which presents risks and opportunities (Bowler, 2001: 27; Drummond, 2001: 69). Fox (1993: 80) claims that by binding an environmental and individual approach together, development can be seen as influenced by numerous variables coming from different yet interconnected systems, such as biological, psychosocial, cognitive/moral and environmental. These various systems are dynamic and continually interrelate with each other. The changes in these domains intensify when an adolescent becomes pregnant and opts to parent her child.

Firstly, an analysis of the psychosocial domain of development is carried out, which describes adolescence as a time of stress and a time of identity formation. Stress is heightened when an adolescent becomes pregnant and has a baby, and the achievement of developmental tasks, such as separating from parents, strengthening peer relationships, planning for an economic future and preparing for family life, are held back. This can have significant consequences on educational achievement and financial independence.

Secondly, an analysis of learning theory is undertaken. Learning theory claims that educational achievement is influenced by internal and external factors. In relation to this research, expectancy theory is of significance, which informs us that people are largely motivated by the 'reward' they expect to gain. The concept of self-efficacy is also examined as past educational success or failure can have a negative or positive influence on educational participation and outcomes. Bronfenbrenner's (1979, cited Lerner, 2002: 20) ecological theory is also examined as it provides the theory base for assessing external resources and supports, which are lacking, as well as the opportunities which are provided, so that young mothers can be provided with a positive and beneficial learning environment.

The third part of this chapter offers a feminist perspective on adolescent development and desire for educational achievement. It discusses Gilligan's (1982) 'Ethic of Care' perspective, which looks at the identity of adolescent girls within a relational context and presents stages of moral development. An ethic of care perspective gives understanding as to how mothering can impact on education, to the point of continuing or discontinuing education. It also looks at other feminist standpoints about the importance for women to be self-motivated, increase self-determination (Miller, 1986 and Lerner, 1989, cited Santrock, 2001: 345) and become financially independent (Hughes, 2002: 116-117). The chapter concludes with a discussion about how these three primary issues of importance (development, learning and mothering) interrelate and inform the research question.

Part One: Developmental Theory

Psychosocial domain

"Psychosocial development is about change in feelings or emotions as well as in relations with other people" (Seinfert & Hoffnung, 2000: 5). It includes interactions with family, peers and classmates and is concerned with the development of individual identity. Psychosocial development can bring about a myriad of challenges. G. Stanley (1916), a prominent theorist on adolescent development, claimed that in the psychosocial domain, adolescents experience *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress). He noted that the adolescent period was particularly a transitional and turbulent time for girls (cited Drummond, 1999a: 5). Although his theory has been open to criticism and has not been proven to be universal by contemporary theorists, stress is often very much experienced by teenagers because of the multifaceted aspects of their lives. The idea of youth as a time of fun, enthusiasm and physical attractiveness, is somewhat misleading (Bird and Drewery 2000: 150; Drummond, 2001: 68). Bird and Drewery (2000) point out that often adolescents find this stage in their lives to be full of anxiety and uncertainties. In Harold Grotevant's (1998, cited Drummond, 2001: 68) article discussing "*Adolescent Development in Family Contexts*" he maintains that adolescence "is a time during which stress may be experienced because of the many choices confronting young people, their changing physical, psychosocial, and cognitive functions, their changing relationships with parents, friends, school".

When an adolescent becomes pregnant, additional stresses arise. The pregnant adolescent has to decide whether to 'keep' or 'not keep' her baby, and if she does decide to parent, she has to make decisions about where she will live, how she will cope, how she will financially support herself, what she will do with her education and what support she will need. She is also faced with the possibility of not being supported by family, friends and school. The adolescent mother is faced with the dual responsibility of meeting her own developmental needs, as well as the developmental needs of her child (Pilat, 1997: xxi-xxii). She has to learn to balance caring for her baby with 'growing up' and taking care of personal aspects of her life (Kelley, 2002: 203-204). Not only is the adolescent coming to terms with her own identity as an individual within her family, school and peer group, she is now having to face taking on the identity of a 'mother' with all its stresses and choices it brings (Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 84).

Developmental tasks

In Havinghurst's (1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34) psychosocial theory of adolescence (see Figure 4.1), he contends that there are eight developmental tasks designed to help adolescents form their identity (McGachie, 2000: 34). For the purposes of this research, tasks three to six will be discussed.

1. Accepting one's body and using it effectively
2. Achieving a masculine or feminine social role
3. Achieving new and more mature relations with peers of both sexes
4. Attaining emotional independence of parents and other adults
5. Preparing for an economic career
6. Preparing for marriage and family life
7. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour
8. Acquiring a set of values as a guide to behaviour

Source: (Havinghurst, 1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34)

Figure 3.1 The Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Havinghurst's (1972) third developmental task is achieving new and more mature relations with peers of both sexes. This usually comes about with an increased detachment from family. Ausbel (1958) describes this as decartelisation, where there is

a move away from parents to attachment to the peer group, resatellization (cited Bowler, 1998: 30). During adolescence, peer group interaction becomes very important. The peer group can offer desirable rewards, such as socialization, acceptance, popularity, as well as friendship with like-minded people who understand each other and have common interests (Santrock, 1998: 185, cited Bowler, 2001: 22; Muuss, 1996b: 324). "Peer interaction is often a crucial component in providing opportunities for developing the social skills and emotional capacities of human relationships." (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 35). High school can play a significant role in the adolescent's development through peer group relationships (Seifert & Hoffnung, 2000: 5). Much of the concern with adolescent pregnancy is because of "the growing disparity between teenage mothers and their peers in terms of the developmental timing of the parenting onset" (Cheesbrough *et al*, 1999, cited Woodward *et al*, 2001a: 1). For the adolescent mother, her peer group often becomes more removed, as they have different interests and responsibilities.

Havinghurst's (1972) fourth developmental task involves the adolescent attaining emotional independence of parents and other adults. There are a number of theorists and writers who claim that adolescents need to develop a separate and coherent sense of identity, through independence and emotional separation from family (Cray, 2002: 26; Bissell, 2000: 11; Bird & Drewery, 2000: 144; Steinberg, 1996: 253; Brooks-Gunn and Reiter, 1990, cited Drummond, 2001: 76; Havinghurst, 1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 204). Some young people, whether young parents or not, are being held up in the tasks of separating from parents, finding one's own identity and developing personal autonomy (Bird & Drewery, 2000: 167), and a longer educational term is now needed because of lack of employment opportunities. Generally, dependency on the family is lengthening and the transition from adolescence to adulthood is becoming more difficult (Bird & Drewery, 2000: 142; Lerner & Spanier, 1990, cited Drummond, 2001: 82).

When an adolescent becomes pregnant and takes on the responsibility of mothering, she often becomes even more held up in the tasks necessary to move into adult status. In cases where a physical and emotional separation from parents was taking place prior to conception, for some, the pregnancy changes this and the young mother becomes dependent on her parents again. Her normative development of separation-individuation is held back to an even greater degree (Sugar, 1993: 227), as emotional and financial dependency on her family is required over a prolonged period of time (Drummond,

1999a: 7; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 157; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 84). This can in turn create welfare dependency for her family (Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78), and for those who are already welfare dependent, the extra burden of an unplanned adolescent pregnancy is distressing (Baragwanath, 1996a: 1).

In Havinghurst's (1972) fifth developmental task he specifies that adolescents need to be 'preparing for an economic future' (See Figure 4.2, cited in Atwater, 1992: 32). This usually involves educational and career planning. To achieve this task, "adolescents need to discover their special interests and abilities and then to choose a career goal, prepare for it educationally, and get started in it" (Atwater, 1992: 32). Those in the early adolescent stage (12-18 years) are often still considering what kind of career they want, and therefore they have not even decided on their educational goals yet. When an adolescent becomes pregnant, the likelihood of her education being interrupted and career and educational goals abandoned is quite high, as discussed in the previous chapter. McDonagh (2001: 57) notes that "teenage parents have not yet established a clear sense of direction for their own lives, and many have not, and will not complete their high school education".

For the adolescent mother, because emotional and financial independence has often not yet been attained, there is also a risk that the sixth developmental task of 'preparing for marriage and family life' is also incomplete. The adolescent parent is faced with family life all too early, and is not usually ready at such a young age to take on the role of parenting. She is often not married, and has sole responsibility of her child. Their children are often raised in single parent, welfare assisted households (Furstenberg, 1991, Mc Elroy & Moore, 1997, cited Woodward *et al*, 2001a: 1) and often live in poverty (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159; Dubow & Luster, 1990; cited Heaven, 1994: 161). Many birth fathers, for a variety of reasons, are not involved in the life of the young mother and her child (Cray, 2002: 26), increasing the need for government assisted benefits. Condon & Corkindale (2002: 46) claim that in New Zealand "over 90% of teenage women are unmarried when they give birth and approximately 60% have no male partner at that time". In the year ending 31 December 2001, there were 206 marriages to the approximately 3,500 adolescents in the 16-19 years age group, who gave birth that year (Statistics NZ, 2002: 35).

Even the birth fathers who are involved in the life of the mother and child, whether or not they are teenagers themselves, are often unable to provide sufficient support. Often they face low educational achievement and unemployment themselves (Paewai-Young, 2001: 53; Leadbetter *et al*, 1994, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78; Marsiglio, 1986, cited Heaven, 1994: 165). Those still at school often abandon their education to take up work, but still the level of providence is very minimal (Paewai-Young, 2001: 53). Government assistance is still necessary, at least in part. Some become dependent on their own families and the probability of their children living in deprived and transient circumstances increases (Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78).

There is increasing evidence that early motherhood not only affects the young women, but may adversely affect the life opportunities and the health and development of their children (Condon & Corkindale, 2002: 45; Wheatley, 2001: 2; Woodward *et al*, 2001b: 301, 303; Woodward *et al*, 2001: 1; Dusek, 1996: 221-222; Romans *et al*, 1997: 31; UNICEF, 1996: 18; Badger, 1985, cited Baragwanath, June 1996: 17, *et al*). There is an "increased risk of parental neglect, child abuse, abandonment, and other forms of parental mistreatment" (Furstenberg *et al*, 1987, cited Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 160). The risk of foetal and infant death is also increased (Brooks-Funn & Chase-Lansdale, 1995, cited Paewai-Young, 2001: 52; Drummond, 1998: 11; Dryfoos, 1990, cited Paewai-Young, 2001: 52). As adolescents are characterised by immaturity, they often lack in parenting skills (Woodward *et al*, Nov 2000: 2) and have less realistic expectations of their child's development (Osofsky, 1990, cited Cray, 2002: 25; Field *et al*, 1980, cited Baragwanath, 1996a: 17). Their ability to cope with the challenges of parenting can be significantly impaired (Woodward *et al*, 2001: 301; Fergusson & Woodward, 1999, Nagin *et al*, 1997, *et al*, cited Woodward *et al*, 2001: 2; Romans *et al*, 1997: 31; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 160).

As discussed in the previous chapter, literature claims that there is a need for young mothers to be educated in child development and parenting; to learn life skills; and continue with formal education (Kelly, 2002: 205; Walsh, 2001: A13; *et al*). By identifying supports and resources within the environment, as well as encouraging the young mother to set personal goals, a young mother can be encouraged to continue her education and achieve the developmental tasks set out by Havinghurst (1972). The risk of poor outcomes for the young mother and her child/children may then be minimised.

Part Two: Learning Theory

Learning theory contends that learning is influenced by a number of internal and external factors (Alexander & Murphy, 1988, cited Cullen, 2001: 65). Fox (1993: 81) claims that learning occurs when students are able to draw on personal, social and environmental resources. Environmental and social factors, such as healthy relationships with significant adults and peers, positive role models and teachers who can help students with key skills (Brynes, 2001: 103; Fox, 1993: 81), and rewards (Fox, 1993: 112, 116) can significantly influence learning. Internal resources which can promote learning include self-efficacy, having a sense of direction (Brynes, 2001: 93) and personal goals and motivation (Cullen, 2001: 64). Motivation itself largely influences learning (Fox, 1993: 107).

Baron (1986, cited Fox, 1993: 107) defines motivation as "the set of processes that energize a person's behaviour and direct it towards obtaining some goal". Motivation is also defined "as an internal process that activates, guides, and maintains behaviour over time" (Schunk, 2000, *et al*, cited Slavin, 2003: 329). There are internal and external forces that 'energise' or 'drive' a young mother to continue her education and achieve educational goals, including personal goals and their reward, and support systems, which can have a significant influence on educational participation.

Expectancy theory

Expectancy theory can be used to explain and understand motivation, which places emphasis on internal and/or external aspects (Fox, 1993: 107). Expectancy theory consists of a combination of internal and external factors, and falls into the category of a social learning approach. Sternberg & Williams (2002: 356) claim that

social learning [is a] mix of extrinsic and intrinsic reinforces based on expectations and the personal value of goals: Understanding how to set workable, effective goals that can be attained; understanding the likelihood of reaching a goal and the payoff once the goal is reached; knowing how to choose goals with payoffs that are personally meaningful.

Expectancy theory claims that people are either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. Those who are 'extrinsic' are motivated by praise, incentives and the reality of reaching a

goal and the reward for an achieved goal, and often have goals related to performance. Those who are 'intrinsic' are motivated from within and engage in behaviours that interest them, ambition and personal plans (Deci & Ryan, 2002: 64). Often these people set goals for learning and have the belief in themselves to achieve their goals (Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 378; Brynes, 2001: 107). It is expected "that people would try to attain outcomes which engender positive feelings and avoid those outcomes which engender negative feelings" (Frijda, 1994, cited Brynes, 2001: 105). When young mothers set educational goals, they need to feel that the achievement of their goals will bring about positive outcomes for them and their child/children.

Expectancy theory is identified with a number of theorists, such as Atkinson (1964, cited Slavin, 2003: 338) and Victor Vroom (1964, cited Fox, 1993: 118). Both these theorists claim that expectancy theory proposes that students are motivated to learn when they believe they can achieve their goals (expectancy), when they believe their performance will be rewarded, and that the reward (i.e. financial, emotional, social, cognitive) is of value to them (Slavin, 2003: 338; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 355; Fox, 1993: 116). Vroom's (1962) theory acknowledges that not everyone is motivated by the same factors, and that ability, skill and opportunity also play a part (Fox, 1993: 118). There are individual differences which "greatly affect how hard students try, how long they persist, and the emotions they feel when confronted with tasks" (Brynes, 2001: 93).

Expectancy theory is an eclectic theory, combining 'need', 'reward' and 'equity' theories (Fox, 1993: 116). Need theories are concerned with internal factors. In the 1920s motivation theories developed that were based on the idea that motivational drive came from an internal need (Fox, 1993: 108). Alderfer (1972) placed 'needs' into three categories: existence (physical and security needs), relatedness (social needs) and growth (self-esteem and development). Each of these categories need to be met simultaneously. Alderfer contends that unsatisfied needs motivate people (Fox, 1993: 110). In using this perspective to understand the motivation of young mothers towards their education, it can be understood that a young mother may be inclined to achieve educational goals because of her need for social interaction with peers, for her own sense of self-worth, or for her need to provide for her child. In contrast, reward theories

are concerned with external factors. Reward theories propose that people are motivated by what they can gain from achieving a goal (Fox, 1993: 113). A young mother may aspire to continue her education because of the reward of sustainable employment for which education may act as a vehicle.

Thirdly, equity theory acknowledges that students do not work in isolation, but are rather part of a social context which has an effect on their motivation. "Equity theory helps explain the difficulty of motivating some pupils from particular ... social groups". It predicts that if a student perceives inequality in the educational system she is part of, a lack of motivation towards her education follows (Fox, 1993: 116). When a pregnant student or young mother feels that she is not treated as an equal within her educational environment, it is likely that she will lose the motivation to continue with her education.

Self-efficacy

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory has been useful in understanding the purpose of self-efficacy beliefs in motivation, which can be described as "an individual's belief that he or she can succeed on a particular type of task" (Bandura, 1986, 1977, cited Brynes, 2001: 100). It has to do with the individual believing that she has the ability to accomplish her goals (Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373, 379; Wilson, *et al*, 2002: 94; Brynes, 2001: 100). Self-efficacy can have an incremental impact on motivation towards education, positively or negatively (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 16). Self-beliefs are vital to an individual being motivated towards education and in being able to achieve (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 14; Santrock, 2001: 429). "If someone has a higher degree of self-efficacy she ... is more likely to attain the outcome desired." (Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373).

Success or failure in school tasks can have a significant impact on motivation towards learning and on setting educational goals. Self-efficacy can determine the degree to which someone puts in the effort to succeed. Low self-efficacy could mean that failure is expected, and as a result, the individual does not even try to succeed. Failure perpetuates failure through lack of self-belief and effort (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 14; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373). When an adolescent feels she has significantly low academic ability in a majority of subjects and expects failure, she is likely to have

minimal expectations of future success and is likely to avoid education (Gaskill & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001: 188; Brynes, 2001: 110). "Sadly, a great number of students leave secondary school with negative views of themselves as learners." (Bird & Drewery, 2000: 155). In contrast, when a student has many successful experiences with her education, and seldom experiences failure, a sense of control over positive educational outcomes is gained (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 3; Cullen, 2001: 65; Bandura, 1986, cited Brynes, 2001: 109).

Dweck (2002: 37-38) asserts that negative self-beliefs can be changed and states:

So, even more important than showing that beliefs matter for student's motivation and achievement is showing that when you change their beliefs, you change their motivation and achievement ... teaching them a different interpretation for failure, or orienting them toward different reasons for achieving - end up having real effects on students' engagement and achievement ... social psychologists understand the power of a carefully targeted intervention that changes a key belief and refocuses student's motivation in highly productive ways.

Bandura (1997, *et al*, cited Santrock, 2001: 430) contends that self-efficacy and achievement can improve when specific goals are set. Young mothers who drop out of school, either prior to or after conception, and do not feel they can be successful in education, with a positive teaching environment, and with specific, achievable goals, may be able to have their low self-efficacy beliefs changed, and hence continue successfully with their education.

An Ecological Perspective

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory has also been used to understand educational issues and the development of learning (Fox, 1993: 78). His framework provides the opportunity for educators to consider the variety of environmental forces which affect (positively or negatively) the adolescent student's learning (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 25; Fox, 1993: 78). The ecological model can help assess the opportunities and barriers that are presented to a student. When adolescents are at risk educationally, an ecological perspective

would take into account the different expectations, pressures, demands, and experiences that are made on the individual, and would view the factors that influence ... her within the context of home, the family, friends, ..., the peer group, the school, and the community at large. Each of these contextual variables is defined by a number of factors that might be influential (Muss, 1996a: 338).

This can be very useful in considering the educational needs of young mothers. Educational failure can be a result of issues in any one or a combination of the ecological systems (i.e. family issues, school issues, and/or socio-political issues) (Adams, *et al*, 2000: 305).

The major spheres of influence are the home, the peer group, the school and the broader community (Frydenberg, 1997: 19). Biological and environmental transitions occur concurrently throughout the ecological system (Muuss, 1996b: 312, 315; Cummings, 1995: 57, 61). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model has been helpful in examining adolescent development in their immediate environment to their more extensive cultural environment. His analysis focuses on linkages and interactions between people and their family, resource systems, as well as political and cultural contexts. The adolescent can be viewed in relation to the wider context while acknowledging that there is constant change in relation to internal and external forces and reciprocity between the two (Sanders *et al*, 1999: 43; Muuss, 1996b: 312; Cummings, 1995: 55-56). "This allows the environments of development, and of learning, to be conceptualised as changing contexts, susceptible to outside influences." (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 25).

Figure 3.2 (p.47) shows Bronfenbrenner's model of human development, which has five structures, each nested inside the other (cited Lerner, 2002: 20). At the very centre is the individual. For the purposes of this thesis I have applied the model to the 'adolescent mother' as shown in figure 3.3 (p.47).

As can be seen from figure 3.2 and 3.3, the microsystem is made up of relationships within the individual's immediate setting, (Bronfenbrenner, 1977: 515), and is also known as the 'proximal level of environment' (Muuss, 1996b: 322). It refers to interactions between the individual and her nuclear family, along with interactions

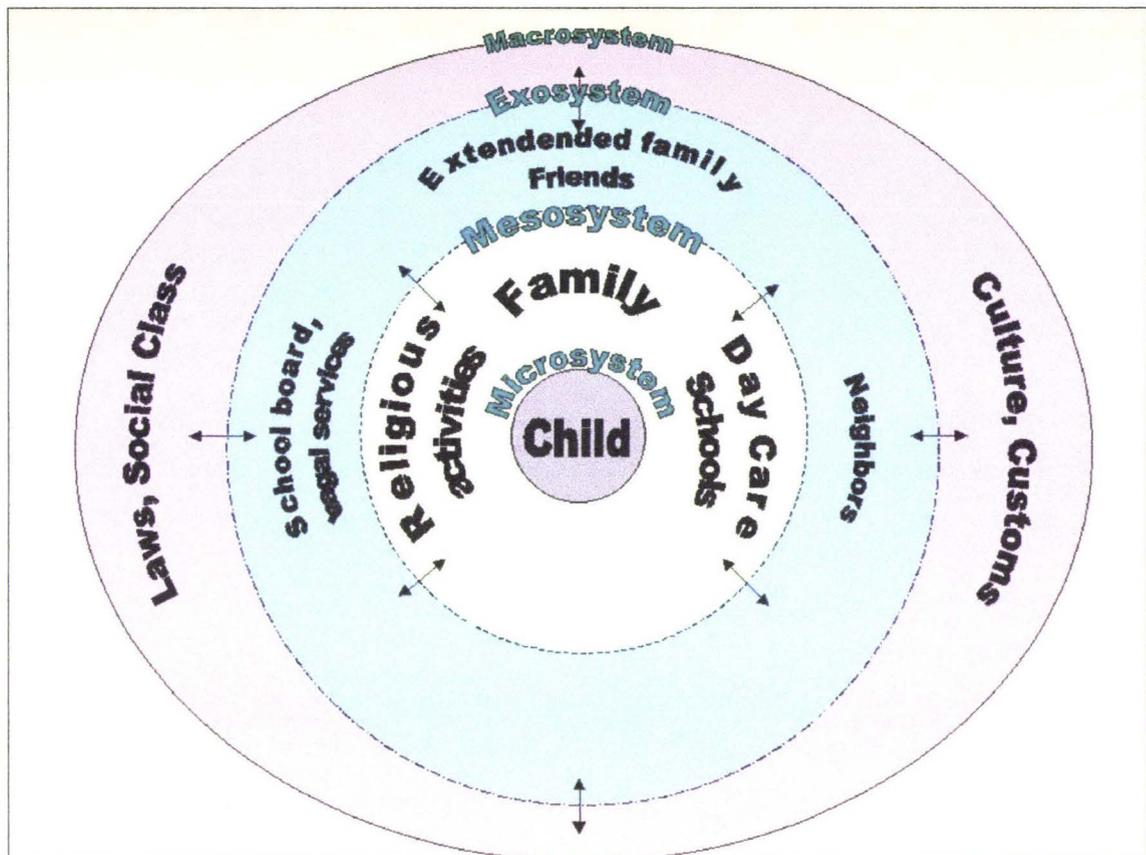


Figure 3.2 Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development

Source: Washington College of Education, 2004.

Microsystem is an adolescent mother's everyday environment of home, school, work, or neighbourhood;

Mesosystem is the adolescent mother's linkage between microsystems, between home and school, home and work, or family and peer group;

Exosystem links the adolescent mother to two or more settings, where one of these affects her indirectly (e.g. governmental decisions);

Macrosystem represents the adolescent mother's cultural environment, its dominant beliefs, ideologies, economic and political systems.

Source: adapted from Drummond (1999 B: 173) and

Massey University (1999, Paper No. 87.208/308/84.308, Topic 3: 3-4).

Figure 3.3 The Young Mother Within an Ecological Framework

between peers and the school setting (i.e. teachers) (Lerner, 2002: 50; Muuss, 1996a: 32). The interactions within this system are referred to as 'proximal process' (Muuss, 1996b: 322). The microsystem of family and peers whom the adolescent interacts with, impacts on the continual changes in the life of the adolescent (Ibid: 312, 323). Positive outcomes later in life, will be to some degree, a result of positive proximal processes (Muuss, 1996b: 324; Frydenberg, 1997: 19). Within this system, a young mother's educational participation can be influenced positively or negatively (Frydenberg, 1997: 19). Where the level of family, peer and school support is strong, the opportunity for the young mother to have successful educational outcomes increases, and in contrast, where these supports are weak, the risk of poor educational outcomes increases. Where there is strong family and peer support.

The mesosystem context are relationships and interactions between two or more microsystems which themselves form a system (Lerner, 2002: 50; Cummings, 1995: 58; Garbarino, 1990: 78; Bronfenbrenner, 1977: 515). "A fundamental ecological assumption is that what happens in a person's microsystem is interrelated to and interacts with what happens in his or her other microsystems" (Muuss, 1996b: 324). Mesosystems are formed whenever an individual moves into a new setting, for example, from home to school. For an adolescent, mesosystems usually consist of relations among family, school, peers and neighbours (Cummings, 1995: 56). The mesosystem context can act as an indicator of risk. Risk factors are low when there is a number of links where there is commonality and shared goals. When microsystem links are few or insignificant, the mesosystem context is weak and risk factors are high (Drummond, 1999a: 8; Muuss, 1996b: 326).

The relationships between home and school (parents and teachers) and between peers and family can influence the young mother's ability to succeed in her educational goals. Interpersonal relationships play a vital role in enabling adolescents to develop and learn (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 19). Muuss (1996b: 325) claims that when there is positive and mutual communication between parents and school, the young person represented tends to have higher school grades, greater independence and initiative, and overall adjustment is good, from primary through to high school years. In contrast, when parents do not show sufficient support, the young person is robbed of their potential and school performance suffers. The same applies when peers are unsupportive and

discouraging (Ibid: 326). "Evidence is emerging that those who use social support in the learning context do better academically than those who do not." (Frydenberg, 1997: 129).

The next layer of proximity is the context of the exosystem which is defined by Bronfenbrenner (1977: 51) as

an extension of the mesosystem embracing ... specific social structures, both formal and informal, that do not themselves contain the developing person but impinge upon or encompass the immediate setting in which the person is found, and thereby delimit, influence, or even determine what goes on there.

This context represents the structure of the wider community in which the adolescent lives and although the adolescent does not directly participate in the decision making that takes place in this context, there is a direct (and sometimes indirect) effect on her life (Drummond, 2001: 64; Muuss, 1996b: 327; Cummings, 1995: 56). Muuss (1996b: 328) states, "the exosystem may impoverish or enrich the quality of the micro- and the mesosystem of an adolescent through exosystem decisions that affect what an adolescent can or cannot do".

For the adolescent mother, the most significant exosystem influences include the health, transportation and education system and its policies. In the exosystem context, the teacher's home life (Fox, 1993: 78); the local transportation system (Muuss, 1996b: 327); school zoning; the school board's management decisions; educational curricula and extracurricular activities (Ibid: 330); government budgets for educational resourcing; tertiary student fees; governmental decisions on the criteria for a training incentive allowance; the amount available from Work and Income New Zealand for Childcare Subsidies; and Inland Revenue interest rates for student loans can all have a profound effect on the young mother who wants to continue with her education.

The outer layer represents the overarching macrosystem which represents the whole culture and subculture an adolescent is part of. Within this cultural context lie societal values, beliefs, attitudes and ideologies (Lerner, 2002: 51; Drummond, 2001: 64; *et al*). The organisation of social and religious institutions (Drummond, 2001: 64; Cummings,

1995: 56, 59), along with the economic climate, political structure and educational culture (Fox, 1993: 78) are apparent. Bronfenbrenner (1993: 25, cited Muuss, 1996b: 330) claims that in the macrosystem "resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options and patterns of social interchange ... are embedded in such overarching systems".

The macrosystem can help assess the educational culture and values in the New Zealand society. "Educational sociologists argue that it is impossible to think about education ... without considering the political, economic, social and cultural context within which education is embedded" (Dixon, *et al*, 2001: 15). It is expected widely (by politicians, professionals and citizens) that young people now have a longer educational term in order to be able to enter into sustainable employment. It is hoped that young mothers become less dependent on welfare and their families and more self-sufficient and autonomous. It is expected that education will help provide the vehicle for this.

Bronfenbrenner's ideas draw our attention to the changing interactions between these different systems, which have the "ability to change the course of development for individuals and families" (Bird & Drewery, 2000: 13). Risk factors can be identified in each of the ecological systems. For example, in the microsystem, poverty, family pressure and conflict can be identified (Drummond, 1999a: 8); in the mesosystem lack of linkages or community-related support (Wells, 1990, cited Drummond, 1999a: 8), peer pressure (Drummond, 1999a: 8) and weak links between family and school can be recognised; in the exosystem unemployment and educational inequalities can be pinpointed (Nash & Harker, 1998, cited Drummond, 1999a: 9); and the macrosystem can highlight values, beliefs and ideologies which underpin social and educational policies, and beliefs and ideologies about sexual behaviour, women, motherhood, and family responsibility.

Part Three: A Feminist Perspective

"Mothering is a very contentious issue in feminist research" (DiQuinzio, 1999: x) and the 'care' component of mothering verses the self-determination of mothers has been central to debates. During the 1980s there was a lot of feminist research that "focused on the way women and girls develop empathy and caring orientations towards others" (Bird

& Drewery, 2000: 158). Feminist theories of adolescent development stood in contention with theories about an adolescent's need to gain emotional independence, as part of their normative development of separation-individuation (Apter, 1990: 111, cited Nicholls, 2001: 12), discussed earlier in this chapter.

It was claimed by some feminists that women tend to define their identity in terms of their connections and attachments with others (Josselson, 1988: 99; Belenky *et al*, 1986: 8, cited Nicholls, 2001: 11; Gilligan, 1982: 159-160) and caring for others is part of forming relationships (West, 2002: 89). In qualitative research carried out by Carol Gilligan, which was aimed at researching how women make moral choices, it was found that women interviewed did not talk about their education and careers when describing themselves, but rather talked about themselves in relational contexts (Gilligan, 1982: 159). Her findings indicated that "responsibility to others is integral to women's identity" (cited Hughes, 2002: 126) and is seen as part of an adult identity (West, 2002: 88). Being a mother can very much be how the young mother begins to identify herself, rather than as a student or employee.

An 'Ethic of care'

Gilligan (1982) claims that adolescent girls tend to develop an 'ethic of care'. Table 3.4 (p.52) presents Gilligan's (1982) '*Stages of Moral Development*', which can be significant in understanding the impact of mothering on a young mother's educational participation. Gilligan claims that during adolescence the young woman moves out of an egocentric stage to thinking and caring more about others (cited Seifert & Hoffnung, 2000: 473). In the initial stage, '*survival orientation*', she is focused solely on her own emotional and physical needs and well-being, unaware of the needs of others (Gilligan, 1982: 75). When an adolescent becomes pregnant, she can no longer just focus on herself, which moves her into the second stage.

In the second stage, '*conventional care*', the young woman tends to 'please' others, regardless of the personal cost. Gilligan (1977: 511, cited Nunner-Winkler, 1993: 144) claims that "the most eminent goals of the ethic of care are the wish to care for and help others, to meet obligations and responsibilities, (and) a concern for others and feelings of compassion". Miller (1986), a feminist who has also been influential in looking at psychological issues from a female perspective, found that when women's lives were

examined, a large part of what we do is fostering the development of others - emotionally, intellectually and socially (cited Santrock, 2001: 346-347).

Table 3.4 Gilligan's Stages of Moral Development

Stage	Features
Stage 1 Survival orientation	Egocentric concern for self, lack of awareness of others' needs; "right" action is what promotes emotional or physical survival
Stage 2 conventional care	Lack of distinction between what others want and what is right; "right" action is whatever pleases others best
Stage 3 Integrated care	Coordination or integration of needs of self and of others; "right" action takes account of self as well as others

Source: Gilligan (1982, cited Seifert & Hoffnung, 2000: 473)

During this '*conventional care*' stage a young women shows concern for meeting the needs of others, without considering her own needs. In doing so, womens' own emotional, intellectual and social needs are forsaken. Her own sense of autonomy or independence is impeded (Hughes, 2002: 126). For example, when an adolescent becomes a mother, caring for her child (and possibly her partner) becomes her dominant focus and her own needs for education can be abandoned. A young woman's own goals and self-determination can be held back by the young woman's concept of mothering and care. The idea of having a family to care for and love becomes more important than the young mother's goal of completing her education and having a career.

The third stage of '*integrated care*' is where the young woman is able to consider herself and the needs of others and take appropriate action. Hughes (2002: 126) contends that "the ideal goal is to meet obligations and responsibilities to others without sacrificing our own needs" (Hughes, 2002: 126), hence moving from stage two to stage three. According to Gilligan's research, this can be a real dilemma because of the 'self-sacrificing' women often do in order to be responsive to the needs of others. A dilemma is also caused through the passion women feel for their children (Nedelsky, 1999: 305).

The transition from stage two to three begins to take place as women reflect upon their own self and their own needs (Gilligan, 1982: 102-104). The concept of care developed in stage two is still apparent, but with an integration of her own needs as well. Entering this stage depicts a moral maturation in human development terms. Gilligan claims that in her research, very few women demonstrated that they had moved from stage two to stage three (Gilligan, 1982, cited Puka, 1993: 231).

Gilligan's *ethic of care* perspective can be useful in observing the care of mothers towards their children and their own educational aspirations and participation. The impact of pregnancy and mothering on a young mother's educational participation can be largely dependent on the way she conceptualises her role as a mother. The adolescent mother may place her own education as less important now that she has a child to care for (stage two) or as vital to future outcomes for her and her child (stage three). In stage three, the adolescent mother will take into account the impact of continuing education, both in the present and the future, on her child, her family and herself.

Self-determination and independence

Some feminists have disputed Gilligan's view of females as '*nurturing*' and '*sacrificing*', saying this could further stereotype women and undermine their fight for equality. Mothers still have ambitions, hopes and plans and "want to remain in control of their own meanings, their own money and, to a certain extent, their own destinies" (Benn, 1998: 241). Feminists have highlighted the importance of self-determination and autonomy, which is about

... being able to determine one's own projects and goals, how one will live one's life, without having to answer for those goals to others, and without having to obey orders of others about how one will live. An autonomous person is not dependent on another to set the direction of her life, and others do not have the right to determine what is good for her...personal autonomy carries the additional meanings of being able to decide one's own goals and their means to fulfilment...(Young, 2002: 45).

What some feminist argue is the need for "more opportunities for females to reach higher levels of achievement and self-determination" (Santrock, 2001: 345), without feeling selfish or that they are neglecting their children (Solinger, 2002: 74). Some feminists believe it is important for women to be self-motivated and increase self-

determination, as well as maintain healthy relationships (Miller, 1986, Lerner, 1989, cited Santrock, 2001: 345). Access and opportunities to continue their education can provide the opportunity for achievement and greater self-determination. The right supports and resources can enable them to still meet the needs of their family and maintain healthy relationships. Receiving the right kind of supports "should be seen as normal conditions of being autonomous" (Young, 2002: 45). As self-determination itself must come from the 'self', by listening to the voices of young women, barriers can be highlighted and opportunities to continue education can hopefully be increased.

Summary

Various conceptual tools have been used to give understanding to adolescent development and learning. Contemporary approaches regard the interactive processes between an individual (as a unique biological, thinking, social and emotional being) and the environment (relationships, culture and social, political, economic, religious and educational structures and policies) (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 19, 20). Each of these contexts are constantly changing and interrelating with each other. When developmental and learning theories are considered together, a comprehensive understanding of the young mother can be gained and the uniqueness of each individual valued (Gross, 1997, cited Dixon, *et al*, 2001: 14).

The theories examined in this chapter provide a deeper understanding of the issues highlighted in chapter two. In the previous chapter, the number of adolescents who become mothers annually in New Zealand and the impact this has on educational participation was discussed. Developmental theory informs us that pregnancy and mothering can interrupt the adolescent mother's normative life trajectory (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 156) and often developmental tasks are not achieved. Stresses become heightened; peer group attachments often decrease, instead of becoming more intense; dependency on parents is often prolonged; an economic future is not planned for; and the young mother is not emotionally or financially prepared for parenting.

Carol Gilligan (1977) wrote that, developmentally, adolescent girls are learning to move from being egocentric to caring for others, as nurturants to their children. This level of care may or may not motivate the young mother towards continuing her education. For

some young mothers, being a mother with all its responsibilities and commitments, may be the 'vocation' she wishes to pour her love and energy into. For others, the responsibilities of care for their child/children may motivate them to continue their education in order to find good employment. As examined in chapter two, in many cases, education is abandoned, of which the responsibilities of mothering can be a significant factor to this.

Feminist critiques of Gilligan's (1982) perspective, advocate for the rights of young mothers to continue their education and become self-sufficient and self-determining. However, various factors, both internal and external, can hinder the continuation of a young mother's education and lower motivation towards achieving educational goals. Barriers to the continuation of education were discussed in the previous chapter, such as mothering responsibilities, childcare, transportation, finances and the school system. Supports deemed necessary to encourage young mothers to continue their education, such as family, peer, school, mentor and governmental, as well as an exploration of effect of specialised programmes, were also discussed. Learning theories provided a framework for examining internal and external resources that can assist a young mother in continuing her education.

Learning theories enable educators to realise ways in which learning potential can be maximised (Gage & Berliner, 1998, cited Dixon, et al, 2001: 14). Expectancy theory provides a baseline for understanding that educational goals and their reward can influence motivation for continuing education. As low self-efficacy can impact significantly on motivation and hinder educational success, it is vital that low self-efficacy in young mothers is increased. An ecological perspective provides a framework for assessing opportunities and risks within the adolescent mother's environment. By identifying and drawing on resources (internal and external) and supports, a young mother's potential for educational success can be developed and educational goals achieved. The literature in the previous chapter highlighted resources and supports which can encouraged the continuation of education, such as family, peer, school and governmental support.

In undertaking a literature review, it became evident that there is a large amount of research on the impact of adolescent pregnancy and parenting on the educational participation of young mothers, on the risk of poor outcomes for young mothers and their children, on barriers (particularly external barriers, such as childcare and transportation issues) to the continuation of education, the supports deemed necessary for educational success, and what young mothers "should" do in relation to their education. Evaluation has been carried out on special educational units for young mothers (Schofield, 1994; Lynch, 1999), and research has been carried out on the experiences of young mothers when they became pregnant at school (Schofield, 1994). However, it appears that little research has been done on the educational aspirations and goals of young mothers. Educational aspirations can exist, despite the fact that they may have decided to leave school prior to conception taking place, during pregnancy or since the birth. Various factors can hinder or support the young mother in turning her hopes into workable goals.

Baragwanath (1996a: 34) states, "We must look for ways and means to bring the young mothers back to a learning situation and find out what motivates them to do so". By understanding what motivates young mothers towards education, along with recognising beneficial environmental and social supports, a young mother's potential can be developed and learning enhanced. Young mothers may feel confident to set educational goals and reach out for them. This research aimed to find out, from the voices of five young mothers, what their educational goals and hopes are; how pregnancy and mothering impacts on their educational participation and goals; what motivates them towards continuing their education, what obstacles exist for them in continuing education; and what they feel they need to be successful in attaining any goals, from their perspectives. A questionnaire was sent to North Shore high school counsellors to add to the examination of the level of support the responding schools offer pregnant students and young mothers who wish to continue their education. The following chapter explains how the research aims were achieved.

Chapter 4: Feminist Methodology

Introduction

The previous two chapters discussed what literature and theory says about the impact of pregnancy and mothering on a young mother's educational participation and motivation towards achieving educational goals. The aim of this research is to examine, through interviewing five young mothers and sending questionnaires to North Shore high school counsellors, if the same factors highlighted in the literature are relevant to the research participants and to identify any diverse issues. Values which underpin feminist research played a significant role in determining the data collection methods utilised. This research is underpinned by a feminist perspective and therefore the voices of women are the central focus of this study. High school counsellors were asked for their participation, with the goal of highlighting strengths and weaknesses within the school system for pregnant adolescents and young mothers. As outlined in chapter one, there were four primary objectives of this research, which aimed to examine the following on a sample of five young women:

- (1) The impact of pregnancy and mothering on the educational goals and the motivation to achieve educational goals.
- (2) Barriers to the continuation of education, during pregnancy and from the birth.
- (3) Resources and supports which influence educational participation, during pregnancy and from the birth
- (4) The level of support offered in North Shore (Auckland) high schools for pregnant students and student mothers.

Qualitative methods were employed to meet the research aims. Qualitative methods and techniques provide access to unquantifiable facts about people's lives and provide the opportunity for researchers to gain an understanding of experiences and perceptions of those researched (Berg, 2001: 6-7; Miller & Glassner, 1997: 100, cited May, 2001: 127). It allows access to understanding peoples' actions, rather than just making assumptions about their actions (Seidman, 1998: 4). Although qualitative research is extremely time consuming, i.e. in gathering and analysing data (Berg, 2001: 2; Wengraf, 2001: 4), the benefits of listening to the voices of five young mothers are invaluable.

The research design consisted of semi-structured, in-depth interviews, with five young mothers, as the primary data gathering tool, along with self-completion questionnaires which provided insight into the level of support offered by North Shore high schools. The semi-structured interview provided a vehicle to give young mothers "a voice" about their educational participation and goals during pregnancy and since birth. In addition, the supports they deem necessary to see their goals fulfilled, as well as the barriers which stand in the way of these achievements were identified. The level of support offered to young mothers in five North Shore High Schools was obtained via a questionnaire sent to school counsellors.

Feminist Methodology

Because of the complexities of feminism and debates which surround the meaning of feminism, there is diversity around what entails feminist research (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2002: 2, 14; May, 1997: 23). As with research perspectives in general, there are a number of viewpoints from which feminists approach issues in social research, which include empiricist, standpoint and relativist epistemologies (May, 1997: 23). Feminists can have differing positions "in relation to all the key characteristics of methodology" (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2002: 14), such as moral and political viewpoints; ontology and epistemology; data collection methods and techniques; and conceptions of validity, rationality and what can be classed as knowledge (Ibid).

Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002: 14) claim that any distinctiveness must then come from the relations between epistemology and politics in feminist research and they contend that what makes research methodology distinctively feminist, is the extent to which the research "is shaped by feminist theory, politics and ethics, and grounded in women's experience" (Ibid: 15-16). Feminist research must be politically for women rather than on women (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2002: 15; Smith, 1987, cited Kirkman, 2001: 53; Oakley, 1981: 54), and feminist knowledge and analysis must come out of women's experiences, from women's perspectives. Methods employed for feminist research therefore need to enable women's voices to be heard.

Feminist qualities of this research

There are particular qualities which make this research feminist. Firstly, the research is for, and with, young mothers, not "on" young mothers (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2002: 15; Smith, 1987, cited Kirkman, 2001: 53; Oakley, 1981: 54). Young mothers were interviewed and questionnaires were sent to North Shore high schools, with the hope of bringing to light ways in which the educational situation for young mother's can be improved, so that young mothers can achieve educational goals and have better life outcomes and opportunities for themselves and their children (DiQuinzio, 1999: x).

Secondly, the young mothers are valued 'as mothers' (DiQuinzio, 1999: x), who may or may not have educational goals. The young mothers who were interviewed were 'listened to' and their educational aspirations were valued each in their own right (Seidman, 1998: 63; Oakley, 1981, cited Schofield, 1994: 52). For research to come out of the actual experiences of women, from their own perspectives, "listening" to women's voices is required (Oakley, 1981, cited Schofield, 1994: 52). The semi-structured design of the interview schedule gave young mothers the opportunity to talk about their educational aspirations from their own perspectives (Graham, 1994, cited Alice, 1999: 62; Oakley, 1981: 31-32).

Thirdly, it is acknowledged that social research is subjective, rather than objective (Gillies & Alldred, 2002: 32; May, 2001: 127). It is not actually possible for social research and its outcomes to be truly objective, as the researcher's biography, values and viewpoints affect the entire research process. Oakley (1981: 41) suggests that,

the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship.

The experiences and history of both the researcher and the researched are brought into the interview process as contended by May (2001: 21). My own personal and social biography has been part of the research process, as discussed in chapter one, although I was careful not to share too much of my own experience, as this may have distorted the interview and distracted participants from sharing their own experiences and feelings.

Fourth, the principle of engagement in the interview sessions, rather than disengagement was embraced as suggested by May (2001: 127) and Oakley (1990, cited May, 2001: 35). Feminists tend to criticize the ideas of disengagement, which is a term used for "aloof detachment by the researcher from the researched" (May, 2001: 21). The interview session was a two-way process, where the researched entered into a dialogue with each participant. The researched were participants in the process, not subjects who are treated unequally with the researcher (Birch & Miller, 2001: 94; Wolf, 1996: 4). Semi-structured interviewing allowed a more reciprocal and equal relationship between the researcher and the researched to take place.

Ann Oakley (1979) contends that disengagement cannot work for three reasons. First, it is not right to adopt an exploitative relationship with research participants. Second, the aim of feminist social research is to give the subjective position of women greater visibility in society. Third, an equal relationship cannot be established by answering questions asked by participants with evasive answers. Oakley found that often participants would ask her questions in an interview, for example, about her own experiences. If the principle of disengagement was embraced, then only a vague reply would be given. This does not provide a genuine, reciprocal research relationship where experiences can be talked about in an environment of trust and honesty. Oakley (1990, cited May, 2001: 135) states, "To expect someone to reveal important and personal information without entering into a dialogue is untenable". For these reasons, engagement was a valued aspect of this feminist based research process.

From a Young Mother's Perspective

In order to achieve the research aims and gain substantial perspectives from the researched, it became apparent that semi-structured, in-depth interviews would be an appropriate method. In-depth interviews were chosen for particular reasons. First, interviews provided an opportunity to explore the research questions from the voices of five young mothers. Interviews have been defined as characteristic of feminist research because they enable women to express their own experiences and thoughts in their own words (Graham, 1994, cited Alice, 1999: 62, 1981: 31-32). Seidman (1998: 7) contends that in-depth interviewing "is a powerful way to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experiences of the individuals whose lives constitute

education". Second, they offered face to face encounters in natural settings. Third, they allowed for intense data to be collected, and provided a wealth of explanation and exploration.

A semi-structured format was chosen as this allowed the interview to be guided by research objectives, as well as allowing dialogue to develop, as led by the young mothers. In semi-structured interviewing, topics are predetermined while the interview structure is fluid. Topics were chosen from knowledge I gained out of my own life experiences, my place of employment, from a theoretical analysis, reading literature and from pilot interviews (which will be discussed further on in this chapter). The predetermined topics provided me with a sense of security in that I could maintain a level of focus and not miss areas which could provide valuable insights. The participants could also be assured that the interview would be completed within a reasonable time frame as the interview was guided by a number of particular themes.

Exploring the Level of Support in the High School Context

To add to the analysis, self-completion, anonymous questionnaires were sent to North Shore high schools. It is the aim of this research to identify gaps which may hinder pregnant adolescents from remaining at school or returning after the birth, so that young mothers may be encouraged to continue with their formal education.

The questionnaire method was chosen for a number of reasons. First, local questionnaires can be useful in finding out the needs of a community of people. Second, it is more cost effective and less time consuming than face-to-face interviews. The whole of the North Shore geographical area was able to be covered in a short amount of time, with minimal cost. Third, the questionnaires gave respondents the opportunity to comment on sensitive issues without being identified. Fourth, respondents were able to fill them out in their own time, and fifth, there was less possibility of interviewer bias, which can result from face to face encounters (May, 1997: 82, 90).

The Participants

Five young mothers participated in the interview stage of this research. Each of the participants identified themselves as New Zealand European and live on the North Shore, Auckland. Four of the mothers were aged 17 at the time the interview took place and one was 16 years. The babies ages ranged from 4 months to 15 months. All had attended a North Shore High School. Two were still at school when they found out they were pregnant and three had left school prior to conception and were attending a course.

Originally, it was planned that the participants were to be aged 13-18 years, of New Zealand European ethnicity, rearing one child aged 4-12 months, living in the North Shore area and attending a North Shore High School when they discovered they were pregnant. Changes were made for various reasons. The age group was confined further because of the vast differences developmentally and also because of income and welfare benefit opportunities. The age range of the children was extended, as the possibilities for recruiting participants was too narrow. Finally, high school status was excluded. In the process of finding young women for the pilot interview, and initially for a focus group interview, it became apparent that often pregnant adolescents and young mothers had already left school prior to conception. This is consistent with research in New Zealand carried by Fergusson & Woodward (2000), as discussed in the review of literature. Along with the realisation that pregnancy and mothering can have an impact on educational participation and goals whether a young mother left school prior to conception or not, I became aware that I ran the risk of not having enough participants for the study.

I also asked High School counsellors in the North Shore area to participate in a questionnaire. A total of 11 high schools were invited to participate. This consisted of 8 public High Schools, 1 private school, and 2 state-integrated schools. Four completed questionnaires were received and one telephone conversation took place with a counsellor who preferred this to sending in the questionnaire.

Gathering the Sample

The young mothers

The sample for the in-depth interviews of young mothers was gathered through liaison with social work and parenting services offered on the North Shore. A number of agencies were contacted and the coordinator or social worker of each spoken with via the phone. The nature of the research was outlined and the need for participants who fit a certain criteria was stressed. I emphasized that names and details of potential participants were not expected at this point. Instead, I offered to send a covering letter (*see Appendix 1*), an Information Sheet (*see Appendix 2*) and a consent form (*see Appendix 3*) to the coordinators/social workers who had contact with young mothers, so they could then pass the information on to any potential participants. Information was sent to five different agencies. The names of agencies who responded will not be identified. Two of these agencies did not currently have any appropriate clients; however, they requested the information in case they did come into contact with a young mother who fitted the criteria. After the letter, information sheet and consent form had been received by the responding social workers/co-ordinators, I was contacted by the social workers/co-ordinators with the names of three young mothers who consented to being part of the research. It is only at this point that identifying information was given, with the young mother's permission. In two other cases I was contacted directly by the young mother.

Recruiting young mothers for the interviews took a lot longer than first expected. It was hoped that all interviews would be completed by the end of April 2003, to give ample time for transcribing and analysis. However, by mid May only three interviews had been carried out. I made further contact with services which had initially shown interest again in May and September. This proved beneficial in that the coordinators/social workers were unaware further participants were needed. Two more young mothers were located and the interviews took place at the end of September. One of these young mothers made contact in June. However, as she was about seven months pregnant at this stage, I phoned her back mid September to give her time to settle in with her newborn before making an interview time.

The schools

For the purpose of looking at the degree to which high schools meet the needs of young mothers, I attempted to contact all high school principals on the North Shore via the phone. The principal was chosen as the point of contact so that he/she could consider whether or not it was in their school's best interest to partake in the study. It was hoped that in making the objectives clear, and emphasising that any questionnaires sent back would be totally anonymous, there would be no risk associated for the school in participating. In most cases the principal's secretary was the point of contact. The nature of the study was explained and the hope that the school's counsellor would complete the questionnaire was emphasised. With their permission a questionnaire pack was sent to each of the High School principals. Packs included a covering letter outlining the nature of the study (*see Appendix 4*); a copy of the Information Sheet (*see Appendix 5*); the questionnaire itself (*see Appendix 6*) and an addressed, stamped envelope for return if the principal and counsellor decided to partake in the research.

Initially, the Massey University Ethics Committee advised me to contact the school principals and ask permission to send an information pack to their Board of Trustees Chairperson, in order for the board to make a decision on the school's participation in the research. However, as I spoke with principals and principal's secretaries, I was informed that it is the principal who makes decisions on research participation, not the Board of Trustees. I therefore did not contact any Board of Trustee Chairperson.

The response rate for questionnaire returns was initially extremely low. I had only received one completed questionnaire by September (they were sent out in July). In consultation with my supervisors, I phoned North Shore high school counsellors to inquire about whether they had received a questionnaire pack from their school principal. In four other cases the counsellor did not know anything about the pack, but was willing to receive one. Two extra schools were also contacted for the first time as I realised these had been left out. One of these was because it is not listed in the Yellow Pages from where I constructed my original list, and one had been overlooked. I sent out these extra packs with a covering letter (*see Appendix 7*) which clearly asked the counsellors to follow their own school protocol, i.e. to run it by the principal first before returning the questionnaire if this was required. After making contact with school counsellors a further two completed questionnaires were received.

The Interview Process

Pilot testing

The interview guide was pilot tested to help improve the design. This was done with the assistance of four young mothers, who described themselves as New Zealand European, had one child under the age of 18 months and lived in the Auckland area, but outside of the North Shore. Three of the pilot study participants were gathered from my place of employment, The Bethany Centre, and one was through a personal contact. Initial contact was made via the phone, in three cases directly to the participant, and in one case, firstly to her social worker at the Bethany Centre, as I was on maternity leave at this stage. The social worker spoke with the young mother, who was happy for me to contact her.

A time and place was negotiated and agreed upon by myself and the pilot study participants. One of these took place at the Bethany Centre, and the other three in the homes of the young women. Each young woman was provided with an explanation of the nature of her participation, given an Information Sheet to read through (*see Appendix 8*), any questions were answered, and a consent form was signed if the young mother wished to continue. As two of the participants for the pilot were under the age of 16, parental/guardian permission was also sought. In each of these cases, a copy of the Information Sheet was given to the parents/guardians and the consent form also signed by them. Parents/guardians were welcome to stay in with the interview session, although they did not choose to. After each test interviewed I worked on the interview guide, which was extended quite significantly. What was particularly helpful was one of the participants was at school when she discovered she was pregnant, one had left school and had not taken up any other form of education, and two had left school and were attending a course. The interview guide was extended quite considerably

The interview guide

The interview guide was semi-structured, as discussed earlier in this chapter (*see Appendix 9*). A framework was devised that assisted me in guiding the young women through the topics that needed to be covered in general terms, and yet enabled them to share their own experiences, thoughts and feelings on the research subject, as suggested by Schofield (1994: 58). Probes were used where it seemed necessary, in order for

conversations to develop and to gain more in-depth understanding. Open-ended questions were vital, as they allowed for issues to be explored, "while allowing the participant to take any direction ... she wants" (Seidman, 1998: 69).

There were three broad areas to the interview guide. First, background information was sought. Fergusson & Woodward (2000: 3) contend that the impact of pregnancy on an adolescent's education is better analysed when their educational situation, family and individual factors prior to conception are taken into consideration. Second, the impact of pregnancy on educational participation, goals and the motivation for achieving goals was covered. Third, the impact of mothering on these educational factors was discussed with the participants. Levels of support were examined in each of the time frames, along with obstacles (internal and external) to the continuation of education and to achieving educational goals. In the third time frame (the impact of mothering on education), supports the young mothers feel they need to continue their education and "the ideal educational environment" was also explored. Topics were chosen with the aim of being able to make a comparison between factors prior to conception, during pregnancy and since the birth, in order to achieve the overall research aims. The topics themselves sometimes overlapped with each other.

The interview procedure

A time and place for the interviews was negotiated between each participant and myself. All the interviews took place in the young mothers' homes which was preferred by the participants. Four of the interviews took place mid morning, while one took place in the afternoon. After an initial welcome, the nature of the research was explained verbally and through an Information Sheet which was given to each participant to read through. In four cases the participant had already received an Information Sheet prior to meeting with her. However, I confirmed all the details. Any questions were answered and signed consent was obtained. The interviews ranged from 65 minutes to 85 minutes to complete. The Information Sheet suggested that 90 minutes was necessary, as suggested by Dolbeare and Schuman (1982, cited Seidman, 1998: 13).

In each of the interviews the interviewee had her child present. Although it is suggested that an interview takes place alone with the participant and free from any distractions (Wengraf, 2001: 188, 191), I did not request for the participant to have her child cared

for. Having the child present did not interfere with the interview to the point of not being able to continue. However, in each case the child needed his/her mother's attention before the interview was completed. I was aware, from the point of the child needing attention, of not taking too long to cover remaining issues. To some degree this interfered with the 'in-depth' aspect of the interviews, as only the surface level of issues began to be discussed. In two cases in particular, I felt that the young mothers wanted to complete the interview and attend to their children. Short answers were being given and the participants seemed to be distancing from the interview. At a later date, this was rectified by contacting the participants again and clarifying the transcribed interviews and any topics which were not covered in detail with the participants, as suggested by Wengraf (2001: 190).

Each interview was individually audio taped, as agreed upon by the participant. Notes were also taken during the interview to assist me in keeping track of the conversation. Seidman (1998: 64) claims that

working notes help interviewers concentrate on what the participant is saying [and] ... keep interviewers from interrupting the participant by allowing them to keep track of things that the participant has mentioned in order to come back to these subjects when the timing is right.

Notes are also a good backup in the event the tape recorder should fail, which unfortunately happened for one of the interviews.

Once the interviews were transcribed, participants were given a copy to read through and change, elucidate or remove any of the information if necessary. I also clarified any issues or questions which were unclear, overlooked or rushed. This was done in their own homes, one-on-one, as arranged with each participant. A further consent form was signed to ensure the young mothers understood fully how the transcripts would be used (*see Appendix 10*).

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire design

The questionnaire was developed around research objectives established at the onset of the study and further shaped by the literature review and the responses given during the pilot interviews. Acknowledging that participants' time is valuable, the questionnaire was kept short and focused. It comprised of questions which provided opportunity to openly comment on certain issues. The questionnaire was designed with the assistance of Baragwanath's (1996a: 35-38) questionnaire which was formulated and sent out to 128 high schools nationally in 1995.

The pilot

Prior to sending questionnaire packs to North Shore high schools, the questionnaire which was originally designed was tested with three high school counsellors of Auckland schools outside of the North Shore area. To carry this out, I selected high schools out of the Yellow Pages Phone Directory which were in the West and Central Auckland districts. The distance I had to travel was taken into consideration. Five schools were phoned and three face-to-face appointments were arranged. An 'interview administered questionnaire' was carried out with the counsellors participating in the pilot study. This enabled discussion to take place on each question and relevant issues could be raised. At the onset of each pilot interview an Information Sheet (*see Appendix 12*) was provided to the counsellor, which clearly stated that any information received from questions asked would not be used in the thesis and names of their school would not be mentioned at all. The only purpose of any information and suggestions given by the counsellor was to design a questionnaire which asked unambiguous and appropriate questions, which would assist me in achieving the aims of the research. The questionnaire was redesigned to some degree as counsellors were able to provide me with valuable insight.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues need careful consideration when undertaking any research involving human participants (Berg, 2001: 40, *et al*). In-depth interviews can bring about an intimate conversation where the participant shares personal aspects of their lives and experiences. Participants have the right to be protected from harm and misuse of their

information (Seidman, 1998: 49). Harm involves physical, psychological or social harm which comes to participants as a result of participating in research (de Vaus, 2002: 179; Berg, 2001: 56; Taylor, 2000a: 8). Issues that need careful consideration include 'informed consent', 'confidentiality', 'anonymity'.

Informed consent

To keep in line with the ethical safeguards stated above, every effort was made to provide open and transparent information to research participants from the onset. The concept of informed consent is one of the primary safeguards established to ensure the safety of research participants (de Vaus, 2002: 179; Taylor, 2000a: 7). Informed consent is defined as "agreement to an action based on knowledge of what the action involves and its likely consequences" (General Medical Council, 1999, cited Bagshaw, 2001: 22). Participants were given accurate information about the research process, in language relative to their age. Every attempt was made to ensure participants were not made to feel obliged to take part in the study: they were invited to take part.

Interview and questionnaire participants, those contacted for recruiting participants and the parents/guardians of the two participants for the pilot interviews who were under the age of 16 years, were provided with detailed information about the nature of the study, verbally and in writing through the use of an Information Sheet. The decision was made to involve parents/guardians for those under the age of 16, as from the age of sixteen a young woman can make her own choices, such as, leaving home (as long as she can support herself adequately and live in safety), leaving school, and consenting to sexual activity. The Information Sheets included details about the aims of the research; the procedures in which the participants would be involved; who would have access to their information; the length of time of the interviews; contact details for further information or regarding any concerns that arise; details about how their information would be stored and used, and how long their information would be stored for; and the participant's rights, including the right to withdraw from the research at any time before and during the interview.

It was clearly stated in the information sheet that once the interview was completed, the material could not be withdrawn. Initially my proposal to the Massey University Ethics Committee stated that participants could withdraw at any time throughout the research.

I was advised that this is not acceptable and was asked to resubmit this section. My resubmission then stated that withdrawal can only take place up until the end of the interview and this was approved by the Committee. However, participants were given the opportunity to view the material once it had been transcribed and change, elucidate or delete any wording that they wanted, also stated clearly in the Information Sheet. This, therefore, gave participants the opportunity to withdraw their information in part or in full. For those who returned completed questionnaires, they could not request their information back, as no names were attached.

As already discussed, consent forms were also signed by interview participants (including pilot interviewees) and by their parents/guardians if they were under the age of 16. Once the interview material was transcribed, I sought further signed consent from the participants. When ethical issues are reflected upon throughout the course of the research, sometimes further consent is required (Miller and Bell, 2002: 67). My objective was to confirm the use of the reviewed transcripts in the analysis, to inform the participants that their name would be changed and to ensure the participants were very clear that although I can guarantee confidentiality, I cannot guarantee anonymity. This was unclear in the initial information sheet and I felt it necessary to fully inform participants. For those who filled in the questionnaires and returned them, this in itself implied consent. No additional form was required. This was clearly stated in the Information sheet and also reiterated on the questionnaire itself.

Confidentiality/Anonymity

It is necessary to protect the confidentiality of participants (de Vaus, 2002: 179; Berg, 2001: 58; Taylor, 2000a: 9). Confidentiality attempts to remove any information from research records that identifies those who participated in the research. Despite being careful to protect the confidentiality of participants, confidentiality does not guarantee anonymity, particularly when working with in-depth interview material (Seidman, 1998: 56). Anonymity means that participants remain unnamed (Berg, 2001: 57), particularly in the writing up of the report. Anonymity was preserved, however, in spite of that; it is possible that recognition may occur. The signing of consent forms presents in itself an ethical dilemma, as names and other identifying data is often collected (Berg, 2001: 57). To minimise the risk of identification, no phone numbers or addresses were required on the consent forms, and the consent forms were kept separate from the raw data. In

hindsight, I feel it would be better to gain verbal consent, which could be tape recorded just before each interview, as suggested by Berg (Ibid). This would cut down the amount of written material with participants' names on.

A coding system for the analysis of data was utilised to ensure the anonymity of all data collected from participants. Identifying information (such as names, addresses and phone numbers) was kept separately from the raw data. A small notebook was kept with a list of names (using first names only), along with contact details, so that interviews and a time for reviewing the transcripts could be set up. The interview material was coded from INT01 - INT05 (Interview 1 - Interview 5). The pilot interviews were coded: PI01-PI04 (Pilot Interview 1 - Pilot Interview 4). The names in the notebook were not placed in logical order from first interview to last, but were placed in an order only I would be aware of.

Transcripts contained initials for all place names and names of people, as suggested by Seidman (1998: 56). Any mention of a particular high school by participants was recorded as HS only. As the North Shore is a relatively small area, it would be too easy to recognise schools with full initials. Transcripts, interview material and audio tapes were kept in a locked file in my own home. Only I had access to the key. Written material was duplicated and kept at my place of work, also in a locked file. In this case the manager of my place of employment also had access to the key. It is expected she did not enter the file for any reason. No names were kept in this file at all, in the unlikely event the file was opened.

I made a genuine effort to reduce the possibility of a reader being able to recognise a participant, by excluding as much identifiable data as possible from the analysis, without minimising and devaluing the participant's voice. The questionnaires remained completely anonymous, as clearly advised in the information sheet. In some cases, I could presume who sent back the questionnaire because of the information provided, but I did not in any way use names or make suggestions as to where the information came from. This minimised any harm to high schools on the North Shore.

Minimising harm in the interview sessions

As the interviews centred on the experiences, thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the participants, there was a possibility that hurtful or 'bad' memories could rise and bring to the surface negative feelings, such as regret, sadness, resentment and/or anger, i.e. of school processes, peer responses and lack of family support. In the event that this became evident, I planned to remind the participant of her right to withdraw at any time during the interview, have the audio taped stopped, as well as the right to erase or change any information that was shared. However, I would make a suggestion of services which may be helpful if I was able to do so and if it seemed appropriate to do so. In one case, I became aware that the young mother I was talking with was lonely for 'adult' company. As I knew of a young mother's support group, I informed her about the group and offered her the contact details. The participant showed an interest in attending this group, but had no form of transport. With her permission, I phoned the support group (outside of the interview time) to enquire about the possibility of transportation assistance. I kept the participant's details confidential. I relayed the information back to the young mother and left it in her hands.

Ethics in Feminist Research

As this research is underpinned by a feminist perspective, it was important that methods were carried out in a feminist manner. The research needed to emerge out of the actual experiences, concerns and needs of women, and undertaken in ethical and non-exploitative ways that promote their interests, as contended by O'Brien (2001: 26), Miller and Teitel (1991: 7-8) and Riddell (1989: 97).

The issues of power relations between the researcher and the researched have been central to the development of feminist methodology (Kirkman, 2001: 54). Feminists have sought to break down the hierarchical and potentially exploitable relationship between the researcher and researched by cultivating equal participation in the research process (Birch & Miller, 2002: 94; Wolf, 1996: 4). It has been rejected by feminists that social research is to be carried out with objective standards (Gillies & Alldred, 2002: 32) and by maintaining distance between the researcher and the researched.

The descriptor '*participants*' has been deliberately chosen to express a research relationship which "involves the exchange of ideas and understanding" (Birch & Miller, 2001: 94). Although the participants did not have any participation in the final analysis, the transcripts from their interviews were reviewed by them and changed if necessary.

It was my aim that research techniques implemented were "non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian and non-manipulative", as suggested by Reinharz (1983: 181, cited Kelly *et al*, 1995: 235). The research participants were not simply seen as sources of data, but were treated as equals involved in a two-way process. By equity I mean being honest about the research process, and valuing the time and the words of the participants, thus developing trust and a willingness to share (Seidman, 1998: 93).

The concept of building rapport is also pertinent to feminist considerations of ethical conduct in research (Birch, *et al*, 2002: 7). It is important that there is a good balance, as too little or too much rapport can "can lead to distortion of what the participant reconstructs in the interview" (Hyman *et al*, 1954, cited Seidman, 1998: 81). I achieved this by being respectful and polite in the initial stage of the interviews (i.e. waiting to be asked to be seated), then talking lightly about 'baby things' (as I too was pregnant for some interviews, and had a newborn baby for others) or other 'light' subjects, then moving into the actual interview (including the preliminary information sharing and consent), while sharing my own experiences and thoughts at different stages throughout the interview, as it seemed appropriate. At the end of each interview I offered the participant a small gift as a token of my appreciation. It also helps mark the end of that stage of the relationship as suggested by Yow (1994, *et al*, cited Seidman, 1998: 92). In one case, I was given a small gift from the participant - some socks for my baby.

Researcher bias/interviewer influence on the research

Feminists have argued that feminist methodology is distinctive in how the researcher locates herself in the research process (Kelly, Regan & Burton, 1995: 236; Stanley, 1992: 31, cited Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002: 16). The idea that the researcher's biography is not relevant to the research process is rejected by feminists. Feminists argue that the researcher's social and personal biographies (Kirkman, 2001: 54, Schofield, 1994: 53, *et al*), and political perspectives (Gillies & Alldred, 2001: 33), influence their research at all levels. It is contended by feminists that feminist research

needs to be reflected upon critically and the place of the researcher in the process of knowledge production needs to be transparent (Doucet & Mauthner, 2002: 125; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002: 16).

The fact that I choose to concentrate on a particular group of mothers (in age, number of children, geographical area, ethnicity), reflects my own bias towards this group. My own life history, culture, experiences, gender and values (being a teenage mother, gaining a Bachelor of Social Work as a single mother, working as a social worker with pregnant teens/young mothers, and now undertaking this thesis as a mother of a newborn baby), has influenced the research process at all levels, from the topic I chose, the aims and objectives of the research, the methods employed, the interpretation of the data and to the ethical considerations themselves (Morse & Richards, 2002: 105, 127; May, 2001: 60).

Morse & Richards (2002: 105) contend that "when experience brings a particular research problem to the fore, it will drive the study". From the beginning of this research I have held a belief that young mothers can achieve educational goals if they have the desire and motivation to do so, along with the right supports. This is largely based on my own experience of continuing education as a mother, which, without good supports, I may not have accomplished my goals. However, I also respect those who want to be a mother and not a student as well. As Bowes (1996, cited Alice, 1999: 67) states, my own views and thoughts "should not prevent the research subject from becoming empowered to express views or take actions that differ from those preferred by the researcher".

When participants reflect upon their own experiences and initiate change where, when and if they want to, this is empowerment (Alice, 1999: 67). It is possible that the research itself may have had an affect on the young mothers involved, for example, they may now be considering their education and possible careers more intensely. If this has been empowering to the participants, then this is consistent with feminist objectives. In conducting this research, it is my hope that those involved found the reflection process personally beneficial and that they felt they were given an outlet to have their voices heard and their educational goals and hopes acknowledged and valued.

Analysis of the voices heard and the questionnaire data also needs ethical consideration. The analysis is, to some degree, a reflection of the personalities of the researcher and the researched, along with their interaction with each other (Seidman, 1998: 16, 79). It is vital the researcher is careful how participant's experiences and views are reconstructed in the final analysis "Data analysis is where the power and privilege of the researcher are particularly pronounced" (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998, cited Doucet & Mauthner, 2001:129). It was important that I separated my own social and personal biography from the interview and questionnaire material (Brown & Gilligan, 1992: 26). I have made an honest attempt to reflect the voices of those who participated in this study, from their perspectives, rather than from my own.

Reliability, validity and generalisability

The concept of validity, reliability and generalisability raises several important questions in feminist methodology: (1) "Who has the power to know what?" (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2002: 14); (2) "How do we know what we are told is true?"; (3) "Is it true for anyone else?"; and (4) "Whose meaning is it that an interview brings forth and that a researchers reports?" (Seidman, 1998: 16-17). These questions are concerned with the concepts of reliability, validity and generalisability.

"*Reliability* refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated." (Merriam, 1998: 205, cited Nicholls, 2001: 74). Reliability in a research design assumes that by asking the same questions and researching the same issue repeatedly, the same results will be evident. However, in qualitative research, reliability is not the objective. When a researcher takes an interview schedule and applies the questions to another group, who perfectly fit the criteria, the results will be different. This is because people are unique and bring with them unique life experiences, feelings etc.. Although there may be similarities, the differences will be distinct. Even if questions were asked to the same group, but at a different time, the results could also be quite different. This is because other factors can influence the interview session, such "their health, mood when interviewed, motives for participating in the study, and ... their relationship with the interviewer" (Nicholls, 2001: 74).

"*Validity* is a way of establishing what counts as true" (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 13). It is concerned with findings being correctly interpreted (Kirk & Miller, 1986, cited Nicholls, 2001: 74). Validity is hard to guarantee. There are several ethical considerations when aiming to understand accounts. First, it cannot be guaranteed the participant understood the question in the same way as I understood and interpreted the question (Allred & Gillies, 2002: 158; Taylor, 2000a: 2). If a response is to be valid, both the researcher and the researched need to understand the question equally. I made an effort to address this issue by giving the participants the transcripts to read over and clarify anything that wasn't right. Second, accounts may not be accurate, either purposely or by misunderstanding. "Although participants may provide a genuine reflection of their knowledge and experiences, there may be significant circumstances that the participant was unaware of." (May, 2001: 144). Third, a more holistic understanding can only be attained by witnessing the experiences in their full contexts (May, 2001: 144). Finally, what is reported is in part the researchers understanding of what was said. Although I aimed to present and analyse the young women's voices accurately, this could not be absolutely achieved unless I was the young women myself (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2002: 15-16; Schutz, 1967, cited Seidman, 1998: 3).

Generalisability refers to "the extent to which a study's findings can be applied to other situations" (Nicholls, 2001: 75). As discussed earlier in this chapter, the aim of feminist research is to look at experiences of women, from their own individual perspectives. This in itself is the beginning and the end point of the research. The aim of this study is likewise. However, it is also hoped that the findings will present useful knowledge and insight that can be helpful to other young women, without claiming that all young mothers experience things the same way, have the same attitudes, or want the same things out of their lives. The interview participants were chosen, as a small non-random sample, to explore their experiences and thoughts concerning their educational participation and goals, not to find out what is generally true for all young mothers.

Reliability, validity and generalisability are not the objectives of this research. As the analysis from the interview and questionnaire material relies on the accounts of the participants, the issue is really whether or not the results and analysis are consistent with the data collected (Merriam, 1998, cited Nicholls, 2001: 74). Although validity cannot be assured in true sense, the authenticity of what the young mothers shared "makes it

reasonable for me to have confidence in its validity for her", as suggested by Seidman (1998: 19). "If the interview structure works to allow them to make sense to themselves as well as to the interviewer, then it has gone a long way toward validity" (Ibid: 17). Likewise, with the high school counsellors who participated, their information too is taken at face value, and treated as information which provides valuable insight into the level of support offered to young mothers in North Shore high schools.

Analysis of Findings

It is important that it is made explicit how any knowledge claims are made. The interpretation and analysis came largely from the interview and questionnaire data. However, other factors were also apparent in this undertaking. Ramazanoglu with Holland (2002: 160) puts it like this:

Your notions of what to look for will come in part from what you learn from your data, in part from interaction with your initial decisions about your project and its framework of ideas. You can get initial guidance on how to look at you data by working out what questions you are asking of them. The results of this interaction between your interpretative creativity, the constraining framework of your prior beliefs, and what appears new to you in your data constitute your conclusion.

Although I made an honest attempt to interpret and analyse the data from the perspectives of the young women and the school counsellors, I am aware that social research cannot be totally objective. My own judgments, understanding and ways of making sense of reality, affects the research at every level, even the analysis.

Analysis of the interviews

I undertook the task of transcribing the interview material. This was a very time consuming undertaking, but very rewarding. As I listened to the tapes and typed out the conversation word by word, the setting in which the interview took place, the young mothers' faces, mannerisms, expressions and emotions came to life again. Once the transcripts were complete and read through by the young women, I took on the enormous task of analysing and interpreting the data. Although the processing of the data began at the very start of the interview sessions and continued through each interview, I avoided any in-depth analysis of the interview data until all interviews had

been completed, as suggested by Seidman (1998: 96). I made an attempt to approach the transcripts with an open mind, without allowing any preconceptions to get in the way of interpretation and analysis. As Seidman (1998: 100) states, "the interviewer must come to the transcript prepared to let the interview breathe and speak for itself" (Seidman, 1998: 100). I attempted not to let my own experiences of being a young mother cloud the voices of the young mothers.

Once the interviews were transcribed, the large amount of data had to be reduced. As I read through the transcripts, I marked interesting texts with brackets. Here I recognise my own judgment as to what was of importance. Once the data was reduced, categories (or themes) were identified, in a very broad sense to begin with, and then sub-categories were developed. Connecting threads and patterns were identified. The passages which were initially marked were cut and pasted under the themes identified.

Developmental and learning theories, with a feminist perspective also, were used as a framework to analyse the data. Over the next three chapters it will be seen how pregnancy and mothering impacts significantly on educational participation and goals for the majority of the young mothers interviewed. An ecological framework was used to analyse support systems which influence educational participation, along with factors which hinder the continuation of education. In particular, microsystem influences of family, peers/partner and school were pinpointed. Mesosystem links were also identified, particularly between home and school, along with exosystem influences, such as Work and Income New Zealand. Expectancy and self-efficacy theory were used as a baseline for analysing the young mother's educational goals, purpose of these goals and levels of motivation towards achieving these goals. Feminist theory of 'care' was used as a guide to analysis the impact of mothering on the young mothers' education. This extended the analysis to identifying particular barriers to the continuation of education, the ideal educational environment and support systems the young mothers' feel are vital to their success.

Quotations used are as they were spoken in the interviews, except names, place names and any identifying information, such as career choice, have been excluded. Pseudonyms have been used throughout the thesis. All effort has been made to ensure confidentiality.

Analysis of the questionnaires

Because of the qualitative nature of the questionnaire, the data gathered was sorted into categories, first in a broad context and then in sub-categories. The questionnaire data was already, to some degree, placed into categories, because of the specific questions asked. However, new categories also developed, such as 'referral processes'. Also, a conversation took place over the phone with one of the school counsellors which provided information outside of the designed questions. Ecological theory was used to identify variables, such as school policies, processes, and childcare. Links, particularly between home and school, were also identified. All questionnaires remained anonymous and the identity of the counsellor whom I spoke with over the phone has been kept confidential.

Summary

Qualities of feminist research have underpinned and driven this research, such as principles of "participation" and "engagement". Five young women were given the opportunity to have their voices heard in a natural, open and honest environment, where their stories, ideas and thoughts were valued, each in their own right. Questionnaires were also sent to North Shore high school counsellors to look at the degree to which these schools meet the needs of young mothers.

Over the following chapters, it is seen to what extent pregnancy and mothering impacts on the educational participation and goals of five young mothers; the barriers which exist for these young mothers; the various supports which influence these young mothers towards continuing their education; the type of educational environment they perceive to be best; and the strengths and weaknesses evident within the school system of five high schools on the North Shore. The next three chapters (chapters five to seven) provide the findings of the interviews in a chronological order. This begins with factors prior to conception, followed by the time during pregnancy, then since the young women became mothers. Chapter eight lays out the findings of the level of support offered in North Shore high schools according to the schools who responded.

It became apparent that these young women very much care about giving their child the best future they can. They all see education as having an impact on this, even if they do not have any educational plans at this stage. Their attitudes and hopes of some day completing a course and gaining good employment, raises awareness of the need for support systems at all levels to be put in place.

Chapter 5: Prior to Conception

Introduction

For the purposes of achieving the research aims, development, learning and feminist theories are used as a framework for analysis, as discussed in the previous chapter. In the next four chapters of results, literature and theories discussed in chapters two and three, are briefly pointed to, to provide an understanding as to the significance of the interview questions. It is in the final chapter (chapter nine) that the interview and questionnaire results will be brought together, with the theories and literature discussed earlier in the thesis, in a critical analysis.

As already stated, according to Woodward & Fergusson (2002: 3), to be able to measure the impact of pregnancy and parenting on a young mother's education, there must first be a consideration of aspects of her life prior to conception. This chapter sets out the relevant factors in relation to the young mothers' education prior to conception. The results of family, peer and schooling are set out, as learning theory claims that these contexts (found within Bronfenbrenner's (1972) ecological model) are major spheres of influence (Frydenberg, 1997: 19). The findings related to the educational context are concerned with the young mothers' motivation towards high school attendance and school work completion; the reasons why for some high school was abandoned before completion; attitudes towards schooling; academic ability; and self-beliefs towards academic ability. Finally, the results of the young mothers' educational goals, and the expected 'reward' of attaining educational goals, are laid out. This chapter will provide a benchmark for analysing the impact of pregnancy and mothering on educational goals and the motivation towards achieving goals, which follows in the next two chapters.

Educational Participation Leading up to the Pregnancy

Each of the participants had educational goals prior to becoming pregnant. Motivational levels were high for all the young women at this stage on their educational path. Factors which impacted on this were parental expectations, good peer support, self-belief of academic ability to pass the particular school year/course, educational goals and the expected reward for attaining educational goals. Two of the young women were still at high school. One was in the fifth form and one was in form seven. The other three young mothers had left school and were attending a course. Prior to attending a course,

these three participants expressed that they struggled with attending school, completing work and being successful in their education, when they were in high school. Many factors impacted on this, from parental expectations of what subjects to take, negative peer influence to skip school, attitudes towards schooling (including towards teachers), past academic failure and low self-efficacy.

The Family Context

An ecological perspective acknowledges the young mothers' immediate context of family as influential on her development and learning (Lerner, 202: 50; Muss, 1996a: 32). The adolescents' relationship with their parents and parental educational expectations can have a significant affect on the adolescent's educational decisions and on achieving educational goals.

The young mothers interviewed are all part of unique and different family situations, with some similarities. One young mother lives with both parents and siblings, one lives with her mother and a sibling, and one lives with her mother and step father. Two of the participants conveyed that they had positive relationships with their parents prior to conception. The other three young women expressed relationship difficulties with their parents prior to becoming pregnant. Katrina⁵ did not live with either of her parents because of problems which existed within the family and family dynamics, leaving home some time ago. She moved in with her friend's parents for a period of time, before moving into her boyfriend's parent's home. She now lives with her partner and their baby. Anna talked about not coming home much and how she didn't get on well with her parents.

I was never really home. I was a teenager. Didn't really see them much. We didn't really get on that well...It was part of the reason I left home. I'm not sure why. I guess I'm the type of person who can't be around the same people for too long...I get on much better with them now cos' I don't see them everyday. They're not in my face (Anna).

⁵ Pseudonyms have been used throughout this study to protect the identity of participants.

Kelly talked about her relationship with her parents before she became pregnant, and described it as "Not good at all". Kelly was not coming home when she was meant to and not going to school. This caused a level of distrust.

...I was just being naughty. Not coming home, not going to school, things like that, yeah. Well, it's hard to explain really. They just didn't trust me and I was always having to explain what I was doing, where I was and everything, but they never believed me (Kelly).

In each case, parents were very concerned about their daughter's education and held expectations about their schooling. However, the level of influence was actually minimal in the majority of cases. Although parents encouraged education, it did not necessarily influence their daughter to stay at school.

Kelly's parents had expectations, which made very little difference at all. Kelly skipped many classes and paid little attention to her schooling.

They just expected me to go to school, and do it. They just told me to go, but I never did. I kind of did what they didn't want me to do (Kelly).

Katrina's dad pushed her into subjects that she didn't want to do. It was his way of trying to encourage his daughter towards her schooling, but Katrina felt that he was putting his own interests on to her. In Katrina's words it was said,

Dad made me take [subject] and my step mum made me take (subject). I was pushed into subjects that I didn't want to do (Katrina).

This ended up having no real influence at all. Katrina had no interest in the subjects she was expected to take and only struggled with them.

Anna's dad had offered to buy her a car if she gained a qualification, but to no avail.

Well, he said to me, if I get some sort of qualifications from school he'd buy me a car....It didn't work [laughs] (Anna).

Rochelle's mum had expectations of her doing well at school then having a good career. Rochelle talked about how her own personal problems hindered her schooling at the time, despite her mother's hopes.

Umm, yeah, she had a good influence, like wanted me to stay at school and, yeah, go far, go somewhere, get somewhere, but I had a lot of [personal] problems, but not anymore (Rochelle).

Rochelle expressed that she was not as interested in her schooling as her mother was, although Rochelle kept attending and succeeding with her school work.

One of the young women has had very influential parents when it has come to her education. Jayne has spent her school years in the private school system. Jayne's parents expected her to go to school and Jayne did not go against this. Jayne expressed,

Mum made me go to school. Education is really important in my family. It's always been a big thing to get an education (Jayne).

Jayne's mother had a baby when she was a teenager and yet continued with her education, then worked for most of Jayne's life. This has impacted on her mother's expectations of Jayne and having a baby is thought of as no excuse to discontinue education.

The Context of Peers

Ecological theory also recognises that the influence of the young mothers peer group on her education can have a negative or positive effect (Frydenberg, 1997: 19), as discussed in chapter three. Two of the participants did not express any negative peer influence that impacted on their education prior to becoming pregnant. These two were still at high school leading up to the pregnancy. Although Rochelle stated, "They were like me, you know, school sucks (laughs)", she did not claim that this made any difference to her schooling in any way. Rochelle still attended school and completed her work. Jayne spoke of her peers in a positive way in regards to her schooling. Her friends were still at school themselves and their schooling was something they were positive about.

Although her boyfriend was not attending school and was unemployed, this did not have any negative influence on her schooling.

Prior to conception, three of the young women felt that their friends were a negative influence on their schooling. These three were the young women who had left school and were attending a course. Anna's friends had already left school, which Anna claims influenced her to leave school. Her friends had no interest in school and this rubbed off on Anna. Katrina spent a lot of time going out with her friends in the weekend, which Katrina claims was hindering her school work. She was struggling to complete assignments and hand in homework. Katrina didn't want to disappoint her friends by not going out. Kelly felt that her school friends were also a negative influence. However, she did take responsibility for her own actions of *'being in with the wrong crowd'*, and acknowledged that she was sometimes a negative influence on her friends. There were some friends who tried to influence Kelly positively by encouraging her to go to school, although with little effect.

They [school friends] weren't that good because I was in with the wrong people. So like when I waggged they would wag with me. Yeah, umm, they just go with me [laughs]. Oh, some of them were like that, but some of them were like, "Go to school" (Kelly).

The Educational Context

Learning theory contends that there are individual factors which can impact on an adolescent's motivation towards education (Alexander & Murphy, 1988, cited Cullen, 2001: 65), as discussed in chapter three. In the following section, the results of personal attitudes towards schooling, self-beliefs about academic ability and the 'reward' for achieving goals are laid out, in relation to the impact of these factors on the participants' motivation towards their education.

High school attendance

Two of the young mothers were still at high school when they became pregnant. They both had high levels of motivation to attend school and complete school work, which was being completed successfully. In contrast, Kelly, Katrina and Anna all struggled

with motivation to some degree when it came to their high schooling and lacked in enthusiasm. These three had already left high school and were attending a full-time course. The reasons for leaving school, as expressed by the young mothers, included attitudes towards high school, the way they felt teachers treated them, academic levels and educational and career goals, which will be laid out throughout the rest of the chapter.

Two of the young mothers were in the 5th form when they left and were aged 15 years, and one had completed the 5th form year and was 16. Anna couldn't quite remember if she was 14 or 15, but thinks she was 15. Anna 'hated' school and wanted to leave.

I hated it [school]! I wanted to do something else. I hated being bossed around and told what to do (Anna).

Anna stated that she took each day as it came and just went to the classes she needed to go to because they were part of her timetable.

...I just went day by day. Had to go to school...I didn't really think anything about it [educational goals] very much at the time. Just go to the place you had to go (Anna).

Anna did not enjoy high school and preferred to be with her friends who were not going to school. Anna expressed "I just couldn't be bothered. I'd rather go out and have fun". Because of Anna's behaviour and attitudes towards schooling, the principal threatened to expel her, so her parents removed her from the school before she completed 5th form.

...Well, my parents knew I had to get out of school anyway, 'cos I was just about to get kicked out anyway. So the school said to my parents, "You either take her out or we'll kick her out". So they took me out (Anna).

Like Anna, Kelly didn't like school very much either and often did not attend. She did not have a lot interest in her schooling, especially when she had to think about the work.

I just didn't find it interesting. I don't know, it really didn't interest me at that time. I just didn't have any motivation to go. Just not bothering to attend. When I did attend I just didn't do anything. Anything where I had to use my brain...I didn't have the motivation to do it, so I just didn't do it. Like if I just had to copy it off the board I'd do it [laughs] (Kelly).

In particular, Kelly did not like school because of how she felt the teachers treated her. It is important to Kelly to feel respected and not treated like a child.

I didn't really like them [teachers], if they picked on me, and at college the teachers treat you like children, they do and like when I go to university they're going to treat me like adults. Like when you're a teenager you don't really want to be treated like kids and they treated you like kids (Kelly).

Kelly made the decision to leave school because she was hardly going at all and she felt the school did not really want her there, although she took responsibility for why teachers did not want her there.

Umm, I thought it [school] stunk really. I just didn't want to go. I'd only like go to school about 1 day a week, or one period ... I left because I wasn't attending, and they didn't really want me there because I wasn't attending and because of my smoking. And I had to make a decision....They [the principal] ... told me I had to leave (Kelly).

Kelly's parents felt it would be the best for her to leave and do an alternative course. Kelly was given an exemption from school as she enrolled in a full-time course and left school before 5th form was completed.

Katrina had high motivation to attend high school, although she expressed that she did not like school. She had very little enthusiasm for her school work and motivation to do her work. At school Katrina found that she just enjoyed the social aspect and engaging in conversations was all she was interested in.

I had no enthusiasm. However, I would still go to school, even if I was sick...I got lazy and didn't really want to go. I still went to school, but only to talk to everyone. I didn't want to stay home with [the person who Katrina was staying with]. I never wagged. I just didn't do my work at school. Like in Maths I used to just draw pictures, but I was into English, well some parts of English (Katrina)

Katrina talked about how she did not like school at all, although she did complete the 5th form year and passed one subject.

Academic ability and its impact on educational decisions

Self-efficacy theory claims that past educational success or failure has a significant impact on the extent to which an individual believes in her future success, which will then impact on goals and motivation (Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373, 379; Wilson, *et al*, 2002: 94; Brynes, 2001: 100), as discussed in chapter three. Two of the young women did not feel they struggled with their school work prior to conception. Jayne said she has always managed to complete and pass her work, although she expressed that this was only on an average level. As far as academic ability goes, Jayne says "*I am not the top of the class student or anything like that, just average*". Rochelle also did not struggle with the ability to pass her assignments or tests successfully. These young mothers were still at school when they found out they were pregnant.

The other three young mothers all struggled to some degree with school achievement levels. One felt that she could have done better if she put in more effort. Katrina had a specific goal to pass School Certificate, but was unsuccessful, except in one subject. She acknowledged that her own social interactions, during school time and in the weekends, impacted a great deal on her lack of success. She felt that she actually had the ability to do better in school and perceives her lack of success as a lack of effort, not inability.

They [achievement levels at school] were always bad. I talked too much. Yeah, I didn't want to miss out on conversation. In the 5th form I wanted to pass computers and maths. I passed computers, but not maths. I was going out a lot in the weekend which wasn't helping my schooling (Katrina).

Anna felt that high school was not really for her and struggled with tests and assignments and also relates that she did not put a lot of effort into her school work.

I wasn't really a school sort of person...I don't like maths and PE. Yeah, those were the ones I didn't like and found hard...I didn't really put much effort in at school. I wasn't really any good at tests or assignments (Anna).

When talking more in depth with Anna, it became apparent that Anna tended to lack effort with her school work because it seemed too difficult. Her lack of motivation and enthusiasm was related to the struggle she felt with her ability to be able to do the work, rather than to just being lazy and uninterested. When Anna attended a course instead of remaining at high school, she did not find the course work difficult. She actually began to believe that she could be successful and enjoyed attending the course.

Kelly found that she struggled with most of her school subjects, except for one. When talking with Kelly, it became apparent as it did with Anna, that the reason Kelly was disinterested in attending school and doing her work was because of how she felt about her ability to be able to do the work. When classes were a struggle academically, Kelly tended to skip the class, but when she felt she could do the work she would go to class. Kelly hardly ever went to her classes because most were a struggle academically. This can be depicted in our conversation.

Kelly: *I found some of it hard. Pretty much all my subjects except maths. I especially found English and science hard. I didn't really do my work [laughs].*

Myself: *Did you feel like you could do your school work if you wanted to?*

Kelly: *Yeah, I just didn't want to do it. In some cases the work was hard. Like sometimes I wanted to go to school.*

Myself: *If you liked the subjects?*

Kelly: *No, but like if the work was something easy to do. I'd like go because I knew I could do it (Kelly).*

Educational Goals for the Purpose of Attaining Employment

Expectancy theory claims that motivation for achieving educational goals comes from the 'reward' one expects to attain from achieving the goal (Slavin, 2003: 338; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 355; Fox, 1993: 116). This next section examines the young mothers' educational goals prior to becoming pregnant, the 'reward/s' they expected to gain from accomplishing their goals and the plans (specific or vague) they had to achieve their goals. The majority of the young mothers had educational goals of some sort that they wanted to achieve, with the hope of then having a financially rewarding career. These young women wanted to find good employment and felt that education was a vehicle for this. Two in particular were very thoughtful about what kind of career they wanted. One was unsure about what she wanted to do, but wanted to 'do' and 'be' something. Only one participant stood out from the rest in lacking in ambition.

Jayne's goal prior to conception was to complete 7th form, then go onto university to complete a (certain degree). Jayne's purpose in this is so she can have a good career and earn well. When talking with Jayne about her reasons for her educational goals she stated, "*Ah, money [laughs], and have a good career, get paid well*". Rochelle also wanted to complete 7th form, go on to tertiary study and then have a career. Rochelle previously had some idea about what type of career she wanted, but changed her mind. In particular she mentioned that it was hard to find a job in the career she was interested in and the money is not that good. These two factors were of importance to Rochelle.

Yeah, finish school [7th form] and like go on to AUT or something, and have a career in something. At one stage I wanted to go into the travel industry, but it's not that great anymore, like it's really hard to get a job and money's not that good anymore (Rochelle).

Although Rochelle was struggling to know what she wanted to do exactly, she was clear on the fact that she wanted to have a career in something.

Umm...but like, I didn't exactly know what I wanted to be, wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to do something (Rochelle).

Katrina's goal was to successfully complete the course she was attending. The purpose of Katrina's goal was like Jayne's and Rochelle's, in that she wanted to have a good career. Katrina only planned to complete the 5th form year (which she did) and felt that it would then be better for her to do a course specifically to help her get the type of job she wants. Katrina's dislike for school also impacted on this.

When I was younger I wanted to be a nurse or a teacher, but now I want to be a receptionist. Since the 4th form I have wanted to become a receptionist. I planned to complete 5th form only and then do a course to help me get into receptionist work. I didn't like school or the teachers, so I didn't want to stay, especially when I could do a course to help me get the type of job I wanted (Katrina).

Originally Kelly's goal was to stay at school and complete the 7th form, but she expressed, "...Well I did say I wanted to stay until the 7th form, but I knew I wasn't going to". Kelly was not keen to stay at school because of her struggle with the work and because she disliked the way she was treated by teachers. Kelly took on a new goal for herself. Her plan was to complete level one of the course she was attending, then maybe level two and then hopefully find a job. The course staff would help to find one.

I want to find a job [after completion of the course], cause umm, they help you find a job at the end of it...Yep, or then go onto the second part. There was like two levels, and that was the first one and the second one is like more intense. I think the courses are for 6 months each. So 6 months for the first one, then 6 months for the second and get a job after that (Kelly).

Although Anna enjoyed the course she attended after high school, the purpose of attending this course seemed to be more that she had to enrol on a course to get an exemption from school as she was only 15 years. It seemed that the purpose of the course for Anna was more to be able to leave school, rather than to achieve an educational goal.

Summary

It can be clearly seen that the two young mothers who were doing well at school wanted to remain at school and complete 7th form. These two participants had good levels of self-efficacy and were completing and passing their school work. The participants did not lack in motivation to attend school or do their school work, although one conveyed that she did not particularly enjoy school. Both participants had the goal of completing 7th form and then going on to tertiary education before embarking on a career on some sort. Peer influence was not found to be negative in these participants' lives and parental educational expectations were high. There were no significant relationship issues between parents and themselves. On the other hand, the three participants who had left school and were attending a course, all spoke of negative peer influence and relations when considering their schooling; relationship difficulties with their parents, although parents were making an effort to encourage education', as well as academic struggle at school. The participants lacked in motivation to attend school and/or complete school work. After leaving school, their goals were to complete a short course, with the hope that on successful completion of the course they would find employment.

Chapter 6: During Pregnancy

Introduction

Factors which impacted on the continuation of education during pregnancy are the focus of this chapter. Relevant factors and influences included the decision to parent; the level of support from parents, school/course and peers; educational goals; and pregnancy related issues, such as tiredness and preparing for motherhood. This chapter firstly lays out the results of the young mothers' initial responses to the pregnancy, how it was for them when they had to break the news to their parents, making the decision to parent and preparing for mothering. Secondly, the level of support offered by family, peers and school/course during the pregnancy, in emotional, practical, financial and educational terms is described. Thirdly, the results of the young mothers' educational goals and motivation towards continuing education during pregnancy are provided, in comparison to goals and motivation prior to conception.

Deciding to Parent

Adolescence is a time when young women are moving from being egocentric, to caring more about others (Gilligan, 1982, cited Seifert & Hoffnung, 2002: 473). The needs of others (i.e. their baby's needs) may be placed as first priority, while their own needs (including attaining educational and career goals) may become less important.

The young mothers' initial response to the pregnancy

Finding out about the pregnancy was quite an emotional time for the young women. Not one of the pregnancies had been planned by the participants and there was a variety of emotional responses. One expressed that she was not ready to parent at this stage in her life as she was wanting to complete her schooling and have a career.

...I was still young. I was 16 and I found out and I wanted to do so much more before I had a baby like have a career and stuff and finish school (Rochelle).

Three of the young mothers stated they were 'shocked' at finding out they were pregnant. Two of these young women thought that they were covered by contraception. One thought she had actually missed a pill, but did not expect it to result in pregnancy.

... I was on contraception, but still got pregnant. Didn't expect to get pregnant. I think I missed one pill, but I didn't like think anything of it. I was shocked that I was pregnant (Rochelle).

The other young woman understood the Depo-Provera (injection) to last up to three years, when in actual fact it only lasts for three months.

Umm, yeah well, like since, 'cos ... had basically been my main partner, and so it was just a big shock. I'd taken like a couple before, ah, pregnancy tests, but they were all negative, so I had to take four. Four tests to think "Oh my god I'm actually pregnant" [laughs]. Sometimes I still wonder if it's sunken in that I'm a mother [laughs]. Like I haven't had a big stress yet, sort of expecting a big breakdown [laughs]. I was actually on the injection, and I was like that was meant to last up to three years, you know. And about 18 months after I had the injection, I don't think it was even that, about 10 months after the injection [laughs]....and I thought three years sort of thing (Katrina).

Jayne was also shocked at becoming pregnant. She took a friend with her to have a pregnancy test done. Although part of her expected a positive result, she was overwhelmed.

Umm, well I was sought of suspicious because I hadn't had my period for like about 17 days [late], and umm, like I thought it was gonna be that, but I didn't' really think it and I was sort of kinda like quite shocked and my friend was sort of like, I don't know, I just cried at first (Jayne).

Jayne also did not feel ready to have a child, expressing, "I had got used to the idea but I wasn't actually ready at this time in my life". Jayne's schooling was extremely important to her and she was focused on staying at school and completing 7th form.

When discussing her initial responses to their pregnancy, Kelly had never actually seen herself as a mother. She had never been around young children and did not know how to care for them all. The thought of mothering scared her.

I felt scared. I didn't expect to get pregnant. I didn't know what to do.... I just never saw myself with children. I'd never been around young children so I didn't know how to look after them (Kelly).

Katrina also talked about feeling scared and not knowing how she was going to cope with being a mother.

Umm, just scared because like I have a niece and nephew, and my sister was a young mum, is a young mum, and umm, I just remember all the money troubles that she was going through and just seeing her with all the stress ... so you know, it was just all the stress that I could see that she had brought on, that had brought on from the children. So, you know, I don't know could I handle it (Katrina).

Anna was partly in disbelief that she was pregnant. She had been putting on weight, but didn't really take any notice and thought to herself "It won't be me, won't be me". She conveyed that she initially felt quite emotionless.

Well, I didn't really know what to think. I didn't know really have any sort of emotion. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry (Anna).

The voices of the young mothers expressed their sense of shock and surprise that they were actually pregnant. Although they had become suspicious that they were in actual fact pregnant, they did not expect to hear that they were. The impact of the pregnancy on their education would soon unfold.

The decision to parent

After finding out about the pregnancy, the young women then had to make decisions about whether or not to continue with the pregnancy. Their own inner thoughts and wishes had to override the opinions, advice and expectations of others. Abortion had been suggested by two of the participants' parent/s (which will be set out in more detail in the next section), however, the young women could not go through with a termination. One of the birth fathers also suggested abortion, although did not push it.

One of these young mothers did not want to have a termination because she "wanted to have the baby".

... when I found out I was already 10 weeks,, I don't know [pause] I couldn't go through with having a termination. I just wanted to have the baby. I just thought, like my mum and stuff said she would just support me whatever I decided to do so yep, I just decided to have him (Rochelle).

For Jayne the thought of having a termination when she found out she was pregnant was quite distressing, and even caused nightmares.

When I found out I was 8 weeks, which gave me like 4 weeks to decide But even before I actually found out, I was pretty sure I wouldn't have an abortion. I had like nightmares about that, which was like weird, like he was in a tube, cause I just always heard that they like stuck a tube up and you got sucked into it and you just sort of got chucked away, and that it was like in a bin, and I was just like "no way!". I just couldn't do that, so I just had him (Jayne).

Katrina also did not think abortion was the right option and did not like the idea of adoption, which was suggested by her step mother.

I've never agreed on abortion or anything. Never could go through it. Definitely not adoption. My step mum said I should give it up for adoption and I was like 8 months pregnant when she said that, and I just flipped out at her. I thought, I'd been carrying this baby for so long. I just couldn't even think of it. Abortion, that's just so wrong. And when I told my partner I was pregnant, I said "should we give it up for adoption", you know, "should I have an abortion", just to see what he'd say, and he goes "no!" [laughs]. We both had the same ideas, he doesn't agree with it either (Katrina).

Of the five young mothers interviewed, one participant considered having an abortion in line with her parent's initial response to the pregnancy. However, she was already four months pregnant when she found out about the pregnancy, and therefore abortion was

not an option for her. Her parents then suggested adoption, which was not a desired choice by the young woman. She was becoming emotionally attached to the baby forming inside her.

I was like, yeah, but I was so far through I couldn't. I was four months already when I found out. I only had one day to decide whether to continue with the pregnancy or have an abortion. Then I had to decide whether to keep her or adopt. Well, my parents then thought it would be better for me to adopt and I did think about it. But it was just the feeling of her inside me or something. And thinking like 16 years later she's gonna come and try and find me and then I'm gonna have to explain why. Umm, a lot of people gave me advice, but I didn't really listen to them. I had to make it up for myself (Kelly).

Anna's dad also advised adoption, but like Kelly, she could not go through with it .

Well, my Dad always tried to convince me to get an adoption, but I always thought I'd rather raise my own child than someone else do it for me. Not knowing who he is, or what he is, or things like that. I don't like that sort of thing...Yeah, didn't quite feel right (Anna).

The young women could not go through with terminating their babies or giving their child to someone else to raise. The young women were overcome with feelings of 'what is right and wrong', feelings of not wanting someone else to raise their child and having to one day come face to face with their child and explain why adoption was chosen, and feelings that started to create an emotional attachment to the forming baby.

Preparation for the task ahead

It was clear from the young mother's voices that the pregnancy was not only unexpected and disapproved by others, most of the young women were not initially ready for the role of mothering and all its tasks and commitments required. Two of the young mothers undertook antenatal classes prior to birth, as a way of preparing themselves for the birth, and in how to care for a newborn. Jayne found that the classes were helpful.

Yeah, it wasn't actually that much about the labour, but it was about how to care for a baby, but it actually did have quite a lot about the labour as well. It was about how to deal with the stress of a baby, how to change a nappy, bath a baby and feeding and that kind of stuff...It was good 'cos it gave you heaps of pamphlets and packs and things (Jayne).

Anna found that she already felt quite confident in how to care for a baby, as. The antenatal classes helped with filling in some gaps in her knowledge of parenting.

Umm, before he was born I did an antenatal class...Yeah, they sort of go through the whole pregnancy process, the birth process and after process. Umm, I sort of knew most things. I just sort of needed to know a few extra little bits that I needed to know, 'cos my friend had a baby as well, so I sort of knew what to do (Anna).

One young mother was interested in some form of pregnancy, birth and post-natal education, but her midwife only told her about classes that had a fee. The young mother could not afford to pay. She actually found out that North Shore hospital conduct some free ones for people aged 15-21, which include some life skills as well, but it was too late by the time she was aware of this.

Support Systems

Learning theory contends that ecological theory can provide a framework for understanding influences and resources which can support an adolescent in her education, as well as identifying obstacles and risks (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 25; Muss, 1996b: 338; Fox, 1993: 78). The following results are concerned with the young mothers' microsystem of family, peers and school/course, which are major spheres of influence (Frydenberg, 1997: 19).

The family context

Not only did the young mothers have to come to terms themselves with realising they were pregnant, they had to break the news to parents. The young mothers found it difficult in telling their parents. They had to face their parents' disappointment and

shock as well as cope with their own emotions and thoughts. Words used by the participants to describe their parents' reactions were "shocked", "angry" "disappointed", "upset", "pissed off" and "surprised". Anna stated,

Umm, my mum was a bit like "gotta go and get drunk now" [laughs]. But my dad was a bit like, "I told you this would happen" ... She [mum] was a bit shocked and surprised. I don't really, I didn't see her face to face, I just told her over the phone (Anna).

Rochelle said her mum was really upset (although showed support in time), and was really angry at the birth father.

Ah, she [her mother] was really upset, like disappointed. Yeah, but she was really supportive in time, but upset. Really angry at the dad at the time. But they always are. Blamed the dad [laughs] (Rochelle).

In another case the step mother thought the pregnancy was the result of a deliberate scheme. In two cases, the initial reaction from parents was that their daughter should have an abortion. In three cases, adoption was strongly advised by parents, particularly when the young mother did not choose to have a termination, or it was too late to have a termination. Two of the young mother's mentioned their parent's concern about the effect on their education when they were first told about the pregnancy. Anna's dad was concerned about the interruption to her course and Jayne's mother was concerned about the interruption to her schooling.

...the first thing she went to do was look on the internet...about school and what I was gonna do. It was like the first thing she worried about. She was like, she couldn't like get her mind on track at work, it was like all she could think about for ages (Jayne).

Family support during the pregnancy

Four of the young mothers in particular had very good family support during their pregnancy. Once parents were over the initial shock of their daughter becoming pregnant at such a young age, and once they realised that abortion or adoption was out

of the equation, the support they offered was extremely helpful to the young women. Support was offered emotionally, financially and practically. Parents made an effort to ensure their daughters had transport to any medical appointments and had things that they needed for their babies. From the voice of one young mother, it was said,

They [parents] like supported me emotionally, and they umm, they helped me physically I suppose. Like they helped me do a lot of things that I couldn't do because I was pregnant. And financially, they helped financially which was great ... [they were] really good. Like after they got over the shock of me being pregnant (Kelly),

and from another it was expressed,

They [parents] were really good. They took me to the hospital, and took me places, and paid for my doctor's bills (Anna).

Rochelle expressed a level of emotional and practical support from her family. In particular, Rochelle felt that her mother was a strength to her, supporting her decision to continue with the pregnancy and discontinue her schooling. Rochelle's mother, and other family members gave items which were needed for the baby. Rochelle was unable to provide the necessities herself.

Jayne's father was a little distant during the pregnancy, however, Jayne still acknowledged that he has been supportive in his own way. Jayne felt emotionally supported by her dad when he 'stuck up for her' with people who learned of the pregnancy. Jayne speaks very proudly of her parents' emotional, financial and practical support they offered her when she was pregnant.

Umm, well just my dad, he like hasn't gone out of his way that much, but you know, like he'd tell people about it, yeah, and he wouldn't like, he'd always back me up if anyone thought anything different, and my mum has taken me to all the appointments I've had and everything like that and paying for

everything and doing all of that and been a real help with everything (Jayne).

One young mother felt she lacked in family support until the end of her pregnancy. Katrina did not talk much at all about her parent's support during her pregnancy until she was in the very last stages, when her mother was able to come and be with her during labour. Her dad remained distant.

Umm, mum was really good. She, at the end of my pregnancy, she came up for a month to be with me and [partner], you know, to help us through. She was there when I gave birth and things like that, but I didn't have much to do with my dad because of [family issues] (Katrina).

Parental influence on education

Once the young women became pregnant, the educational expectations from parents seemed to somewhat lower in three of the cases. Four of the young mothers conveyed that their parents had no influence on their education during their pregnancy at all, similar to the responses about parental influence on education prior to conception.

Rochelle claims that her mother no longer encouraged her to stay at school or complete her schooling, but supported her decision to leave school and become a mother. Prior to conception, Rochelle's mother had considerable expectations of her completing school and then having a good career in something.

Anna and Katrina both claim that their parents continued to have no influence on their education during pregnancy. Katrina's dad had made her take subjects she was not interested in and therefore did not do well and although Anna's father was concerned about the pregnancy interrupting to her education, and once again tried to encourage her to continue education, this was again no avail.

Umm, well I was doing a course and they're [parents] like, "Oh you're only just starting your course, blah, blah, blah", but umm, they were going to, I was going to try going back to school. My dad was going to help me go back to school, but it didn't really work out (Anna).

Prior to the pregnancy, Kelly's parents had expected her to go to school, but this had no influence. Then during the pregnancy, Kelly felt that education was not even an issue to them anymore. There may be a number of reasons why they did not talk about education at this point, such as their own focus on becoming grandparents. However, it would not be fair to make any assumptions.

Jayne's parents on the other hand, were very clear about their hopes and expectations of their daughter's education, as they had been prior to conception. Jayne's mother did not accept that because Jayne was pregnant, she had to discontinue with her educational goals.

Yeah, my mum had a baby when she was [age], so she kind of understands. But she did a lot more of it by herself. And when she had him she was still doing her [training], and she thinks that because she did it with a baby that I can too... Yeah, well it makes mum think that I can do it [laughs] (Jayne).

Jayne expressed that her parents were very influential in regards to her education throughout her pregnancy, especially her mother. Jayne's parents did not expect her to change her educational direction just because she was having a baby. Jayne's mother was successful with her own education when she had a baby and she expected the same from Jayne. Jayne's own attitudes towards education also made a huge difference to accepting her parent's values. Jayne did not appear to feel pressured by her parents to do something which she felt was beyond her, or that she didn't want to do. Jayne seemed to wholeheartedly agree with her parents values and hopes and she wanted the same thing.

The educational context

As already presented, two of the young mothers were at high school when they became pregnant. Both had very different experiences with the responses of school staff and peers to their pregnancy and both had very diverse feelings and opinions about remaining at school. Jayne remained at school and Rochelle left. Jayne claims that without good support from school staff she would have left school. Rochelle claims that with good support from school staff she would have chosen to stay. Rochelle found that

the initial response of school staff was very negative and she did not feel any support from them at all. Rochelle actually felt undervalued.

They [school staff] were really negative as well. Like a couple of them were really nice, but some of them were like, you know, like just were all really negative. Yer, and told me how young I was and how it would effect my life and stuff...It was just their tone and how they spoke to me. Like they said things to me like, "Well you got yourself into this mess", and it made me feel really stink and like they were looking down on me. They just said things like, "You're just another stupid young girl"... They just think you're just another typical teenage dropout that's going to go and have a baby (Rochelle).

Rochelle also said that teachers were talking behind her back very negatively and not keeping the pregnancy confidential. This is quite a significant issue for adolescent girls who value being able to put their trust in others.

Well I actually knew a teacher who had heard through other teachers that I was pregnant. This is how I knew they didn't keep it confidential. The teacher I knew told me that they were saying things like, "just another typical teenage girl", "dropout", sort of thing (Rochelle).

When I talked more in depth with Rochelle about how all this made her feel she claimed,

It made me feel stink.... it made me feel like I didn't need people like them telling me all that stuff. It made me feel like they were frowning upon me, like looking at me and thinking "just another typical teenage girl", sort of thing (Rochelle).

Some of Rochelle's attitudes towards how school would treat her as a pregnant student were related to past accounts from others. Rochelle talked about a friend of hers who had also become pregnant quite some time earlier and the school tried to talk her into having an abortion and kicked her out. Rochelle claims that this is not an isolated case.

Yeah, and they try to talk you into it. And one girl while I was there, this was when I was in [school year], she was in [school year] and pregnant, and they expelled her and she ended up having a miscarriage. Yeah, because they were really horrible, like and they were giving her a hard time, and then they kicked her out, so yeah, that's happened to quite a few girls (Rochelle).

Rochelle feels that there are no schools that would be supportive of a student who falls pregnant and wants to continue with their pregnancy, although she strongly believes that they should be there as a support.

Yeah, cause they're supposed to be there to help you, not be against you, cause it's not like you get pregnant on purpose... I don't think there are much schools that do ... They don't exactly go, "Well, have the baby and come back to school". They don't just say, "Stay at school while you're pregnant". They just kick you out. But you could stay at school while you were pregnant. Like if you were like in the 6th form or something, and you weren't having your baby until the next year, so you could stay at school so you could get 6th form certificate. But they don't suggest things like that (Rochelle).

Rochelle felt that, although the school could not legally expel a student because of a pregnancy, the school would not be supportive of her to remain at school and continue with the pregnancy.

Yeah, they don't exactly, they can't kick you out just because you're pregnant, but they think they can... They would of just said, "Oh well, if you have the baby then there's no point of being at school" (Rochelle).

Rochelle did not even attempt to remain at school and talk the pregnancy through with school staff. She felt she couldn't even confide in the counsellor because confidentiality would not be kept.

They're [school counsellors] like, "Oh well, we have to (tell others)", and stuff like that. And then they say, like you hadn't told your mum, they go and tell your mum, but like, my mum already knew (Rochelle).

Because of the negative response and the perceived negativity, Rochelle left school without telling them that she was leaving. (As she was 16 years at the time an exemption was not needed.) She felt that the school would try to talk her into having a termination, which is not what she wanted.

I didn't actually tell them [about leaving] until, ah, like I just left and told them. Because they're all like anti and try to like make you have a determination and stuff...So I just left, left within two weeks of finding out I was pregnant (Rochelle).

Jayne had quite a different experience at school when she became pregnant, one which was by far more positive. Initially Jayne thought she would have to leave school because of her school's principles.

Yeah, well I didn't really think I was going to be able to keep going to school, just because of the kind of school it is ... (Jayne).

Jayne actually began to look at completing her 7th form year through correspondence schooling, despite knowing that she would struggle with having the motivation to do her schooling this way. However, Jayne found her school to be surprisingly supportive and she did not feel the need to leave at all.

Umm, I didn't tell them for quite a while ... and umm, I got my Dean, 'cos we [Jayne and her mother] went to ... [name of] school, and thought I'd have to leave because, yeah, and I hadn't seen anyone pregnant there before, and I got correspondence stuff sorted out and we had to get a bit done by my principal. My principal had to fill a bit out and we went to see her about that and she said "You know you can stay here, it's fine, we'll support you through it and everything", and we were like, I was like, "O.K.", and umm, so cause I knew myself, I wouldn't work very well at home by myself. I just

couldn't keep myself doing it well like I would at school, yeah, cause I use the teachers help a lot, so I decided to stay ... and Dean told all my teachers and they were all good. Not all of them said something at first, but they were like, you know, "You're really brave", and that sort of thing, and yeah.

Jayne chose to stay because of the support offered by the school staff. Jayne stated, "They were like really good and stuff, so I just decided to stay" (Jayne). The school have also allowed Jayne to drop one of her subjects and allow her to not attend assemblies, sports days, or anything unrelated to her classes.

As previously stated, three of the young mothers were attending a full-time course when they found out they were pregnant. In Katrina's case, the course staff encouraged her to continue her course work and supported her in her decision to parent. Flexibility was offered.

... my tutor was encouraging and said things like, "You can do it" [the course work], and "it's your decision" [about your education and parenting]. They were really nice, encouraging and understanding ... of the fact that I was pregnant, and they were flexible if I couldn't make it on time, or couldn't come that day. They allowed me to catch up on course work that I'd missed (Katrina).

Katrina found their support exceptionally helpful and completed enough credits to pass the course and leave the course early.

In the other two cases, the young mothers left the course before completion. As one young mother would not have been able to complete the course before her baby was born, she felt there was no point in continuing the course. The course did not encourage her to continue with the course as long as she could and did not suggest any ways in which Anna could still pass the course. Anna stated that she would have considered continuing if they had suggested some way. Anna did not herself ask about any flexibility or options for continuing. In Kelly's case, the course staff were very supportive, particularly one tutor.

Oh yeah, the tutors were really good. The people at my course were really good ... and they were like really supportive ... Oh, and one of the tutors, I'm not that good at spelling, she umm, helped me out with the basics, pretty much helped me out. And that was just for me, no-one else (Kelly).

The course also allowed a degree of flexibility and offered her extra help if she was tired or not feeling well. They also offered her time off, although work still had to be completed by the end of the course. Kelly also had to attend approximately 80-90% of the course to actually pass. Kelly was not offered the option of returning after the birth, although one of the tutors gave her some support in continuing with the course work at home, but without getting a grade at the end.

..It was finished by the time [baby's name] was born, but when I left, like one of the tutors gave me some books so I could practice on the computer at home. She just said, "You can print it off and bring it in when you're finished and I could mark it for you, but not get grades for it (Kelly).

Kelly found that as she was working almost full-time (as she needed the money now that she was having a baby) and would not receive a grade at the end, she did not do any more of the course work.

Peer support and its impact on continuing education

All of the participants spoke of having peer support which they felt was good. Anna felt like her friends were "there for her", and in particular she mentioned a friend who had previously had a baby. Anna was able to learn some parenting skills from her.

Kelly and Katrina said they both found other students on their course very supportive of their pregnancy. Kelly expressed,

"Oh, you're going to be a mum", they'd say things like that. They were like real supportive. I don't think I came across one person that was real negative. It made me feel better that I was having a baby. If people had of said negative things, I probably would have felt a bit sad (Kelly).

The two young mothers who seemed to be most impacted by their peer's responses to their pregnancies Jayne and Rochelle, were both still at school when they found out they were pregnant. Jayne expressed that she had particularly good peer support.

My friends were really good and everyone's been really supportive, and no-one would come up readily and have the guts to ask me anything about it, even 7th formers. They wouldn't come up you know, and umm, they weren't bad or anything. They were like, "Woo, like that's such a big thing", but they're really supportive and understanding of it (Jayne).

Because of this, along with support from school staff and family, Jayne felt fine about staying at school. Jayne was able to continue her schooling without a lot of interruption and without negative feelings of herself or of others.

Rochelle found that that some of her friends were really supportive, but she also experienced gossip and negative comments from other peers at school.

Well, one of my friends, one of my really good friends, well she already had a baby... Umm, she was just like really encouraging, you know, because she's being in the same boat. Umm, and my other friends, like people who I hadn't even spoken to for ages were like ringing me up, and like, "Are you pregnant?", and things like that, and like my best friend she was really good. Like they were really supportive and stuff. But then there was a few girls that were like gossiping about me and stuff ... People I didn't even know were like, "Oh yeah, that girl, she's pregnant"...All negative comments instead of being positive about it (Rochelle).

Because of the gossip, Rochelle initially felt self-conscious and ashamed.

Oh, at first I felt really like ... shamed out. I always tried to hide my stomach [laughs], for like 5 months. I just felt like everyone was talking about me. Like I was a real 'get around' or something, but then I just got over it (Rochelle).

In discussing what could have made things better for her, Rochelle expressed that what she needed was support and understanding from her peers at school.

... If they had just gone about it in a better way, and not gone on about, you know, a termination, and just asking me how I feel, instead of just telling me what I should do. Then you've got more understanding (Rochelle).

For Rochelle, with the gossip amongst peers and the low support from staff, she did not even consider staying at school or returning after the birth. In contrast, Jayne felt supported by peers and school staff, and consequently choose to remain at school and achieve her goal of completing 7th form.

The Impact of Pregnancy on Achieving Educational Goals

Research has shown that pregnancy has interrupted the educational participation of adolescents in some cases (Woodward & Fergusson, 2000: 3; Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 23). In the majority of cases in this study, pregnancy had a significant impact on the motivation for achieving the educational goals held by the young women prior to conception.

Prior to becoming pregnant, the two who were at high school had exactly the same goals as each other - to complete 7th form and then go on to tertiary education. Even when Jayne became pregnant, her educational goals and motivation for achieving her goals, remained exactly the same. Pregnancy did not interrupt her schooling. Initially Jayne thought she would not be able to continue at school because of the pregnancy, due to perceived school reactions, so she enquired about enrolling in correspondence. Jayne felt that pregnancy did not need to hinder her education and believed in her ability to be a student and become a mother.

It [her goal] was just the same. Like just because I was pregnant it didn't mean that things had to change. I could still do my schooling (Jayne).

Jayne was prepared to look at other options in order to achieve her goals, as examined earlier. Her own needs were still very important to her. Due to her school's support (of

both staff and students) she chose to continue with her original plan and remained at school until the baby was ready to be born. During the interview, Jayne expressed, "*Umm, well, I stayed, [day of the week] I went to school and [the same day of the week] night my waters broke*".

In contrast, Rochelle felt she could not complete 7th form because of becoming pregnant. She expressed that she wanted to continue with her education and parent, but at the time she felt she couldn't do both.

Yeah, I couldn't exactly finish school, umm, like being pregnant. I had to leave school. I couldn't umm, keep staying because I was pregnant (Rochelle).

Rochelle left high school within two weeks of finding out she was pregnant. She was 16 years at the time and could make a legal decision to leave school. Rochelle chose mothering over being a student.

For two of the young women who were attending a course, the educational goals they had of completing the course were abandoned. Before Anna became pregnant she wanted to complete her course and then find a job, although her enthusiasm for education seemed low. Anna expressed that she was even less concerned about her education while she was pregnant. Anna left the course she was attending instantly as she felt she was too far through the pregnancy (Anna was about five months pregnant when she found out and as the course was on a break, she would be nearly six months when they started up again).

...cause I started the course half way through it and when everyone else was finishing I was only really just starting. So over the [specific holidays] I had to find a job. So the day before I started my job I found out I was pregnant. So I didn't bother going back to the course. I just carried on with the job for a while, then I left the job (Anna).

Anna expressed that she did not really do anything once she became pregnant. She was 15 years at the time.

I didn't do anything [laughs]. I did have a job at [place of employment], but because I was too far along, pregnant, they wouldn't let me work, so I didn't really do anything ... just stayed in bed all day (Anna).

For Anna, pregnancy interrupted her initial plan to complete the course she was attending, although enthusiasm for education was already being low.

Before conception Kelly wanted to complete her course then find full-time employment. Kelly initially tried to keep her attendance levels up. Kelly expressed that initially, being pregnant gave her the inspiration to want to continue with her course. In her words it was said, "...being pregnant kind of motivated me a bit more" (Kelly). However, because of issues associated with her pregnancy, wanting to be financially prepared to have a baby, and family considerations, Kelly left her course about two months later after finding out she was pregnant. The decision to leave was with some dilemma as she enjoyed the course and had really wanted to pass and gain a qualification, especially now that she was pregnant. Tiredness, which is commonly associated with pregnancy, was a significant factor.

Just keeping on top of my work load and resting as much as I could...I really wanted to do the course, but I was just tired (Kelly).

The participant's energy levels depleted and she was missing a fair amount of the course. Kelly also had other priorities which resulted in more of the course being missed.

...cause I was really tired and I like slept a lot. Umm, I'd sleep until about 11 and then go after that. I'd go for half of it, and yeah, a bit more, or sometimes it would be a bit less...I had to leave because I didn't attend enough, because they only allowed like, I think it was, yeah, to attend 95% of the time. Plus when my [family member] came over I took a lot of days off to spend with him. I also had to go to the midwife quite often, and doctors and stuff (Kelly).

Kelly was also working part-time and increased her hours to almost full-time because she needed the money now that she was going to be a mother.

I and doing my course and it was like too much. And I couldn't do it [the course], like I couldn't work, cause I was working part-time, like everyday of the week pretty much couldn't give up my job because I really needed the money. So I had to give up the course (Kelly).

Although Kelly abandoned her goal of completing the course she was attending, she had not abandoned the idea of education, which will be seen in the next chapter.

Katrina remained focused on her goal to complete her course, with the hope secure a good career when the time is right for her as a mother. Katrina stayed at her course long enough to complete as much as she could and gain as many credits as possible before she gave birth. Katrina completed enough credits two months before her baby was due. This was done despite her tiredness and morning sickness. Katrina remained motivated to achieve her goal, regardless of being pregnant. Being pregnant motivated her to work even harder than before she became pregnant.

Summary

In each of the cases examined the pregnancies were unplanned. For most of the young women, abortion was not something they could go through. Adoption was also out of the question, as their heart feelings of wanting to love and care for their child outweighed any other options. Their decisions were not made in order to please others, but rather they had the interests of themselves and their baby at heart. Despite the overwhelming feelings of shock, fear and not initially feeling ready to parent at this stage in their lives, the young women prepared, with the help of family, and two through antenatal education, to have a baby. Once parents realised the pregnancy was going to continue, in most cases, their support was very evident, in practical, emotional and financial terms, although to varying degrees. One of the young women stood out from the rest in talking about her parents support and influence on the continuation of her education.

Motivation to achieve educational goals, which were formulated before the pregnancy took place, lowered quite significantly for the majority of the young women during pregnancy. Only two continued on with passion and determination to achieve the same

goals they had prior to the pregnancy. Factors evident in the data, which influenced the continuation of education, included support from school/course staff and other students; some degree of flexibility in the school/course content; family support (evident in one case); as well as high personal motivation towards achieving educational goals. Factors which impacted on the discontinuation of education during pregnancy, included lack of school support, including gossip amongst students and staff; lack of enthusiasm; family priorities; and pregnancy related factors, including tiredness, preparing for the baby; not having enough time to complete the course before the baby was due; having to attend pregnancy related appointments; and feeling like education and having a baby could not both be done. One of these mothers, however, attended antenatal classes in preparation for her baby's birth and first few months of life. Her educational focus turned towards preparing for her baby's birth.

In the next chapter, the participants' educational goals and motivational levels since the birth are laid out. Barriers to the continuation of education, as well as the supports and resources which influence the young mothers' in continuing education are also set out. The supports the participants deem are necessary to their educational success (regardless of whether the supports are evident or not) are also taken into consideration, which includes what the participants perceive to be the most ideal educational environment for them as young mothers.

Chapter 7: Since Birth

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the impact of mothering on the educational goals, and motivation towards achieving goals, of the five young mothers interviewed. Firstly, the results of the educational goals and the motivation towards achieving goals are laid out. In particular, expectancy theory, discussed in chapter three, provides the basis for examining the young mothers' educational goals, the perceived reward/s of achieving these goals and their levels of motivation towards achieving these goals since the birth. In the following sections, Bronfenbrenner's (1972) ecological theory is of significance. After educational goals and personal motivation, resources and support systems apparent since the birth are presented, which include microsystem, mesosystem and exosystem links. This is followed by the issues the young mothers face in continuing their education, which have the potential to create obstacles for setting and achieving educational goals. Finally, the findings of the support systems the young mothers feel are needed to achieve their educational goals are set out, which include family; peer/partner; educational; governmental; and community support. The results of 'the preferred educational environment', as defined by the voices heard, are also provided.

Educational Goals and Plans to Achieve Goals

As discussed in chapter three, personal motivation and the 'reward' that is expected from setting and achieving goals, largely influences learning (Fox 1993: 107, 116; Cullen, 2001: 64). When an adolescent becomes a mother, personal motivation towards continuing education and achieving educational goals can lower. The interviews aimed to find out the degree to which educational participation and the motivation towards achieving educational goals was affected, since the birth and in comparison to during pregnancy and prior to conception.

When talking with each of the young mothers about their educational goals since the birth of their baby, each one showed an interest and concern about their education. One has not stopped her education, one is wanting to return to education within the next year, two of the other young mothers would prefer to wait until their child is school age and one wants to wait until her partner has sorted out his career first, also probably when her child is of school age. In comparison to before conception, actual goals and the way

they will be achieved have changed for the majority of the participants. Only one young mother's goals have remained exactly the same.

Once again, Jayne's educational goals remained unchanged: To complete 7th form and then go to university. Jayne has remained a student at her school during her entire pregnancy, and since the birth, has undertaken school work at home. Jayne aims to complete 7th form in this current year. In preparation for university next year, Jayne has booked her child into the university childcare centre. Jayne is unsure as to how childcare and course fees will be paid, but she will be in consultation with WINZ. For the remainder of Jayne's time at school, Barnados home based childcare service will be used for her baby's care.

Before Katrina became pregnant, her goal was to complete a course in order to find employment. The course she was undertaking was specifically chosen in order to gain skills she required to achieve her career goal. Katrina fulfilled her goal before her baby's birth. Katrina still wants to continue on the same career and hopes to have her own business with her partner as a ten year plan.

Yeah, well I'd quite like to own my own business, and because he [partner] wants to become an accountant, I thought we could own an accounting business, and I could become the receptionist [laughs] (Katrina).

Since having a baby, Katrina has decided she would like to continue gaining skills for the career she wants through correspondence schooling. Correspondence schooling has been considered as a practical option now that she is a mother. However, Katrina acknowledges that she does not currently have the motivation to undertake correspondence schooling. Her plan is to undertake further education after her partner has sorted out his own career and when she has saved enough money to cover the course fees and buy a computer. It is expected this will be in about three to four years time.

I need to save for a computer first, but I can't do this until after we have saved enough for [partner] to do an accounting course. Then I will look at doing my course after that, when I'm about 20 or 21 years, but I don't know exactly [the timing] (Katrina).

The other three young mothers seemed more concerned about their education since their baby has been born, in comparison to during pregnancy where educational goals were no longer their focus or priority.

Prior to pregnancy, Rochelle's goals were the same as Jayne's: To complete 7th form and then go on to tertiary education. However, these goals were abandoned once she discovered she was pregnant. Now that her baby is born, Rochelle expressed that education has become more important to her, as she is concerned about her future and the future well-being of her child. Rochelle goal is to complete a course at some stage, rather than return to high school.

Education is in a way more important to me now that I have a child, because of mine and my baby's future. Not so much school though, but a course. I want to do a course at some stage so that I have more opportunities and more behind me for mine and my child's future, so I can get a good job (Rochelle).

Rochelle is unsure of what she wants to do in regards to further education. Rochelle mentioned that she would still like to complete 7th form, but does not see it as a viable option because she is adamant she would not return to high school and correspondence schooling is not something she feels motivated to undertake. Rochelle would like to enrol in a course of some kind once her child is going to school.

Prior to conception, Anna had left school and was attending a course. Once Anna became pregnant she left the course instantly and did not really consider her education at all during pregnancy. After the birth of her baby, Anna began to think about her education more seriously and did consider going back to the high school. However, she expressed that the principal did not give her any encouragement and Anna feels she is not welcome back at the school. Anna is now working with her Case Manager at Work and Income New Zealand, who is helping her to find a course. This is a requirement when receiving the EMA and will be the same for those who go onto the DPB when they turn 18 years.

...Well with WINZ I've got my case manager to help me find a good course to go to, and, yeah, she's helping me out. She's going to ring Unitec and things like that (Anna).

Anna expressed that she would prefer to do a course once her baby is school age, although is unsure of what. Anna feels that her own personal motivation for undertaking a course is high and stated, "*... I've always wanted to go out and do stuff*". Anna's difficulty is finding what she wants to do and she also feels too young at this point and wants to wait until her child is of school age.

Since the birth of her baby, Kelly has become more concerned about her education than before she became pregnant. Initially, after her baby was born, Kelly thought it would be best to go back to high school, rather than correspondence schooling, as she found that she missed mixing with people her own age. Kelly's mother encouraged her to look after her child full-time for the first year.

... I was thinking about doing correspondence some time after she was born, but umm, then ... I thought it would be much better to go back to school, you know, next year. I just thought that doing correspondence would be too lonely. I'd rather associate with other people my age. I wanted to do 5th form and I knew I could this time (Kelly).

Kelly wants to complete high school, then go to university. Kelly says that nothing will stop her from carrying out her goals. She feels a bit nervous, but this is not enough to impact on her motivation.

It is clear that all of the mothers are concerned about their future and the future of their child. Some are more specific than others in their career choice and/or their plan to attain educational goals. Those who seemed unconcerned about their education during pregnancy have come a long way in looking towards their future, even if actual goals are not in place yet.

The expected 'rewards' for continuing education

All five of the young mothers talked about undertaking further education in order to obtain financially rewarding employment. There was a strong impression from the mothers that they do not want to be on a benefit long-term. All of the young mothers felt that if they continued with their education, themselves and their child will benefit to a greater degree than if they do not continue with their education.

Anna expressed that she wants a good job and does not want to be on a benefit long-term. This young mother wants to do a course that can help provide her with a job which pays well. Anna was quite unenthusiastic about her education during her pregnancy, and although she does not have any concrete goal at present, she does have aspirations for the future.

Because I'd rather get a job than sit on the benefit for the rest of my life. Do something everyday than sitting at home. For some motivation ... I'd rather do a course and get a job, than start straight off at MacDonald's (Anna).

Kelly also wants to be successful in a career and have a high paying job. Like Anna, Kelly also does not want to stay on the benefit long-term.

Yer, getting into like a career thing. I want to get a good job, high paying, decent job. I don't just want to be on a benefit (Anna).

Kelly also feels that if you get a good job then it is possible to go out and do more things, on top of being able to buy nice clothing, food and everyday things.

Umm, I want to be successful, and I want to be able to give things to [baby] that I wouldn't be able to do if I didn't go back to school. Like lots of nice clothes, decent clothes, like decent food, and just like everyday things that I wouldn't be able to get if I didn't go back to school. Like you don't need an education to go out and do things, but if you do education, then get a good job, you can have more money to do better things than what you could do if you didn't have a job (Kelly).

Anna also believes that education can provide more leisure activities, which is important to her as a mother. Anna wants her baby to be well stimulated.

Umm, it would be more fun for [baby]. I don't want him to sit around and be bored all day. I'd rather get interesting things for him to do (Anna).

In relation to housing, all the young mothers are assured that they could live somewhere better than if they remained on a benefit or were employed without qualifications. Katrina claims that continuing education would help her and her partner to be able to "save for a house so we didn't have to keep renting". Anna said it is important for her to live somewhere nice "rather than a cardboard box". Kelly also expressed that it is important for her not to be "living in a shack". Education was perceived as the key to suitable housing, because employment opportunities would increase.

Education was also perceived as the key to having good transport. This is particularly important to four of the young mothers. Furthermore, four of the young mothers feel that financial security is important. Katrina in particular linked this with education.

... because if I have good employment because I have done more education, then I can save and have more money to support me and my child (Katrina).

Anna believes that money in the bank is important to fall back on when it is needed. Kelly expressed that she does not want to live 'week to week', but would rather have some financial security. Only Jayne feels that this does not really matter, stating, "I don't really mind if I don't have money. I would still be happy without money". However, Jayne said she would like a house, a car and would like to travel. Jayne feels that her own education will help provide these things.

Two of the young mothers felt that by continuing their education, they would encourage their own child in his/her education. Kelly felt that if the same situation arose for her own daughter in years to come, then her daughter would be encouraged by her mother's effort to continue with her education. Kelly would be a good role model for her child.

I'd be like a good role model. Like if she ended up in my situation, pregnant like me, she'd know I did it, so she could know she could do it as well. It would encourage her to do her education, instead of just leaving it. Yer, I don't really want to be a role model to her, but if it go to that situation (Kelly).

Rochelle acknowledged that children learn from what they see their mothers doing and Anna felt that her own education would encourage her child in his education.

Because it would encourage him and give him encouragement. If you're on a benefit right, all the time, and stay on it and don't want to get off it, then your child's gonna see that. But if like you're out ... like trying to, get somewhere ... they'll see that too, 'cos they learn from you (Rochelle).

None of the mothers felt that their own level of education will have any significant impact on the healthcare they can provide for their child. They did not consider themselves when the issue of healthcare was talked about in the interviews, considering only their child. Anna feels that going to a doctor is a matter of need, not a matter of finances. Anna can also rely on her parent's financial help in the provision of healthcare if it is needed at any point.

I don't see how it [having a good job] can make a difference, because if you have to go to the doctor, you have to go to the doctor. But a more expensive doctor maybe...Yeah, if he needs to go, he needs to go. With those sort of things my parents really help me out if I need it anyway (Anna).

The young mothers feel that because the doctor is free for those under 6 years, their own education would not make any difference. Only one of the young mothers acknowledged that when her child reaches the age of 6 there will be a charge. She also feels that if she had good employment and medical treatment was needed, she would be more likely to be able to afford it.

...because when you get sick, you know, you don't have to have money. When she's older, but at the moment it's free, but like if she needed some surgery or something, I would be able to, yeah, afford it a bit more (Kelly).

Support Systems Evident

Support systems are deemed vital for a young mother in continuing education (Hughes, 2002: 116-117; McDonagh, 2001: 62; *et al*), as discussed in chapter three. The following results are in relation to the level of family, peer/partner, school support and support from parenting services (found within the microsystem of Bronfenbrenner's (1972) ecological model), and the level of governmental support (found within the exosystem of Bronfenbrenner's (1972) ecological model), which is evident in the interview data.

Parental support

In talking with the young mothers it was very obvious that they have each received some form of parental support since the birth of their babies. In some cases the support was most obvious in the very early stages. Katrina's mother was able to be with her during the birth and for one week afterwards.

... Mum was at the birth and the labour and she came [from the place she is living], she was here a week after as well, but then she had to go back because it was [time of the year]. She kept saying that whenever I wanted her to come up she'd come up (Katrina).

Other participants also talked of family support in the very early stages after their baby was born. Rochelle communicated that her mum was a great help when her baby woke up during the night (as they do!).

... [Mum was] really supportive. My mum was really good when I first had him, like she would like get up in the night and help me out and stuff (Rochelle).

Jayne's family have also shown support from the early stages of birth, especially her mother. Jayne expressed that this is what she needed most as a new mother. *"I've got my mum ... who helps me with things"*. Her father is also spoken of favourably. Initially he wanted her to have an abortion, but now he really loves his grandchild. Jayne also talked proudly about the support she receives from her siblings.

And now that he's born, they're [siblings] like really helpful with like doing things, holding him, and will take him after his shower and like dress him, and do heaps and hold him (Jayne).

Katrina found that her child's paternal grandparents have been very supportive financially, which has helped them live on one wage, with a small accommodation allowance from WINZ and family assistance from Inland Revenue. Anna's parents have taken on the role of 'grandparents'. Anna spoke very proudly of this and has found this helpful and a good change since her father's initial reaction.

But now he's [Anna's father] is really good and he takes him for the nights. He's just put his pride aside a bit, cause he tried not to show he cares too much [laughs], but now he's really good, yer, they're both normal grandparents ... they do 'grandparently things'- Take him out and stuff (Anna).

Kelly has found that her parents have continued to provide her with a high level of emotional, practical and financial support as they had during her pregnancy. Support from her family also included educational advice on how to care for her baby as she grows. Because of this, Kelly does not feel she needs further parenting education.

Umm, the support from family and she's [baby] not that bad to handle. She's pretty good. And my mum teaches me a lot of things, as she grows up she teaches me about what to do with her ... I don't really feel like I need to get more help with how to care for her because mum helps (Kelly).

Financially, all of the participants have been helped out by their families in some way. Support has been received through help with purchasing baby items, baby items have

been donated by extended family, medical costs have been met, transportation (for example, to medical appointments) has been provided, as well as daily living costs and personal items. One of the young mothers is totally dependent on her family for financial support. Two others also live at home and are partially dependent on their parent/s. One of these young mothers can provide baby items needed, such as nappies, formula and food, but cannot pay board or cover her own personal needs.

Two sets of parents have remained constant in their educational hopes and expectations for their daughter from before conception, through the pregnancy and since the birth of the baby. Anna's dad has persisted in trying to be influential since the birth, as he had done prior to the pregnancy and somewhat during the pregnancy.

Well, my dad said if I go back to school, he'd still buy me a car. Or I was thinking of doing some courses, but I'd rather wait until he goes to school cause of childcare's so expensive. They still said, you know, "if you do good [with your education] we'll help you (Anna).

At the point of the interview, Anna's dad's encouragement and offer of a very good reward was still to no avail. However, Anna did speak of doing a course in the future. She feels her Dad's support and help will still be there when she decided to do this.

Jayne's parents have also continued to be extremely supportive. They are continuing to pay for her schooling and her mother has gone to school with her to pick up some work to do at home. One of Jayne's siblings also picks up work for her and brings it home.

Two other sets of parents seemed to become concerned again, since the birth, as they were prior to conception taking place, about their daughter's education. Rochelle's mother had wanted Rochelle to have a good education and career before she became pregnant. During pregnancy, as with the majority of the other parents/guardians of the young mothers, Rochelle's mother did not seem to be focusing on encouraging and supporting Rochelle to continue with her education. Since the birth, Rochelle's mother has again encouraged her to study. She has suggested that Rochelle continue her education with the help of a Training Incentive Allowance from Work and Income New Zealand.

Umm, she [her mother] talks about like how I can, when he gets older, I can do courses through WINZ cause they help and stuff, and it's a really good opportunity cause you don't have to umm get a student loan, because they'll pay for it, so...yeah, and you can get money to help out with childcare, but mum said she'll look after him (Rochelle).

Kelly's mother has also been very encouraging and has provided practical support in organising enrolments forms and finding out about childcare options, as Kelly plans on returning to high school next year.

Yep, I plan to go back to school next year and my mum's helping me to organise everything, like childcare and transport and other things (Kelly).

This is in contrast to the lack of educational encouragement the participant felt from her parents' during the pregnancy, as seen in the previous chapter.

Peer support

Two of the young mothers have lost contact with most of the friends they had at school, and one does not see her friends that regularly anymore, except for her friend who has had a baby also. One of these young mothers is slowly making friends with other young mothers. Another young mother has a friend from school who also has a baby. This has provided some encouragement and support with learning how to care for her baby. For two of the young mothers, contact with the birth father is a large part of their social life.

One young mother suggested that a lot of her friends are no longer in contact with her because she has now become more mature than them. Her school friends are still doing the 'immature' things she used to do, which was expressed as going to parties, getting drunk and wagging school. Their interests are now different and they are on different levels socially.

A lot of my friends have ditched me. I think it's just that I'm not as immature as them. All the things they're doing now I've already done (Kelly).

Kelly socialises mostly with the birth father of her baby and on the odd occasion with a couple of friends from high school. As these friends do not have parenting responsibilities, they enjoy a social life that Kelly is now not interested in being part of. Kelly would like to meet other young mothers and has inquired about a mother's group close to where she lives.

The peer context for Anna has changed quite significantly in comparison to before she became pregnant. Anna used to spend a lot of time with her friends outside of school (which was part of the difficulty she had with going to school). Now Anna's life is revolved around caring for her child and socialising with friends is no longer her first priority. This has impacted on the level of contact she now has with friends. It is evident, that Anna is now feeling in need of some 'adult company', as Anna expressed it, instead of 'baby talk all day'. Anna wants to go out and meet some people whom she can relate with, "*instead of sitting around and being bored all day*". Anna expressed that she would like to attend a group where she can meet other young mothers.

For another one of the participants, peer contact also lessened from the time of her baby's birth. Once the baby was born, Katrina didn't have a lot more contact from school friends, although two to three still come and see her occasionally. Before Katrina became pregnant her social life was extremely important to her. Talking excessively during class and going out with friends impacted negatively on her academic achievement levels at school. Katrina is now concentrating on making friends with other young mothers. Katrina also lives with her partner which provides some social stimulation for her.

Only in one case is there evidence of positive peer influence on the young mother's educational participation since the birth. This mother is the only one who was continuing her education at the time of the interview. Four of the young mothers feel that since the birth of their baby, their peers have no significant influence of their education, either positively or negatively. It was felt by three of these participants that friends had a negative influence on education prior to conception.

One young mother has been asked by peers if she is returning to school at some stage. This young mother has no intention of returning. Another young mother is often told by

peers that she needs to "do something". This has no influence at all on the young mother, and she has no specific plan for undertaking education.

Well, everyone's [peers] telling me to do something. I don't really listen to anyone. When the time's right I'll do it. Just a bit young yet (Anna).

Birth father support

There is no evidence of support from the birth fathers which has positively influenced the participants' education, and support in general terms is only apparent in one case. In this case, the birth father completed high school and now works full-time. He financially supports the young mother and his child and they are in a defacto relationship. His parents also offer financial and practical assistance when needed. Work and Income New Zealand top up with an accommodation supplement and Inland Revenue provide Family Assistance.

In the other four cases, the birth fathers do not offer any financial contribution, either in monetary or in material value. One of the birth fathers is unemployed, and is not receiving a benefit because of his age. He cannot offer any financial assistance and the participant did not express any other ways in which he offers support. The young mother is totally supported by her family. His family have made contact with the newborn, although no level of support was evident at the time of the interview. In the other case, the birth father works full-time, although no financial support is offered. Support is provided by looking after his child on a regular basis. He also takes his child to his family home to spend time with his parents.

The other two birth fathers are not in a relationship with the birth mothers, although they do have contact. They both have full-time employment, but contribute little financially or practically. One of these birth fathers sees his child about once every week. He will contribute financially if the participant asks him, however, she usually does not ask. There was no mention of any support from the birth fathers' family.

School support

Only one of the young mothers was continuing her education at the time of the interview. As previously stated, this young mother remained at high school throughout her pregnancy. The school showed support towards the participant remaining at school, by allowing her time away from school; by organising work to be sent home while the participant was at home with her new born; by allowing her to drop one subject; and by ensuring the participant feel welcome to come back as a student mother. This young mother planned to physically return to school at approximately 6 weeks after the birth.

Parenting education

Since the birth, three of the participants have been involved with Parents As First Teachers (PAFT) as a way of being educated about their child's development, ways in which they can be 'educators' to their babies as they grow, and general information and help on how to care for a child. A PAFT worker comes into their home once a month. The three young mothers who have been involved with PAFT, all feel quite confident as mothers and feel that PAFT meets their educational needs in relation to parenting and child development. One young mother expressed,

Well because I've never had a kid before I don't know what to expect from that sort of age. It sort of gives you a hint of like what things you can do at that age, or what things you can help then with, and stuff like that. Like if they're teething and what to do, or if you don't have much money they teach you how to make a toy. All that sort of stuff, just everything (Anna).

The PAFT worker's ability to relate ways in which the young mother can meet her child's developmental and educational needs was talked about by one of the participants.

Yeah, and she comes over with the toys, and you know, for that age group and tells you a bit about the mind and that, but that's a bit above my head, but like the toys that stimulate their minds, like I didn't know that they couldn't see black and white until like 6 like months until she came over. So it's quite interesting [laughs] ... Umm, it just was the toys and umm and the understanding what she can learn at the age. Like I don't know, when I first found out I was pregnant, you just assume, you know, that babies don't have

to learn to laugh and things like that....it was just so interesting that you see the stages as they grow up. And she's given me this booklet of umm, you know, from 3 to 5« months of what they should be doing and helping them get along for that. Yer, so that's real interesting....Like with the mirror and things, and I didn't know that a mirror was good for them, and they can talk away and pretend that it's another, you know, thinks it's another baby, but it's actually not, it's themselves [laughs] (Katrina).

Katrina is also part of a young mother's group which provides parenting support and education.

Rochelle, who is not involved with PAFT, expressed that she feels she needs to learn further parenting and life skills. She has joined a young mother's group and is hoping that will provide her with some further parenting skills.

One of the participants is not undertaking any form of parenting education. However, she conveyed that she feels very confident as a mother, largely due to her mother's help in learning how to care for her baby, despite being scared to begin with. This young mother appeared very capable as a mother when I met with her. Her baby was clearly her first priority and she was confident to meet her baby's needs. Her child responded well to the mother's care.

Government assistance currently received

Four of the young mothers are currently receiving some form of government assistance. Three of the participants live at home, one flats and one lives with her partner in a defacto relationship. Two are receiving the Emergency Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from WINZ, one of whom is receiving the 'Living at Home' EMA and one is flatting and receiving the full EMA amount. These two young mothers are also receiving Family Assistance from Inland Revenue. Another one of the young mothers receives an Accommodation Supplement, also from WINZ, and Family Assistance from Inland Revenue. This young mother lives with her partner who works full-time.

Two of the young mothers who live at home do not receive any WINZ benefit because of their parent's income. However, one of them receives Family Assistance from Inland

Revenue and initially received Paid Parental Leave for 12 weeks after she left work, also from Inland Revenue. The other young mother does not receive any government assistance and did not know about Inland Revenue's assistance to families.

Barriers To Continuing Education

Learning theory claims that a number of internal and external factors influence learning and can hinder the continuation of education (Alexander & Murphy, 1988, cited Cullen, 2001: 65). There are a number of significant issues which the young mothers expressed that have the potential to hinder continuing education, such as being unsure of what to study; childcare and transportation issues; lack of finances; the age of their child; and the impact of mothering responsibilities. Gilligan's (1982, cited Seifert & Hoffnung, 2000:473) 'ethic of care' perspective provides an understanding that adolescent women are moving from being egocentric to caring more about others. The very role of mothering can have a significant impact on an adolescent mother's development. Some of the young mothers are prepared to work through potential obstacles and formulate plans to undertake further education and achieve their goals, while others want to wait until their child is school age.

Low self-efficacy?

None of the young mothers expressed that low self-efficacy was an issue for them in continuing education. Each conveyed that they would like to complete a course at some stage and any obstacles expressed were not concerned with the way they felt about their ability to continue with their education, or their self-belief in being able to be successful. When the young mothers were asked in the interviews if their own academic ability, or feelings of past school results, was an issue for them in achieving educational goals and making educational plans, not one expressed any concern in this area. It is other factors which present as obstacles, which will now be set out.

Childcare Concerns

Four of the young mothers expressed that they would prefer not to leave their child in the care of someone else. All the young mothers expressed strongly that having someone they can trust is the most significant issue for them. Regardless, three of the participants said that they still would make childcare arrangements in order to undertake education.

Kelly expressed her feelings of not wanting to be apart from her child, although she has plans on using Barnados' home based childcare service next year when she goes back to school and then on to university. Kelly also stated that it is good that she can be cared for while she continues her education because then she can concentrate on her work and not be distracted.

I'd have to trust them. It couldn't just be anyone, but umm, it feels good that I don't have to take her because I would just like put all my thoughts onto her, but like, I don't really want to leave her with someone else for a week. I like spending my time with her (Kelly).

Kelly would prefer to use the university daycare where she hopes to study after completing high school. However, Kelly expressed that she cannot afford this.

Umm, probably be a crèche where I could drop her off in the morning and pick her up afterwards, because I would be close to her if something happened. The most suitable would be the daycare at [name of] university. But it's too expensive (Kelly).

Kelly says she cannot afford the \$180 per week she would have to pay for the university day care. WINZ would only supplement a small amount of this with a Childcare Subsidy. Kelly will only need to pay \$1 per hour using the Barnados home based Childcare Service. This is quite a significant difference to the university childcare.

Jayne also does not want to leave her child in care, but like Kelly, she's prepared to so that her education can be continued. She will be using the Barnados home based childcare service while she attends school, and then will use the university day care. Jayne prefers for of her child to be on the same site when she studies.

Not too keen on it [leaving her child in care], but I will. It has to be done, so it has to be done. Yeah, I just have to do it. If I didn't have to I wouldn't. I'd rather not leave him, but it'll only be for four weeks anyway, and then I go to uni next year. There's a childcare place there and I'll be using that (Jayne).

Rochelle is also very concerned for the well-being of her child and would prefer a family member to take care of her child, although feels a 'good' childcare centre would be fine once her baby is older.

Probably like a family member [to take care of child]. If he was older, like about 4 or something, he could go to daycare, as long as it was like, you know, a really good one (Rochelle).

Rochelle's main concern is that her child is left with someone she can trust.

As long as I leave him with like someone I can trust that I know he's safe with, it's all right (Rochelle).

Katrina does not want to leave her child in the care of someone else. She wants to be there to see her child's development in every way.

No! I do not like that idea at all. I don't want to miss out on new things that my baby does, like the new foods she tries and everything (Katrina).

Katrina expressed that she would only consider undertaking an educational course, outside of the home, if childcare was on the same premises.

Transportation

Only one young mother expressed that, unless transport was provided for her, she knows she would not attend a course.

Transportation would stop me from going to a course because I don't have a license and a bus is hard work with a baby. I just wouldn't do it (Katrina).

This young mother has hopes of enrolling into correspondence schooling at some stage in the future, so that transport will not be needed.

Four of the young mothers expressed that the provision of transportation would be an incentive to continuing education, although they do not feel that lack of transportation

would be an issue that would prevent them from attending a course. As Anna stated, "*There's always a bus*". It seemed apparent that these young mothers would find a way to get to where they needed to go. Kelly has already made transportation arrangements for next year when she goes to university.

Finances

Only one of the young mothers expressed that finances would be an obstacle to continuing her education. This young mother is adamant that she will not borrow to do further education as she does not want to be in debt at all.

It's not a major, but I would not get a student loan to do a course. I don't like the idea of that, of paying back all that money. If I did a course it would need to be paid for somehow, either by WINZ or by saving enough money myself (Katrina).

Katrina is not entitled to a TIA as she is supported by her partner. Saving for her education is likely to take some time. Three of the young mothers plan to use a TIA to undertake any further education and will also apply for a student loan for any extra that they need. One of the young mothers will be in consultation with WINZ, for assistance with her plan to go to university next year.

Mothering responsibilities

All of the participants acknowledged that their time is very much taken up with childcare responsibilities. This significantly impacts on their thoughts towards continuing education. Katrina stated, "I know how hard it is to have a baby and do education at the same time. Although Katrina has not done both, she knows what it is to be a student and she knows what it is to be a mother. As her mothering role is very much full-time, like all the mothers interviewed, the thought of fitting in education is overwhelming. Time is the most significant factor, which impacts on the educational plans and hopes of these young mothers.

Katrina expressed that because of the responsibilities of mothering, along with her effort to make a little extra money, she does not have the time to continue her education at this point.

I don't have enough motivation at the moment. I'm looking at getting started into baking and me and a friend have started knitting. We're like going to make baby things and sell them at the market. Have a stall, and with all the baby stuff as well, I just wouldn't have the time (Katrina).

Anna expressed that she thinks the hardest thing about studying will be finding the time: “... not having enough time to do everything. Not enough hours in the day”..

For Kelly also, the most significant issue for her in considering further education is feeling like there is not enough time to be a mother and a student.

... time to study, go to school, spend time with [baby], eat, and like, just how hard the work would be. Because I reckon it would be quite hard (Kelly).

Rochelle also feels that being a mother impacts on her motivation to continuing her education at this point. She finds that having enough time and being tired are two significant issues. Jayne also expressed that the hardest thing for her about studying as a young mother is also finding the time.

Umm, time. Finding the time, and him taking up so much of it, and lack of sleep. Having time to do everything, to study, to look after baby (Jayne).

However, as already examined, Jayne has continued with her education throughout her pregnancy and since the birth.

From talking with these mothers, it became apparent that the hardest thing for these mothers in considering further education is finding enough time in their day to be a mother and a student. Tiredness is a major factor, as it was during pregnancy

Supports Required to Continue Education

As in the literature review (see chapter two), the young mothers interviewed all expressed how much support is vital to their success in continuing their education.

Family support vital

All of the young mothers expressed how important it is for them to have good family support. Family support is required for financial help, childcare and for encouragement. When talking with the participants about the level of family support that they do have (presented earlier in this chapter), the majority felt their families were extremely supportive. Only one seemed to lack in family support, yet she expressed that family support is vital to her when she chooses to continue her education.

When talking with Jayne, she feels that she needs family support to continue, if she is to be successful in continuing with her education and achieve her goals. Kelly expressed that she needs support from her family more than from anyone else.

Myself: So what kind of support do you need to be able to be successful in your course?

Kelly: Just help with [baby], money support of course, and just people cheering me on kind of thing. Do you know what I mean?

Myself: Like encouragement "you can do it", sort of thing.

Kelly: Yer, like encouragement from my family and friends, especially from my family (Jayne).

Like Jayne, Katrina and Rochelle said they both need family for encouragement and childcare. When talking with Katrina she stated, "I need my family to tell me I can do it, and maybe a help with baby sitting". It was expressed by Rochelle that she would also need family for encouragement and childcare, as well as for financial support.

Yeah, support, like someone to look after your baby, your child, so that you can go and do that [further education] and like to encourage you, and yeah, and even like financially if you needed some help (Rochelle).

Anna also needs encouragement from her family and financial help as well. Anna is assured her parents would help.

Yeah, I need my family for helping me along and encouraging me, and also to like help financially with course costs. They would help if I needed it (Anna).

The importance of peer/partner support

Four of the young mothers felt that although peer support would be good, they do not need it to continue with their education successfully. These young mothers did not talk of any positive peer influences prior to pregnancy in regards to their education. It is likely that they do not see any reason for peers to make a difference now or in the future. Only one of the participants feels that peers will make a significant difference to her education.

Yeah, like it's important to have my friends there to help me. This will make a big difference to my study. The fact that I'm not by myself and trying to do it alone.... (Jayne).

This young mother had good peer support prior to pregnancy and she said she would not have continued at school during her pregnancy or after the birth without it.

Three of the young mothers communicated that support from their partner is also important. Two in particular were specific about what kind of support would be needed. Jayne needs her partner's help particularly with childcare.

... also from my boyfriend. I need his help to like look after baby. Just the fact that he's there and part of his [baby's] life, and to look after him would help me out, otherwise it would be another problem that I'd have to worry about (Jayne).

Katrina also expressed that she would need her partner's help, understanding and financial support.

...I would need him [partner] to be understanding about how hard it is to study and have a child, and I would need his help, and definitely financial support (Katrina).

Governmental support required

Four of the mothers intend to receive the DPB once they turn 18 years. Their case manager from WINZ will be required to formulate an educational and employment plan with them. This will be done on a yearly basis. One young mother hopes to receive something extra from WINZ when she turns 18. She currently receives an Accommodation Supplement and lives with her partner and will not be entitled to the DPB.

Help from the government to continue education is hoped for by all of the participants. Three of the young mothers plan on receiving a Training Incentive Allowance (TIA) from WINZ to assist with course fees if they undertake any education. Two of these mothers have a specific educational plan where one said she will apply for a TIA. The other young mother, who also has a specific plan to go to university next year, is unsure how she is paying for her course. She has not thought about this yet, but will be talking with WINZ once she is 18 years. The two participants both intend on applying for a childcare subsidy.

School/tutor support needed

It is important for the young mothers to have some kind of support from tutors if they were undertaking education. Katrina would need flexibility from tutors and feels that correspondence schooling would offer this. Jayne, who is currently enrolled in high school, expressed that it is the school's understanding and support which has made the difference to her continuing at school. Kelly, who is returning to the same high school she left when she was 15 years (prior to conception), expressed that it is important to her that teachers understand that she does have mothering responsibilities, although she does not want to use this as an excuse to not complete work. It would be helpful to Kelly if teachers understood that sometimes the tasks and responsibilities of mothering get in the way of completing work. Kelly wants them to understand that if she does not complete her work on a particular day, that it is not because she is being unconcerned about her work.

Yep, like that shouldn't, I couldn't use that as an excuse [being a mother], but they [tutors] have to understand that if I can't finish something that day, that it's because I do have other things to worry about, not just like sports activities, or something like that, something that you just want to do (Kelly).

Anna would like to know she can have extra help if it is needed so that she is successful in her education. Rochelle specifically mentioned that there may be times when help with transport could be good.

Because it always helps if you like your teacher or whatever, and they'd be like supportive of you, and it makes you feel better. Yer, even if like you couldn't, if you had trouble getting there and that, they could come and pick you up. Even that would be like good. Just anything (Rochelle).

Careers advice/mentoring

Two of the young mothers felt that help from a careers advisor would be beneficial in sorting out what they would like to do. Both these young mothers said they would like to do a course in order to find good employment once their child is of school age, but have no idea of what they would like to do. Another one of the young mothers has considered phoning a particular agency which offers careers advice, but she feels it is better for her partner to sort out his career first.

Two of the young mothers expressed that it would be helpful to them to have someone who helped them through their education with goal setting, advice, and practical help. It was conveyed that someone to act as a role model and mentor would be beneficial because of how hard it is to be a young mother and undertake education. A mentor would be someone to give parenting, educational and goal setting support. These two mothers are the ones who would like to go to a course, but are unsure of what they want to do at this stage.

The three who are clear on their educational goals, at least in part, feel that they would not need this kind of support. One young mother expressed that her mother is like her mentor who is helping her to organise her education, teaches her about how to care for her child as she develops and supports her financially and emotionally.

The Preferred Learning Environment

Through conversation, the type of educational programme or environment that the young mothers each felt would be most ideal for them was explored. Each of the five young mothers felt it would be beneficial in some way to be able to continue their education with other young mothers. The most common reasons were for support, understanding, being with others in the same situation, for making friends, and being able to talk about common things. However, two expressed that they would not use a specific educational service for young mothers because it would not fit in with the educational goals that they have. Although Jayne feels that studying with other young mothers has its advantages, she feels that her school is able to meet her educational needs.

...Like you'd understand each other more and, you know, maybe be more helpful towards each other if anyone needed something... but I would probably not [use this kind of service], cause I'm, it's my teachers. I've known them the whole time I've been at school and different teachers definitely have different ways of teaching and stuff and different techniques, and so I'd notice that I might not get it as much and all that sought of thing (Jayne).

Like Jayne, Kelly could see some benefits socially to studying with other young mothers, although she too does not feel it would meet her educational needs.

It would be good to meet people my age with babies, and be learning at the same time. It would be like school, but without all the school trouble, but I don't really need it. Umm, it would be good to like meet some friends. People would be easier to talk to. They don't talk about stuff that people my age without babies, do you know what I mean, like "I went to this party last night and I got drunk". We can talk about the same things, but it wouldn't help my education. I'd rather do a course because it's what I want to do, not because of who else is in the course (Kelly).

Anna, Rochelle and Katrina expressed very strongly that they would be interested in an educational programme particularly for young mothers where they could continue with their education. Katrina's plan is to do correspondence when she can afford it, but when considering an ideal educational environment for her, Katrina expressed that she would prefer to study with other young mothers and be able to make friends.

I'd rather study with others than do correspondence, so I can get out of the house...I could also make new friends, who had kids as well, so we would have something in common and things to share and talk about (Katrina).

Anna said she would also like to study with other young mothers. This way she said she'd be with "other people on my level, instead of other teenagers who do not have babies". Rochelle expressed that she would like to be part of an educational programme for young mothers "'cos you'd feel like you've got support - other people in the same situation as you and things in common".

Rochelle was the only young mother who felt she needed further parenting and life skills education and she expressed that it would be beneficial to be able to learn more about parenting and complete her basic schooling at the same time, in the same place.

Three of the mothers feel that flexibility within a course is of high importance, because of their childcare responsibilities. Rochelle used this as an example of the difficulties in being a mother and how hard it would be to actually continue education as a mother. Katrina also talked about how childcare responsibilities impact on being able to continue education within a structured programme. Anna conveyed that she would need flexibility because of the time factor.

I'd need a flexible course so I have time to myself, time for [child], and I have to study, and I have time to do my course [laughs] (Anna).

Summary

The responsibilities of mothering have presented as both having a positive influence on thoughts towards attaining educational goals and as an obstacle. It is clear that all of the participants are concerned about their future and the future of their child, as the voices of the young mothers expressed their hopes to undertake education, in order to have better life opportunities for themselves and their children. The participants who seemed unconcerned about their education during pregnancy have come a long way in looking towards their future, even if actual goals are not in place yet. Some are more specific than others in their plan to attain educational goals so they can secure good employment. For the majority, however, factors are evident which hinder the continuation of education, such as the responsibilities of mothering, childcare, financial and transportation issues, and personal direction. Three of the young mothers aim to undertake further education when their child goes to school (at the age of 5 years), while two have immediate plans in place.

All of the young mothers expressed their need for support in being successful in continuing their education and achieving educational goals, especially family support. In the majority of cases, family support seems good. Peer support was expressed by one young mother as important to continuing education. This young mother is the only one to express a positive experience of peer influence which has impacted on her decision to continue at school. One young mother expressed that partner support is vital to her education when she chooses to continue. This young mother is supported by her partner. In each of the other cases, partner support is minimal. Other support which was talked about in the interviews was governmental support, hoped for by each of the young mothers; careers advice, in which a need for this was expressed by two young mothers; mentoring, which was expressed as something which could be beneficial by these same two young mothers; and three expressed that a flexible, supportive, educational programme specifically for young mothers would be beneficial for them in meeting social, emotional, practical and educational needs. These three young mothers do not have any specific educational plans in place.

This chapter, along with the previous two, have laid out the findings of the interviews with the aim to meet the research objectives set out at the onset of this thesis. The findings have been presented in chronological order. The following chapter presents the findings of the questionnaire data, not with the aim of critiquing, contradicting or confirming the interview material, but with the aim of highlighting strengths and weaknesses in the responding schools ability to meet the needs of pregnant students and young mothers. Together with the interview results, it is hoped that recommendations can be made, which if acted upon, the future for young mothers on the North Shore may be enhanced.

Chapter 8: The Level of Support Offered in North Shore High Schools

Introduction

The Association of Women Educators (2003: 3) contends that adolescent mothers have the right to continue their education and develop skills to find rewarding employment, in a flexible and responsive school environment. As already discussed, the school context of an adolescent's life is found within the microsystem of an ecological model (Lerner, 2002:50; Frydenberg, 1997: 19; Muuss, 1996b: 322). In this chapter, the results of the questionnaires are laid out, leaving the analysis to the final chapter, where literature for chapters two and three will be used for a critical discussion. Firstly, this chapter acknowledges the respondents and the ethnic distribution of the schools represented. Secondly, pregnancy, parenting and the rates of those who return to school after giving birth, since 2001, are provided. Thirdly, the respondents' perceptions of a link between pregnancy and educational underachievement are set out. This is followed by the findings of the ways in which the responding schools support the pregnant student, and the ways in which the practical needs of young mothers are met within the schools to encourage the continuation of their schooling.

The Respondents

Of the 11 questionnaires which were sent out to North Shore high schools, 4 completed questionnaires were filled in by high school guidance counsellors and returned. I also spoke with one counsellor via the telephone. This conversation did not follow the questions in the questionnaire, although the discussion was still related to the level of support offered to young mothers in the high school the counsellor was from. The guidance counsellors who replied have been in their position from a range of 3« years to 10 years. Three of the counsellors are female and two are male. One of the counsellors noted that the information provided was mostly an assumption, as there have not been pregnant students who have continued with the pregnancy for a number of years.

Since it is a number of years since a girl has become pregnant and decided to continue with the pregnancy, a lot of the information is an assumption.

Each of the schools had a majority of New Zealand European students enrolled. The percentage of New Zealand European students ranged from 63 to 79 percent of the total school population. (The sample group in the interview stage of this research, was partly chosen because of the high percentage of New Zealand European adolescents of school age in the North Shore City area).

Pregnancy and Parenting Rates

From the questionnaire data, the total number of students who have become pregnant since 2001, that the counsellors are aware of, is twelve. Five continued with the pregnancy and decided to parent. The questionnaire data shows that during 2003, up until the date the questionnaire was filled in, there have been five pregnancies within the responding schools that the counsellors are aware of. Two of the schools have had two students become pregnant, and one school has had one pregnancy. Out of these five students, only 1 carried her baby to full-term and choose to parent. This student is of New Zealand European ethnicity. The counsellor I spoke with over the phone was not able to give me a pregnancy rate within the school, but the counsellor did say that one student became pregnant recently and decided to continue with the pregnancy.

In 2002 there was a total of only two pregnancies represented in the questionnaire data. Two schools said they had one student become pregnant. One of these students continued with the pregnancy and chose to parent. This student is also of New Zealand European ethnicity. In 2001 there were five pregnancies recalled in the questionnaires. One school counsellor recalls three pregnancies, and one recalls two. Of these pregnancies, two chose to carry the baby to full-term and parent. One of these students is New Zealand European and one is Maori. The pregnancy rate has been kept low in this particular school as the students are referred to a nearby clinic which provides the morning after pill, contraceptives and will assist students in going for a termination if they so choose. Although there have been some abortions over the past few years, it is believed that the number of students having abortions has been kept low because pregnancy is being avoided to begin with.

None of the students represented in the questionnaires who became pregnant and chose to parent their baby, returned to school after the birth. One counsellor noted that

pregnant students usually leave before the pregnancy is obvious. This counsellor is unsure as to whether this is encouraged by the school's principal or decided by the student or her parents/guardians.

...Girls usually leave before the pregnancy becomes obvious. As discussion about their attendance while pregnancy occurs between the principal, student and parent/caregiver, I'm not sure whether this is encouraged [leaving before the pregnancy becomes obvious] or if it is the student's or parent's choice.

In one of the cases, a pregnant student wanted to return to school after the birth. However, the school did not accept her back because of past behaviour at school. Pregnancy and mothering was not the school's reason for non-acceptance. The counsellor stated that there have been no other young mothers apply to return to school and definitely none with toddlers.

Pregnancy and Educational Underachievement

School counsellors were asked if they have noticed any links between pregnancy and underachievement within their school. Four of the counsellors said they have. One counsellor recalled a student who became pregnant when she was 13-14 years, and left the school instantly. This had a negative effect on other students who then become truant to go and spend time with the student who had left. The counsellor stated that there was a risk of others also becoming pregnant, and without the school knowing.

Yes, [a] student who did have baby was 13-14 and left straight away... Other students then experience truancy...moving right away from school to spend time with others who left...and may then get pregnant and we [the school] wouldn't know.

Another counsellor wrote that students who become pregnant, whether they choose to continue with the pregnancy or not, often miss school early on in the pregnancy, due to coming to terms with the pregnancy, pregnancy related sickness and grief issues.

Yes, missing school in early stages of pregnancy due to shock, grief, morning sickness. Plus time missed and grief issues for girls who terminate their pregnancies.

Another counsellor claims that recent cases where there has been an observed link between pregnancy and educational underachievement, represent half the cases. There have been five known cases of pregnancy within this school in the past three years. In addition, this counsellor noted that she believes there have been previous cases of Pacific Island students who have become pregnant and a link has been noticed between their pregnancy and their levels of educational achievement.

Not while I have been there, but in the past I believe there have been a higher number of Polynesian girls who have become pregnant and who would have been considered underachievers. Recent cases would be 50/50.

This counsellor has acknowledged that this is not something she has observed since she has been at this school. Pacific Island students are not represented in the number during the past three years of those who have become pregnant and chosen to parent. As already laid out in this chapter, in the past three years, since the counsellor has been working at this school, there have been five pregnancies that the counsellor is aware of. Three carried their baby to full-term and choose to parent. One is Maori and two are of New Zealand European ethnicity.

Another counsellor offered an opinion about the link between pregnancy and educational underachievement, as a general statement rather than what has been observed in the school. It was claimed that those who have become pregnant and have chosen to parent are underachievers before conception. It was said by one counsellor that pregnant students tend to come from dysfunctional families and a baby gives them someone to love, to make up for what the student did not have. Pregnancy is the excuse to leave school as they were already underachieving in their education.

Those who have become pregnant and kept their babies are underachievers before conception. They often come from dysfunctional families and having a baby is their opportunity to give love and attention to a baby and make up

for love they didn't receive as a child. They tend to have not being getting much out of their education and were really "dropping out", once they became pregnant.

This counsellor also claims that those who are motivated towards their schooling, and want to establish a career, tend to choose to have an abortion if they become pregnant.

Supporting the Pregnant Student

The schools offer the pregnant student support in a variety of ways, including referral to outside services, practical support, counselling and talking with parents/guardians. In one school a pregnant student would be talked to about what she wants to do and supports would be put in place.

Should we have a pregnant teen we would endeavour to put support in place - through discussion sort out what was needed.

This school has had five pregnancies that the counsellor is aware of since 2001, none of which have resulted in births.

The questionnaire data also informed the research that in one school, counsellors and Deans work hard in the event of pregnancy to give all the support needed to any pregnant student. It is noted that parents are also given support.

[The school will] support parents and pregnant women in whatever decision they make to follow through with [the] pregnancy or not, and giving support throughout the process and beyond of counselling, practical, emotional support ... In the event of pregnancy the counsellors and Deans would work hard in this respect.

Referral

Three of the counsellors informed me that part of the school's processes in handling a known pregnancy is by referring to appropriate services. Two of the schools said they refer pregnant students to the doctors (one said to the family doctor) and/or Family

Planning. One counsellor said the school will refer to the Epsom Day Clinic also, which offers abortions. Another counsellor asserted that the school refers to a clinic nearby which is operated by the Public Health and Family Planning. Year 11 and 12 students can attend the clinic any time without an appointment, and year 9 and 10 students need an appointment. The clinic offers contraceptive advice, contraception, pregnancy tests, and the morning after pill. Parents are not consulted without a student's permission, as all student contact remains confidential.

Involving parents/guardians

In addition to referral and assisting pregnant students to appointments, it is clear that all the schools who responded prefer to have parental/guardianship involvement. Four school counsellors communicated that parental involvement is encouraged, but ultimately this requires the student's permission. One counsellor mentioned that parental/guardian involvement is encouraged "to a great extent, especially if the student is under 16". It is difficult to determine if this is with the student's permission or without. Another counsellor stated that parent/guardian involvement is "always encouraged but the student has the control over who is told and when". Another counsellor maintains that part of the school's process in handling the pregnancy is to strongly encourage pregnant students to inform parents/guardians and every endeavour is made to ensure this happens.

Strongly guiding them to reveal their pregnancy to parents is supported ... [Parental involvement is encouraged] a great deal: Not manipulating to tell but certainly every avenue is followed to try to encourage the client to share with parents.

It was also stated by another counsellor that a pregnant student is strongly encouraged to tell her parents and have them involved in any decision making.

Parental involvement is highly encouraged although this may not be the preference of the young woman. I work very hard for permission for parents to be informed both of the pregnancy and involved in the decision as to whether to continue with the pregnancy or not.

Counselling is also provided to the student and to parents/guardians, which can help with decision making.

[Pregnancies are] dealt with entirely by the school counsellor who will assist with appointments, communicating with parents/caregivers if required and counselling throughout the process.

It was stated by another counsellor that discussion takes place between the young woman, the principal and parents/guardians. It is not said whether this is with the student's permission. In this meeting, school attendance during the pregnancy is discussed. The counsellor noted that pregnant students usually leave before the pregnancy becomes noticeable, as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Peer reactions

I asked school counsellors about how they have found the reaction of other students when a student has become pregnant. Three responses to this were given. In two cases, the response from students has, in the past, been quite negative. One counsellor stated that this is usually because it seldom happens. However, it does also depend on 'who' the student is and her level of popularity.

As it happens so rarely it's usually a big scandal and whispered about behind backs. Depends quite a lot on how popular the girl was before she became pregnant.

Another counsellor commented that students can be quite critical of a pregnant student.

Probably quite judgmental towards the pregnant young woman - unsure about young student mothers - perhaps the girls would display some maternal compassion once they saw the baby.

One school counsellor had a more positive remark and claims that other students have been supportive of pregnant students, stating: *"Those few that have known have been very supportive indeed"*.

Educational planning and goal setting

The questionnaire included a question on whether educational planning and goal setting is offered to pregnant students or young mothers. Four questionnaires stated that this is provided by the counsellor. In two of these schools, the Dean, the Transition teacher, or subject teachers, may also work through an educational plan with the student.

Alternative education

A question on the forms of alternative education that are advised in the event of a pregnancy was included. Two of the schools did not find this question applicable. One of these schools has not had any students continue with a pregnancy in the past three years, that the counsellor is aware of, and the other school has had one. Two of the school counsellors expressed that correspondence schooling is encouraged. One said the school would firstly encourage a pregnant student to continue her education at the school.

The school would encourage the young woman to continue her education here as long as she was able to ... We would arrange for her to enrol in correspondence school if she were unable or unwilling to continue at school.

In addition to encouraging correspondence schooling, one counsellor stated that a high school programme offered specifically for young mothers, which is opening in 2004 in another Auckland area, will be encouraged.

Usually correspondence lessons [are encouraged], although now Auckland Girls Grammar is opening a special class for young returning mothers. I will suggest this as an alternative as well.

A Written Policy?

High school counsellors were asked if their school has a written policy on pregnant students and student mothers. A written policy may in fact provide guidelines in encouraging pregnant students to remain at school and complete their education (The Association of Women Educators, 2003: 1). This will be discussed in the final chapter.

None of the responding schools do. One counsellor noted that there is probably no written policy because pregnant students usually leave the school.

Each case is treated individually - there's nothing really set down, probably because most pregnant students in the past have left.

Following-up students who leave

Counsellors were asked about their school's follow-up system or policy for students who become pregnant and leave the school. Three of the schools have an informal policy where the counsellor, or whoever was the closest to the young woman, will keep in contact with the student once her baby is born. One counsellor said the staff member who was the closest to the student "*will inquire about the health of mother and child and what their plans are*".

One counsellor also keeps in close contact with others who are close to the young mothers, who may need support and/or counselling.

[The] counsellor keeps in close contact and also counsels, supports her friends, partner who may be the child's father.

An example was offered by one of the counsellors who noted that a young woman, who left the school to have a baby some time ago, was visited by the counsellor and given information about Parents as First Teachers. This has not been done in recent years as the school has not had any students become pregnant and continue with the pregnancy that the counsellor is aware of.

Meeting a Young Mother's Practical Needs

Childcare

Counsellors were asked about childcare facilities either within the school or within walking distance. As childcare is a very important issue for young mothers (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12; Bissell, 2000: 3; The Depart. of Health, 1990: 34), it is helpful to know if schools are able to meet this need. This issue was also discussed over the phone with one of the counsellors. None of the responding schools have a childcare

service on site and three counsellors were not sure if one was close by. One counsellor noted that there is one within walking distance, but it has a waiting list, and one counsellor said there is one next door which can be utilised.

Zoning Policies

School zoning policies were enquired about in the questionnaire, because if a school has a childcare centre on site or nearby, a young mother from another area may be interested in attending the high school. Zoning policies could prevent her from enrolling in the school. Two of the responding schools have zoning policies. One of the high schools has a policy consisting of three specific areas which are taken into consideration when accepting students who are out of zone. This criteria is based on (1) spaces available, (2) religious affiliation, and (3) compassionate consideration. The other high school, which has a childcare centre within walking distance, has an interview procedure and acceptance is based on academic and personal attributes, plus reasons for wanting to attend the school.

Flexibility

A question about the level of flexibility offered for young mothers was included. Two respondents said this is not an option. One counsellor stated that this is a possibility.

Possibly, if the situation arose, as the school is supposed to be compassionate! As far as I know, it has never happened though.

Another counsellor said that the school does offer flexibility for young mothers for baby care during intervals and lunch times. It can be presumed that outside of these times there is no flexibility.

One school clearly stated that part-time study is an option, although it was not said to what degree this would be. One school expressed that, although this is not usually an option, it may be in special circumstances. Three schools clearly said that this is not an option. One of the counsellors gave a very valid reason for this.

This [part-time study] would be difficult because of the 7 day timetable. In most cases young mothers would only want to do 2 or 3 subjects, however,

the classes are broken up over the whole week. It would be difficult for a young mother to come to school for one period only, or having to hang around until the next class, which could be some hours away ... They would also need to be highly motivated.

This counsellor also commented on how it would be difficult for young mothers to attend school on a part-time basis because of transportation issues. As the school bus service runs at certain times, and because classes are at various times during the week, the bus service may be unsuitable. Also, the gap between classes could mean that without transport, the young mother may need to remain at school for a number of hours between classes.

Parenting, child development and life skills education

Four of the counsellors responded to the question on whether or not their school provided parenting and child development education in the curriculum. Each of the schools provides this to some degree. In two schools it is provided in the Health classes and in one school it was said that this is usually administered by a Public Health nurse. In one of these schools it is also provided as unit standards in the senior school. One school provides "a little under the sexuality education topic". One of the respondents did not specify in which subject parenting and child development was offered in.

From the questionnaire data, three of the high schools offer limited life skills education. One counsellor stated that the life skills offered is "very sketchy, part of general health, food technology classes". In another school, budgeting and food nutrition education is provided. One counsellor did not specify the life skills education.

Summary

The number of high school students who become pregnant and decide to continue with the pregnancy and parent is very low, in comparison to national figures (see chapter two), as far as the responding counsellors are aware. For those who do get pregnant at school, it is likely the pregnancy will interrupt their schooling at least in the early stages of the pregnancy. The questionnaire data gives evidence that those who have become pregnant and chose to parent over the past three years, did not return to school after the

birth, and in some cases, left before the pregnancy becomes obvious to others. Assumptions that some students were already struggling academically at school prior to the pregnancy, and that pregnancy negatively impacted even further on their achievement levels, are evident. There was only one case reported by the respondents where a student wanted to return after the birth. However, because of her past school record, the school would not accept her back.

None of the schools have a written policy on pregnant students and young mothers. However, informal processes are used. To support the pregnant student, schools tend to offer referral, counselling, practical assistance to appointments and strongly encourage parental involvement. With the student's permission, parents are involved in the decision making process around whether to continue with the pregnancy and school attendance. In addition, educational planning and goal setting is provided as a way of encouraging the pregnant student to continue with her education. Correspondence schooling has been suggested as an alternative in some cases. In the case where a pregnant student leaves school, an informal follow up system is used within the majority of the schools. This includes visitation, counselling and general support.

The school's ability to meet the young mother's practical needs of transportation childcare and provide a flexible, part-time programme is limited. One school said that part-time study is an option, and another said it could be under special circumstances. The questionnaire data shows that a little parenting, child development and life skills education is provided in all of the schools, except for one which does not provide life skills education. The level of parenting and life skills education required by young mothers may be insufficient for their learning needs, as the responsibility of motherhood is huge and the young mother has a lot to understand and learn.

This chapter has set out both the strengths and weaknesses within the responding high schools, in their ability to support pregnant students and student mothers. In the following chapter, an examination of the results takes place, along with an examination of the results from the interview data.

Chapter 9: Enhancing Educational Opportunities

Introduction

None of the young women in this research planned their pregnancy, as found in other research (see Condon and Corkindale, 2002: 45; Dusek, 1996: 219; UNICEF, 1996: 219). All five participants expressed their shock and surprise at becoming pregnant. The decision to parent was made, despite the disapproval of others, out of love for their forming baby. Havinghurst's (1972) developmental task of '*preparing for family life*' became important in these young women's lives, although at a time when other developmental tasks had not yet been completed. Havinghurst's (1972) task of '*preparing for an economic future*', was in most cases, interrupted. For the majority, motherhood has become more important than continuing with their education at this stage in their lives.

The previous four chapters set out the interview and questionnaire results. In this chapter, the objectives articulated in chapter one are critically discussed in light of the interview and questionnaire data, along with the literature review and theories analysed in chapters two to four. Firstly, the impact of pregnancy and mothering on the educational goals and motivation towards achieving goals of the five young women interviewed, are examined. Secondly, barriers to the continuation of education during pregnancy and since the birth are examined. Thirdly, an examination is carried out of the supports and resources which influence the achievement of their educational goals. The participants' ideas of an 'ideal educational environment', and the supports they perceive to be vital to their success is also explored. This is undertaken within an ecological framework. The level of support to pregnant students and young mothers in North Shore high schools is then examined from the questionnaire data. The chapter ends with some recommendations that may enhance educational opportunities for young mothers in the future.

Educational Participation and Goals

Havinghurst (1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34) claims that during the adolescent stage of development, preparing for the future and having a sense of direction is vital to identity formation. Havinghurst's (1972) fifth developmental task, '*preparing for an economic*

future', usually involves educational and career planning. It was the hope of all the participants to gain employment after achieving their educational goal. The following section of this study analyses the interview data, in relation to the first objective of this study, which was *'to examine the impact of pregnancy and mothering on a sample of young mothers' educational goals and the motivation to achieve educational goals'*. The examination of educational factors prior to becoming pregnant provides a baseline in which to carry out the analysis.

Prior to conception

Research gives evidence that often pregnancy follows school leaving (Bissell, 2000: 3; Fergusson & Woodward's; 2000: 3, 9; Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 23; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159). In this study, three of the young mothers had left high school prior to becoming pregnant, although they were each attending a course at the time of conception. Not one of these three enjoyed school and expressed negative attitudes, such as *"I hated it [school]" (Anna)*, *"I... thought it [school] really stunk" (Kelly)*, and *"I didn't really like school at all" (Katrina)*. One left school at the age of 16 years, after the completion of form five, and two left school at 15 years with an exemption. Full-time study or employment had to be undertaken for an exemption to be granted, as a legal requirement (Ministry of Education, 2000: 21). Each enrolled in a course (two in computers and one in hospitality), which were approximately six months duration, and offered at no cost.

Research has also found that teenage pregnancy is strongly correlated with low academic achievement, and may even be a result of academic failure (Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 11; Woodward *et al*, 2001a: 11; Baragwanath, 1996a: 16; UNICEF, 1996: 15; Clarke, 2002: A4), as discussed in chapter two. This study found evidence that the three young women who left high school prior to becoming pregnant struggled academically at school. One of these young women had difficulties with her school work, largely due to a lack of concentration on her work, too much attention on her social life, and excessive talking in class. Peers became more important than her education at the time, and only one School Certificate subject was passed. The participant perceived her low test results to be a result of her lack of effort and focus on her education, rather than a reflection of her academic ability, suggesting that levels of self-efficacy were high.

The other two participants left school because of difficulties with their academic ability and poor attendance levels. Self-efficacy theory claims that when failure is expected, there can be a lack of effort to even try to succeed (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 14; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373) as discussed in chapter 4. For these two young mothers low self-efficacy was evident, partly due to finding subjects difficult and not passing tests or exams. This resulted in a lack of enthusiasm and effort, and the motivation to attend school became low. School became something to avoid, which literature says is common for those who are not doing well academically (Gaskill & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001: 188; Brynes, 2001: 110).

These young women each chose a course they felt they could succeed in and gain employment from, despite past school failure in the majority of subjects. High levels of self-efficacy; good motivation for attendance and doing the required work; focus on goals; and the expectation of completing the course and then becoming employed is evident. Bandura (1997, *et al*, cited Santrock, 2001: 430) asserts that "researchers have found that self-efficacy and achievement improve when adolescents set goals that are specific". From the interview data, it can be seen that the participants' level of self-efficacy was high, as they were able to focus on a certain topic (rather than a range of subjects which must be covered in high school), and for two participants, a degree of success in the course subject (computers) was experienced at high school.

Woodward and Fergusson's (2001a: 3) study showed that only 38.1% of women who had become pregnant by the age of 18 years, were still in high school. This is similar to what was found in this study, as two of the young mothers (40%) were still in high school at conception. (It must be noted that this study has a very small sample size, and does not aim to make generalised conclusions, as discussed in chapter four. It is interesting, however, to note the similarity to the above research). The participants both had a goal of completing 7th form and then going on to tertiary education. One was specific in what kind of tertiary education and career she wanted to do and one was unsure. McDonagh (2001: 57) contends that it is common for those in the early stage of adolescent development to be undecided about their educational and career path. One participant stated, "*...I didn't exactly know what I wanted to be, wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to do something*" (Rochelle). Levels of self-efficacy were high, as the participants expressed that work was being successfully achieved. Once the pregnancy

became apparent, school participation and educational goals changed significantly for one of these young women, as it did for two who were enrolled in a course.

During pregnancy

A risk of adolescent pregnancy is that often educational goals established prior to conception are abandoned once the pregnancy is realised. In Fergusson and Woodward's (2000) study of 42 women who became pregnant by the age of 18, it was found that out of the 7 who were still at high school when they became pregnant, 4 left following the pregnancy. Other research has also provided evidence of pregnancy interrupting schooling (Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990, cited Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 23), as discussed in chapter two. In contrast, Moore and Rosenthal (1993: 159) claim that for those who are motivated towards their schooling at conception, pregnancy may not interfere to the point of abandonment. Although each of the interview participants in this study expressed high motivation towards attending school/course at the time of conception, for three of the young women, pregnancy impacted significantly on their educational goals and participation to the point of discontinuing their education. One participant left high school and two left the course they were attending before completion.

Becoming a mother took first priority in these three participants' lives, as they began to see themselves as mothers, with a full-time responsibility, rather than as students. Gilligan's (1982) study indicated that women see the responsibility of others as integral to their identity, and it was not uncommon for women to talk about themselves as '*mothers*' when describing themselves, rather than as '*students*' or '*employees*'. In viewing Gilligan's (1982) stages of moral development as a framework for analysis, these three participants showed evidence of moving from stage one (*survival orientation*), where focus had been placed on their own educational needs, to stage two (*conventional care*), where the participants began to consider the needs of their babies to be full-time parented, sacrificing their own educational needs. The participants' educational goals were abandoned.

Two of the five young mothers remained focused on their educational goals during pregnancy. Fergusson and Woodward's (2000) study found that three out of seven who were still in school when they became pregnant, remained at school during their

pregnancy. One of the young mothers in this study worked hard to complete the course before her baby was born, achieving her goal. The reality of becoming a mother motivated the participant to work hard. She remained focused on her own educational needs (stage one of Gilligan's (1982) model), in order that when her baby was born, she could concentrate solely on caring for her baby (stage two of Gilligan's (1982) model). Instead of finding employment after completing her course, which was her original plan, she focused on becoming a full-time mother.

The other participant remained at high school throughout pregnancy (until the labour!). The participant passionately stated, *"like just because I was pregnant it didn't mean that things had to change. I could still do my schooling"* (Jayne) (p.109). In addition, antenatal classes were attended. The beginnings of a move from Gilligan's (1982) stage one of moral development, through to stage three (*integrated care*) can be seen. Gilligan's (1982, cited Puka, 1993: 231) research showed that very few women entered this third stage of development. The young mother in this study was focused on her own educational and career needs prior to becoming pregnant, and while this did not change during pregnancy, she also began to consider the needs of her baby. The importance to the participant of being educated, in order to gain good employment in the future, and to gain knowledge about caring for her baby in the early stages of life, is evident.

Since the birth

Benn (1998: 241) contends that mothers have ambitions, hopes and plans, and want to have control over their own financial future. Expectancy theory says that motivation comes from a belief that goals can be achieved, performance will be rewarded and that the reward will be of value (Slavin, 2003: 338; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 355; Fox 1993: 116). The belief that education can provide qualifications and skills, in order to secure good employment opportunities, was conveyed by all the participants. All the participants in this study feel that education will have a significant impact on their lifestyle opportunities (such as good housing, transportation and leisure) as mothers and the opportunities they can provide their child. An example of this is when a participant stated, *"I want to be successful and I want to be able to give things to [baby] that I wouldn't be able to do if I didn't go back to school"* (Kelly) (p.118).

Other factors expressed as desired outcomes and rewards of continuing education, included being able to have financial security, to travel, and buy decent clothing and food. In addition, two of the young mothers expressed that their education will provide good encouragement to their children in becoming educated and self-sufficient themselves. It appears to be important to the majority of the participants that their own child does not become welfare dependent. (It is interesting to note that healthcare was not seen as something which is affected by a better income, as healthcare is free to those under the age of 5 years. One participant expects that her parents will cover any medical costs, and the others did not consider healthcare issues for themselves or for their child after the age of 5 years. Interestingly, according to the literature, the children of adolescent parents are at high risk of poor health outcomes, (Wheatly, 2001: 2, *et al*) as discussed in chapter three.)

Research has provided evidence that those who are still in high school at conception, are more likely to return after the birth, than those who leave school prior to becoming pregnant (Bissell, 2000: 3; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 159). In this study, of the two who were in high school at conception, one continued with her high school education after the birth. Those who were enrolled in a course at conception did not continue with education postnatally.

Literature claims that often the intentions of returning to school or enrolling in a course after the birth are deserted (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Ferguson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Berk, 1996, cited McDonagh, 2001: 58; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78, *et al*), as the responsibilities of mothering take utmost priority and the young mothers focus turns to her mothering role (Kelley, 2002: 204; Gilligan, 1982; Nedelsky, 1999: 305). One participant remained focused on her educational goals (to complete high school and then enrol into university) prior to conception, throughout pregnancy and since her baby's birth. Pregnancy and mothering had not interfered with her goals. Although attendance at school was interrupted after the birth, work was completed extramurally. The plan of this participant was to physically return to school when her baby was six weeks old. (As the interview took place before the participant physically returned to school, there is no data on the experience of returning). Childcare arrangements were put in place. The responsibilities of motherhood did not take the focus away from the participant's educational goals.

Since becoming a mother, another one of the young mothers has formulated a plan of returning to high school and then going to university. This is despite past academic difficulty, examined earlier in this chapter. The participant stated "*I know I can do it (fifth form) now*" (Kelly). The participant's success with the course she was attending prior to becoming pregnant (as far as completing work each week); increased level of emotional maturity (as a result of taking on the responsibilities of mothering); and passion and determination to be successful and secure rewarding employment, has increased her level of self-efficacy in regards to completing high school. This participant showed evidence of the beginning stages of moving from stage two of Gilligan's (1982) model, where focus was placed solely on meeting her child's needs, to stage three, where she is now considering her own needs as well as her child's.

During pregnancy the participant's educational goals had been abandoned, but since becoming a mother, her focus has again turned towards continuing education, but with a more intense desire than prior to becoming pregnant. Having a child to care for and support has caused the participant to think very seriously about her and her child's future. Like the participant who has remained at school, an educational qualification is desired in order to secure a rewarding career. Levels of motivation to organise everything that is needed (i.e. childcare, enrolment forms, finances and transport) are high. These participants expressed that nothing will stand in the way of their educational plans, including the responsibilities of mothering.

It has been suggested that parenting can be seen as an attractive career choice for some adolescents, especially when schooling has been incomplete and good employment prospects are low (Merrick, 1995 and Simon & Lowry, cited Bissell, 2000: 11). At the time of the interviews, the other three participants appeared to be content in their full-time mothering role, with aspirations of continuing some form of education when their child is of school age. One of these young mothers achieved her first educational goal of completing her course during pregnancy. Since becoming a mother, the participant is now thinking about enrolling in correspondence school at some stage, to gain even further skills to enhance her career opportunities in the future. Another one of the young mothers commented that she would still like to complete the hospitality course she was attending at conception, although this was not conveyed with any real conviction or plan on how this could be achieved. The young mother who left high school during

pregnancy expressed that education is now more important to her than before she gave birth, as exemplified in chapter seven when the participants stated,

Education is in a way more important to me now that I have a child, because of mine and my baby's future ... I want to do a course at some stage so that I have more opportunities and more behind me for mine and my child's future, so I can get a good job (Rochelle) (p.161).

Although there was no evidence of a physical move towards stage three (*integrated care*) of Gilligan's (1982) ethic of care perspective, where the participants' own educational needs and the needs of their children are met simultaneously, aspirations towards continuing education at some point are evident.

Summary of objective one

In the majority of cases, pregnancy and mothering impacted significantly on the young mothers' commitment to education. Prior to conception, all of the participants had an educational plan, with the hope of gaining employment after completing their goals. Once the young women became pregnant, educational goals were abandoned in three cases, as becoming a mother was given a higher priority than continuing education. Since the birth of her baby, one of these young mothers has formulated a specific plan to return to high school. Mothering has revived her passion to continue education, with the hope of providing well for herself and her child in years to come. In two cases, educational goals still took precedence during pregnancy, and one participant completed her course. The thought of becoming a mother motivated this young woman to work hard to achieve her goals. The other participant remained at high school and was still enrolled at the time of the interview. Pregnancy and mothering did not take her focus away from achieving the educational goals which were formulated prior to conception. The two participants, who have specific educational goals in place, claim that nothing will stand in the way of achieving their goals. The other three participants have the hope of continuing education at some stage, although they currently lack motivation. For these three young mothers, obstacles are evident, which will be examined in the following section.

Barriers to Educational Participation and Achieving Goals

The second aim of this research was *'to examine the barriers to the continuation of education, during pregnancy and from the birth, on a sample of young mothers'*. The literature review and theoretical analysis highlighted individual and external barriers, which can hinder a young mother in continuing her education. Bronfenbrenner's (1979, cited Fox, 1993: 78 and Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 25) perspective can help assess factors which can hinder educational participation and success. The following discussion examines the school system (found within the microsystem); educational and welfare policies, childcare costs and applicability, and transportation issues (found within the exosystem); as well as individual factors, in relation to pregnancy, mothering, self-efficacy and feelings about taking on a mothering and educational role (found within the centre of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model). The interview data shows evidence of factors which hindered educational participation during pregnancy and since the birth. Factors which the young mothers perceive to be obstacles are also examined.

Barriers during pregnancy

In Schofield's (1994: 72) study, discussed in chapter two, it was found that often pregnant adolescent students were pressured into considering abortion, were treated poorly by school staff, and suffered rejection from peers. This resulted in many pregnant teens choosing to leave school. Some had feelings of shame and guilt, which stayed with some of them for years after. The experience of one of the young mothers interviewed in this study is very similar. As in Schofield's (1994: 72) study, this participant expressed that staff wanted her to have an abortion, which was against the participant's wishes. It was also exemplified that staff were talking about the issue behind her back, and negative comments were also spoken to the participant, such as *"Well you got yourself into this mess You're just another stupid young girl"* (Rochelle) (p.103). It was felt by the young woman that there wasn't any staff member who could be confided in, even the counsellor.

In addition to the lack of support from staff, there was gossip amongst students, which heightened existing negative feelings about remaining at school. Literature says that often pregnant students are not treated like equals by their peers, and consequently, they feel they no longer belong in school (Baragwanath, 2000: 5; He Huarahi Tamariki,

1999: no page number; Schofield, 1994: 74). Lack of motivation to attend school often follows (Fox 1993: 116), as seen in this case. The young mother also knew of other students who had become pregnant and experienced lack of support within the same school. This impacted even further on her negative feelings towards remaining at school.

The lack of support from staff and peers, as well as hearing similar stories from others, raised feelings of embarrassment, resentment, distrust and feelings of being undervalued and unsupported, similar to feelings expressed by women in Schofield's (1994: 74-75) study, who had also experienced lack of positive support. It was clearly expressed that the school environment did not provide the participant with the level of support she required. In her words it was said, "*There's just no where to go for support once something like that (pregnancy) happens to you*" (Rochelle). This compounded with the participant's dislike for school, which existed prior to the pregnancy. Schofield (1994) found that for those who already hated school, leaving was easy and justifiable when support was not evident. Other research has also found similar results (see Baragwanath, 2000: 5; Schofield, 1994: 74; Moore and Rosenthal 1993: 159).

A weak microsystem can influence a young mother's educational outcomes negatively (Frydenberg, 1997: 19). In this case, the relationship between the participant and the school system, negatively affected the participant's motivation to continue at high school. The participant's educational goal of completing 7th form was abandoned, with a clear link between the lack of school support she experienced and her decision to leave school. According to Muuss (1996b: 324) and Frydenberg (1997: 19), this may negatively affect her life outcomes. If support at school had of been positive, it was strongly expressed by the young mother in this research, that she would have chosen to remain at school, as shown in chapter seven. No other options to continuing her schooling, such as correspondence schooling, was considered by the participant.

For those who were attending a course when they became pregnant, the option of continuing the course after the birth was not available. The policy of each course was that completion of the course had to be within a certain time frame, with no exceptions. For two of the young women, this was a disadvantage, as their babies were due before their course could be completed. The course policies, formulated within the exosystem context (Muuss, 1996b: 330), indirectly affected the young women's educational goals.

One participant stated that if the course had offered her an option to completing the course in some way, she would have been interested. The other participant continued with the course for a further two months before deciding to discontinue. The participant was offered the option of completing work at home, although a grade could not be given. These two participants showed evidence of being extrinsically motivated, where an external 'reward' was expected (see Deci and Ryan, 2002: 64, discussed in chapter three). The participants did not undertake their course purely because they were interested to learn, but rather, a certificate was expected to be gained with the hope of finding employment.

Furthermore, one of the participants experienced extreme tiredness during pregnancy, which was a significant factor to discontinuing the course being undertaken. Other factors which also presented as obstacles, included pregnancy related medical appointments; family priorities which interfered with class times and completing work; and needing to earn money in order to purchase needed baby items. The participant felt it was more important to increase the hours of her part-time job. Having to '*prepare for family life*', Havinghurst's (1972) sixth developmental task, came before the participant was economically ready. This turned the participant's focus from education preparing, to needing to earn as much money as possible, and as quickly as possible, without any qualifications. The participant left her course two months after finding out she was pregnant. It did not appear that this participant's educational goals were abandoned because she wanted to give up on her course, it seemed more that the effects of the pregnancy and preparing for motherhood took first priority.

Another one of the young mothers expressed that she was unable to be a student as well as a mother. Lynch (1999: 48) claims that for adolescents who become pregnant, it can be overwhelming to continue education and also come to terms with becoming a mother. Part of this is because of their lack of emotional and psychological maturity, as discussed in chapter three. Together with a lack of school support, the participant's own internal feelings and beliefs hindered her from continuing education.

Barriers since becoming mothers

The interview results highlight significant issues which stand in the way of some of the young mothers' educational aspirations becoming workable goals. Some obstacles were apparent in their lives at the time of the interviews, other factors were perceived by the young mothers as issues which may prevent them from achieving educational goals in the future (see chapter seven).

One of the most significant obstacles evident is 'time'. Benn (1998: 62) claims that the responsibilities of mothering are demanding of a mother's time. In considering further education, the time to look after their child, with the responsibility and commitment it brings, was conveyed as a significant issue by all of the participants in this study. In Lynch's (1999) evaluation, mothering responsibilities negatively impacted on young mothers continuing their education. Three participants in this study expressed that the time it takes to fulfil their mothering responsibilities, hinders them from continuing education. Two of these participants feel that it would be better to continue education when their child is of school age, as it is felt that there would then be time to study. Another young mother expressed that the responsibilities of mothering are a barrier for her in continuing education, although it does not appear that this is with regret. The willingness to 'self-sacrifice' her educational goals is evident, which Gilligan claims is common amongst women (Gilligan, 1988: 203). The risk for these three young mothers is that they will remain in stage two of Gilligan's (1982) ethic of care perspective, where the basic needs of their child are met, without developing into stage three, where their own educational and financial needs could also be met.

'Childcare' is another significant factor which has the potential to hinder educational participation. Lynch (1999: 46) and Pilat (1997: 57) claim that young mothers can be very anxious about leaving their child in the care of someone else, to the point of not continuing with education. This is also evident in this study. In Lynch's (1999: 49) evaluation, the majority of young mothers wanted a childcare facility on the same site as where they were studying. One of the participants in this study is considering undertaking correspondence school at some stage in the future, notably because she is then able to care for her child herself. The participant strongly expressed that furthering her education would not be considered at all if her child could not be on the same premises. Lynch (1999: 45) and Baragwanath (1996a: 31) found that the cost of

childcare costs can also be a major barrier to a young mother continuing her education. Although WINZ offers a childcare subsidy, the amount does not cover the total costs, and can only help pay for registered childcare services. Family members are therefore often excluded (WINZ, 2003c: 4; WINZ, 2003b: 2-3). The cost of childcare seemed to be a significant issue for the three participants. These three participants have no educational plan in place, and partly the reason continuing education when their child goes to school is being contemplated.

In addition, transportation issues can prevent a young mother from continuing education. Within the literature, there is evidence that transportation can be a considerable issue for young mothers when undertaking education (Lynch, 1999: 46; Baragwanath, 1996a: 31; Pilat, 1997: 55). Lynch (1999: 4) claims that not only is the cost of public transport unaffordable, it is difficult to catch a bus with a young child. Transportation was expressed as a barrier in continuing education for one young mother in this study. The cost of the public bus service did not appear to be an issue for the participant, it was more the effort of catching a bus with a child that was expressed as the issue

A further obstacle seen within the interview data is the costs of education. Lynch (1999: 45) and Baragwanath (1996a: 31) found that the cost of education is often a major barrier to a young mother continuing her education. This study shows that limited finances are a considerable hindrance for one of the young mothers. The participant is not entitled to a TIA, as she lives with her partner, and is unwilling to apply for a student loan because of the concern about being in debt. The participant's plan is to wait until she has enough money saved for furthering her education. This is after the participant's partner has saved enough money to further his career prospects and a computer is purchased. Although an interest in furthering her education was conveyed, the participant also expressed a willingness to sacrifice her own educational and career aspirations, and place her partner's as a higher priority. Gilligan claims that often adolescents seek their own identity through their relationships with others (1982: 170). In addition to the time needed for mothering, as well as childcare and transportation issues, financial constraints hinder the continuation of the participant's education to a significant degree.

Still further, a significant barrier identified in the interview material is being unsure of what education to undertake, evident in two cases. As discussed earlier in this chapter, it is not uncommon for those who are in the early adolescent stage of development to be undecided about the educational and career path they want to undertake. As McDonagh (2001: 57) states, "teenage parents have not yet established a clear sense of direction for their lives...". In this current study, two of the young mothers have no idea of the kind of education or career they want, although they each expressed a desire to continue education when their child goes to school (at the age of 5 years). Lack of direction can be a significant factor in low motivation towards continuing education (Brynes, 1993: 91).

Low self-efficacy was also examined as a possible barrier to the continuation of education for the five young mothers who were interviewed. As discussed in chapter three and also earlier in this chapter, self-efficacy theory claims that an individual's belief in herself can significantly impact on their motivation to continue their education, and can even impact on their ability to achieve (Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 16; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373; Santrock, 2001: 429). The majority of the participants conveyed a high level of belief in themselves to be successful in undertaking further their education, regardless of any past academic struggle. This is with the exception of one participant who expressed that extra tutoring would be needed when she decides to continue education.

Summary of objective two

To summarise this section, there were factors during pregnancy which hindered four of the participants in achieving their educational goals, and three participants expressed barriers since the birth. During pregnancy negative school and peer response (i.e. gossip, judgmental comments and negativity), hindered the educational participation for one participant. With better support, the young mother claims she would have remained at school. For two of the participants, as their babies were due before they could complete their course, they did not have the incentive to continue attending. In addition, extreme tiredness, pregnancy related appointments, family commitments, and needing to earn extra money in preparation for the baby's arrival, for one of these young women was a significant barrier.

After the birth, barriers which are evident within the interview data include feeling that there is not enough time to be a student because of mothering responsibilities, (evident for three participants); unwillingness to make childcare arrangements (for one young mother in particular); childcare costs (for three participants); and transportation and educational costs (for one participant). In addition, one participant feels “too young” to make educational decisions at this stage, and along with another participant, lacks educational direction. Self-efficacy was explored as a possible barrier. Although there is no real evidence of this, in one case, it was expressed that help with extra tutoring in any educational undertaking would be important. This young mother struggled academically at school prior to conception.

Resources and Support Systems

The third objective of this research was *'to examine resources and supports which influence educational participation, during pregnancy and from the birth, on a sample of young mothers'*. According to literature, strong supports are vital if a young mother is to be successful in achieving educational goals (Bissell, 2000: 3; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001; Lynch, 1999). Supports and resources that the participants feel would be beneficial, regardless of whether they have this support or not, are also examined, along with the kind of educational environment the young mothers would prefer. As the young mothers are part of an ecological environment, which influences their educational participation (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 25; Fox, 1993: 78), Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework has been used as a framework for the analysis.

The individual context

Four of the young mothers in particular conveyed a high level of self-efficacy when considering further education. High self-efficacy, as an internal resource, can increase an individual's motivation towards learning and achieving educational goals (Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 373; Pajares & Schunk, 2002: 16). In considering Bandura's (1986, 1977, cited Brynes, 2001: 100) self-efficacy theory, the chance of educational success is high for these four participants, because they have belief in themselves to be successful. Although low self-efficacy was apparent during high school years for three of the participants, the self-beliefs of two in particular changed from negative to positive when they left school and enrolled in a course, as discussed earlier in this chapter. One of

they left school and enrolled in a course, as discussed earlier in this chapter. One of these young mothers is even returning to high school, where she had left prematurely. Personal goals, commitment to continuing education, passion to be successful and establish a career, and the desire to be able to provide well for herself and her child, appear to be significant factors in her high motivation. Two of the other young mothers also showed strong personal drive to achieve their educational goals, as examined earlier in this chapter.

Supports and influences within the microsystem context

All of the young mothers are part of diverse microsystem structures with varying levels of family, peer, partner, and educational support. The micro system is made up of relationships which influences an individual's educational participation and success positively or negatively (Frydenberg, 1997: 19). The following analysis examines the degree to which microsystem supports influenced educational participation prior to conception, during pregnancy and since the birth, of the young mothers interviewed.

Family support and influence

As discussed in chapter two, family support is one of the most significant and vital support systems needed for a young mother to have positive educational outcomes (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Lynch, 1999: 45; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 27; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 79; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). When considering further education, all of the participants in this study feel that family support is vital to their future educational success.

It was expressed by the majority of the young mothers that their parents had very little influence on their education prior to conception. Three of the participants did not observe parental educational expectations. This was exemplified by one of the participants (see chapter five) who stated,

"They [parents] expected me to go to school, and do it. They just told me to go, but I never did. I kind of did what they didn't want me to do" (Kelly) (p.83).

In two cases, the participants were influenced by their parents to remain at school. One participant in particular expressed that her parents were very influential, stating, "*Mum made me go to school. Education is really important in my family...*" (Jayne) (p84).

In the majority of cases, the initial reaction from parents when they heard that their daughter was pregnant was one of shock, anger and disappointment. In four cases, adoption and/or abortion was strongly advised. Once it was clear that the pregnancy was going to continue, and that the baby was going to be a significant part of their lives, the majority of parents showed a high level of love and support. Furstenberg & Brooks-Gunn (1987, cited Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 85) claim that a high level of support can offset negative outcomes for young mothers and their children. In most cases during pregnancy, parents provided the basic necessities of life; transport to medical appointments; help with getting baby items together; as well as emotional support. The pregnancy seemed to bring the participants and their parents closer together. Relationship difficulties were only talked about in the context of before the participants became pregnant, and only in three cases.

During pregnancy, educational expectations from parents seemed to lower in three cases. From the participants' perspective, parents seemed to accept that focus would be placed on becoming a mother, rather than being a student. One of the participant's parents still strongly encouraged education, not accepting that pregnancy needed to interfere with the participant's schooling. The participant expressed that her education was the first thing her mother was concerned about. The participant's mother had a baby when she was an adolescent, continued her education, and has had a rewarding career. It is expected that her daughter will do the same. This participant has continued to be enrolled in high school during pregnancy and then after the birth.

Since the birth, the majority of parents have once again encouraged education, by giving advice as to how further education can be paid for, and offering rewards (such as a car for going back to school and doing well) and practical help (i.e. with enquiring about university enrolment processes, and offering childcare). In addition, other support from family for the participants has included acceptance of the baby, emotional support, and support with parenting skills. One participant stated "*...my mum teaches me a lot of things, as she grows up she teaches me about what to do with her...*" (Kelly). The

participant, who has continued at high school, also expressed that her siblings helped her with the baby, and also with collecting work from school to bring home. This is the only participant who mentioned the support of her siblings.

Good family support has been with the exception of one case, where parental support seems very minimal in general and educational terms, due to geographical distance and personal issues. This young mother has been physically, and possibly emotionally, detached from her parents for some time, leaving home during her high school years. The developmental task of '*attaining emotional independence from parents*' has been attained to a significant degree (see Havinghurst, 1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34). According to Sugar (1993: 227), when adolescents become pregnant, they are often held up in attaining emotional independence from their parents/guardians. Part of the reason for this may be that financial, practical and emotional support needed from their families becomes immensely important. One of the other participants has also physically separated from parents, although a strong emotional attachment still appears to be evident. Feminist theory claims that emotional attachment can be still strong, even when there is physical detachment (Apter, 1990: 111, cited Nicholls, 2001: 12). The participant expressed that her parents will help with any financial costs for medical, practical and educational issues, and the young mother also conveyed a need for this.

Three of the participants and their babies live at home with their parent/s, one of which is fully supported by her parents. Two participants are supported in part by their parents and in part by government assistance (which will be examined further on). In Furstenberg's *et al* (1987, cited Baragwanath, 1996a: 18) research in Baltimore, it was concluded that young mothers who remain at home had a higher chance of continuing their education and less chance of becoming welfare dependent over a prolonged period. Of the three participants in this study who are living at home, two have a precise plan to continue their education. The parents of these two participants are extremely supportive financially, practically and emotionally. It is interesting to comment, without making conclusions, that the two participants who are living away from home, have no educational plans in place.

Peer relationships and influences

Theories on adolescent development claim that peer group interaction is extremely important for identity formation, development (Havinghurst, 1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34; Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 35; Massey University, 1999, Topic 8: 1-2; *et al*) and emotional well-being (Cray, 2002: 26). As part of the normative development during the adolescent stage, an increased detachment from family (desatellization) often comes about with an increased attachment to peers (resatellization) (Ausbel, 1958, cited Bowler, 1998: 30). Prior to conception, friends were a significant part of the participants' lives, although positive peer relationships and influence on education appeared weak in four cases.

As discussed in chapter two, literature says that positive peer influence can make a significant difference on a young mother's education, and successful educational results are more likely (Cray, 2002: 26; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12, 13; Lynch, 1999: 45, 46; Baragwanath, 1996a: 27; The Department of Health, 1990: 34; *et al*). In the majority of cases, becoming mothers has interfered with the participants' normative development of building strong peer relationships, Havinghurst's (1972) third developmental task. The peer group seems to be more removed from the participants' lives since becoming mothers. One of the participants expressed that her friends have 'ditched her' since she became pregnant, and puts this down to their immaturity. As the participant has become a mother with full-time responsibilities, her emotional developmental has matured quicker than how she sees her friends.

The participant, who has remained at high school throughout pregnancy and since the birth of her baby, expressed that peers have had a positive influence on her education. A strong link between continuing her education at school and positive peer influence is evident. The participant expressed that this is largely because of the way other students have accepted her as a young mother. The participant feels that the continuation of peer support is vital to achieving her educational goals.

In regards to partner support, according to Condon and Corkindale (2002: 46), about 60% of young mothers in New Zealand do not have a male partner at the time of the birth of their baby, which increases the likelihood of welfare dependency and poverty. In this study, three participants (60%) claim to be in a relationship with the birth father.

One is in a defacto relationship with the birth father, and the others live separately. It was expressed by the participants that support from their partners for educational success, in the form of childcare, financial support, understanding and encouragement, is needed. The interview data shows evidence of significant partner support only in the case of the defacto relationship. In the other cases, the young mothers plan on using full welfare support in the short-term.

Literature claims that the birth fathers who are involved are often unable to provide support due to unemployment (Paewai-Young, 2001: 53; Leadbetter *et al*, 1994, cited Cray, 2002: 26, Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 78; Marsiglio, 1986, cited Heaven, 1994: 165). One of the birth fathers is unemployed and the others work full-time. Paewai-Young (2001: 53) contends that those who do work often provide minimal support. In the cases represented, the birth fathers who work full-time (with the exception of one who is in a defacto relationship), do not contribute at all. Two of these participants plan to rely on welfare assistance once they turn 18. Literature claims that the risk is, that without the support of a partner, welfare dependency will be for a prolonged period (Condon & Corkindale, 2001: 46).

In relation to support from the birth fathers family, in one case, it was mentioned that the birth fathers parents may offer some support in childcare, if it is needed for education purposes. No other support has been offered by this family. In the case of the participant who is in a defacto relationship, the participant conveyed that the paternal grandparents may provide some financial and practical support if needed at some stage. There is no evidence of any other support from the birth fathers' families in the interview data.

The educational context

The Association of Women Educators (2003: 3) contends that that it is the right of a young mother to be educated so that they can find rewarding employment, in a responsive school environment which offers flexibility. The right for young mothers to be educated is also a feminist issue (Solinger, 2002: 74; Santrock, 2001: 2345). Baragwanath's (1996) survey in New Zealand indicated that the majority of high schools were responsive to pregnant students and encouraged the continuation of education. In this study, according to the young mothers who were in high school at conception, one had a positive experience, where good school support was found, and one experienced a

negative school response, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Prior to conception taking place, both of these mothers had the same educational goals prior to conception. What seems to have made a considerable difference between staying at school and leaving, is the level of school support from staff and peers.

For the participant who stayed at school, support from school was extremely high. The participant's decision to keep the baby was respected; she was accepted by the school as a pregnant student; the school offered some degree of flexibility within the school timetable (i.e. the participant was given the option of not attending school assemblies and any other activities unrelated to the subjects she had taken); one subject was able to be discontinued; the continuation of school work was encouraged postnatally (i.e. by organising work to be taken home); the school liaised with the participant's family in ensuring work was taken home; and flexibility around completing school work was offered. Largely due to this support, the young mother remained focused on her educational goals.

For the two who were attending a course for some time during pregnancy, a degree of flexibility was provided, i.e. lateness to classes was allowed and days off were accepted if needed. What the participants found most helpful was that course staff treated them with respect in their decision to continue with the pregnancy. Research shows that a positive teacher relationship where there is respect and understanding encourages educational participation (Pilat, 1997: 119; Schofield, 1994: 77-78). In this study, one participant continued with the course for two months, and one completed the course before the baby's birth.

An ideal educational environment

Literature states that young mothers need a learning environment which meets their special needs and which encourages the continuation of their education (The Association of Women Educators, 2003; Baragwanath, 2001: 6; Bissell, 2001: 3; Walsh, 2001: A13; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 7; Woodward *et al*, 2001: 2; Dusek, 1996: 224; Schofield, 1994: 57; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993: 164; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105). Three of the participants feel that the most ideal environment for continuing their education would be with other young mothers, where there is a degree of flexibility. These participants feel that flexibility would provide the opportunity to still

meet the responsibilities of mothering, such as feeding and being able to be there for their child if needed. Flexibility is also noted as important for young student mothers in the literature review (He Huarahi Tamariki, 2002: no page number; Baragwanath, 1996b: 43-44; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 11; Bissell, 2000: 3; Lynch, 1999: 27; Drummond, 1998: 13; Schofield, 1994: 57; The Department of Health, 1990: 34).

As discussed in the theoretical analysis (chapter three), the peer group can offer desirable rewards, such as socialization, acceptance, and friendship with like-minded people who understand each other and have common interests (Santrock, 1998: 185, cited Bowler, 2001: 22; Muuss, 1996b: 324). The three participants mentioned above, feel that continuing their education with other young mothers would provide them with a positive level of emotional, practical, social and educational support. One of the participants hopes to undertake correspondence schooling some time in the future, but expressed that studying with other young mothers would be preferable. Research has found that peer group support is an important factor to young mothers in continuing education and achieving their goals (He Huarahi Tamariki, 1999: no page number; Lynch, 1999: 36-37; Schofield, 1994: 57).

In addition to an educational programme which offers flexibility and positive peer support, one of these three young mothers expressed that learning parenting skills and being able to continue with her basic education would be advantageous. Literature suggests this is vital for young mothers and for the well-being of their children (Hurlburt, 1997, cited The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12). Furthermore, the interview results show that the provision of transport would be an incentive to continuing education for two of the young mothers, and childcare on site would encourage all of the participants in continuing education. *He Huarahi Tamariki*, discussed in the literature review, provides both these services, which is said to encourage young mothers to continue attending the school. Baragwanath, 1996b, cited Rae, 1996: 18). Kelley (2002: 206) also claims that assistance with transport is essential to the success of an educational programme for pregnant and parenting teens. Still further, one young mother said the offer of free food, i.e. lunch, would encourage her to attend an educational programme. Baragwanath (1996:b 45) also claims that food is an incentive for continuing education.

As already discussed, the other two participants have very strong educational goals in place. Both plan on going to university after completing their high school education. These participants feel that university is the most ideal learning environment for them, where it is expected that tutors are professional and the focus is on education. Literature suggests that a caring environment increases motivation towards learning (Lerner, 2002: 275; Lynch, 1999: 47). One of the participants in particular, expressed that it is important for her to be in an environment where teachers treat her fairly and equally. This participant had experienced negativity from teachers when she attended school prior to becoming pregnant.

Mesosystem Links

An ecological assumption is "that what happens in a person's microsystem is interrelated to and interacts with what happens in his or her other microsystems" (Muuss, 1996b: 324). Links between the context of family and school can have a negative or positive influence on a young mother's education (Mahon & Rockel, 2001: 19). In this study, it was found that the mesosystem links between family and school appear to be generally weak, increasing the risk factor of educational underachievement (Drummond, 1999a: 8; Muuss, 1996b: 325, 326). In two cases, the participants talked about their parents having involvement with their school only when they were being removed from school. Evidence of a positive mesosystem link between home and school was seen in the case where the young mother has remained at school. In this case, the participant's mother initially talked with the school to see what kind of support the school could offer her as a pregnant student, and then met with teachers about work to bring home in the early post-natal stages. Muuss (1996b: 325) notes that when parents have positive communication with their child's school, the chance of educational success is higher. The strong link between home and school has encouraged the continuation of education for this young mother.

Supports within the exosystem context

The exosystem context, which represents the structure of the wider community, also has a significant influence on a young mother, whether direct or indirect (Drummond, 2001: 64; Muuss, 1996b: 327; Cummings, 1995: 56). Within the interview data, supports within this context were evident.

Parenting services

One of the developmental tasks defined by Havinghurst (1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 34) is '*preparing for marriage and family life*'. Literature claims that adolescent parents are likely to be unprepared for parenting, lacking in skills and maturity (Woodward *et al*, Nov 2000: 2; Osofsky, 1990, cited Cray, 2002: 25; Field *et al*, 1980, cited Baragwanath, 1996a: 17; Romans, *et al*, 1997: 31, *et al*). Literature also claims that through education about child development and through learning parenting skills, the risk of poor health and educational outcomes for the children of adolescent parents is decreased (Baragwanath, 2000: 5; Lynch, 1999: 1, 47; Duesk, 1996: 222; Schofield, 1994: 37; *et al*). To prepare for the birth and early stages of the pregnancy, two of the participants attended antenatal classes. Since the birth, four of the young mothers are currently involved with parenting services. This helps to address a lack of parenting skills, and provides them with some understanding and knowledge on their child's development.

Governmental support

Government services and welfare policies can influence a young mother's educational participation, and the quality of the micro- and the mesosystem can either be enriched or impoverished (Muuss, 1996b: 328). In the literature review, it was pointed to that governmental support can help encourage young mothers to continue their education (The Association of Women Educators, 2003: 1; Cray, 2001: 27; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 26; Drummond, 1998: 15; Schofield, 1994: 130). At the time of the interviews, four of the participants were receiving some form of government assistance, either from WINZ or Inland Revenue, or both. Each of the participants were entitled to Inland Revenue's Family Assistance, although one was unaware of her entitlement. (Lynch (1999: 50) maintains that young mothers are often unaware of their entitlements offered from government services.) From WINZ, one received an accomodation allowance only, as she was in a defacto relationship and supported by her partner, one was receiving the EMA 'living at home' and one received the full EMA. Two were not entitled to a WINZ benefit because of parental income.

The two participants who are receiving an EMA benefit, have both had a meeting with their WINZ case worker to discuss and devise an educational and employment plan, part of the policy for receiving this benefit (Fair Centre, 2002; no page number). Havinghurst (1972, cited Atwater, 1992: 32) contends that adolescents need to discover their interests

and abilities, choose an educational and career goal, and "get started in it". No specific plan had been devised with the WINZ case worker at the time of the interviews, although in one case the participant said that her case worker is helping her to find a suitable course. These two young mothers expressed that careers advice and mentoring would be beneficial to help with educational goal setting and advice. Literature claims that this can assist a young mother with deciding on an educational path that is practical and affordable (Lynch, 1999: 38).

Four of the participants plan on receiving the DPB when they turn 18 years, and then hope for government assistance in the form of a TIA for any future educational plans. A childcare subsidy (WINZ, 2003b: 2-3) will be applied for by the two young mothers who have educational goals in place for the purpose of continuing education. One young mother is not entitled to apply for a TIA as she lives with her employed partner.

The macrosystem context

Education can not be considered, without recognising that education is embedded within the macrosystem of cultural, economic, religious, educational and political systems, ideology, values and beliefs (Lerner, 2002: 51; Dixon, *et al*, 2001: 15; Drummond, 2001: 64; Cummings, 1995: 56, 59; Fox, 1993: 78). Societal attitudes about needing to complete some form of education, in order to secure good employment, are embedded into the New Zealand society. However, unemployment is one of the significant macrosystem issues affecting young mothers, as discussed in chapter two.

As a longer educational term is now required by young people (Statistics NZ, Dec 2001: 70; Bird & Drewery, 2000: 167; UNICEF, 1996: 6; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 10), adolescents are being held up in achieving developmental tasks, such as '*preparing for an economic future*', '*separating from parents*', and '*preparing for marriage and family life*'. Young mothers are even more at risk of moving into early adulthood without completing developmental tasks. At the time of the interviews, none of the young mothers were working, although they all have the intentions of working at some stage in the future. They each believe that unless they continue with education, employment opportunities will be limited. To assist young mothers in achieving the political and societal ideal of being employment and self-sufficient, the ideal is fed down through the ecological layers from the macrosystem (see Muuss, 1996: 328). For example, through

welfare policies which insist that WINZ case workers formulate an educational and employment plan with young mothers who receive the EMA or DPB. The ideal of employment is also fed down through educational systems, which provide a vehicle for employment through learning and qualifications.

Summary of objective three

Within the exosystem, the majority of participants have turned their educational focus towards becoming educated on child development and parenting, using parenting services and young mother's support groups. Also within the exosystem, governmental support is being provided to the majority of young mothers. All expect to receive a welfare benefit of some kind when they turn 18 years, (i.e. an Accommodation Allowance, Family Assistance, and the DPB). Four plan on receiving the DPB and a TIA at some stage. Macrosystem influences impact on welfare policies that insist that an educational and employment plan must be devised if receiving the EMA or DPB. This may have a positive influence on the motivation towards setting and achieving educational goals, and reducing unemployment amongst young mothers.

One participant has remained focused on the educational goals that were established prior to pregnancy. The resources and supports which appear to have particularly influenced this includes exceptional family (parents and siblings) support; good peer support; strong mesosystem links between home and school; a positive and flexible school environment; and a determination to achieve her educational goals regardless of her mothering responsibilities. Another participant completed her educational goal of completing the course she was attending during pregnancy. With positive tutor support and self-determination, the goal was achieved. Another participant has formulated an educational plan since giving birth. The supports evident in this case, include parental support; governmental assistance with a childcare subsidy; and a passion to be successful and secure a rewarding career, and increase the life opportunities for her and her child. The other three participants claim that they want to undertake education at some stage in the future. These participants expressed that continuing their education with other young mothers would be an advantage. In addition to this, assistance with transportation; childcare on site; a dual focus of parenting and formal education; and the provision of food, would form part of an 'ideal educational environment'. Two of these young mothers expressed a need for careers advice and mentoring.

From the Viewpoints of School Counsellors

The final aim of this research was *'to examine the level of support offered in North Shore (Auckland) high schools for pregnant students and young mothers'*. This objective was achieved by examining the voices of two young women who were interviewed, as discussed earlier, and also through examining the questionnaire data. Five out of 13 high schools, who were sent a questionnaire pack, responded, and only a small number of students (12 in total) have become pregnant while at school since 2001, as far as the respondents are aware. Only five of these students continued with the pregnancy and chose to parent. This is especially low when taking into consideration the national figure of confinements to those of high school age each year, which was 1159 confinements to those aged 13 to 17 years in the year ended December 2001 (Statistics NZ, 2002: 37). It can be assumed that there are students within North Shore high schools who become pregnant that the respondents are not aware of. Some may have abortions and others may leave without anyone being aware of the pregnancy.

The link between pregnancy and low educational achievement has been found in a large amount of research both nationally and globally (Bissell, 2000: 3; Clarke, 2002: A4; Fergusson & Woodward, 2000: 9; Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Heaven, 1994: 163; Furstenberg *et al*, 1987, cited Dusek, 1996: 220; *et al*), as discussed in chapter two. The majority of respondents in this research have also perceived a link between pregnancy and underachievement. One respondent in particular, expressed that some students were already struggling academically at school prior to the pregnancy, and pregnancy negatively impacted further on their achievement levels. As discussed earlier in this chapter, academic struggle is often a precursor to adolescent pregnancy (Baragwanath, 1996a: 16; UNICEF, 1996: 15). Another respondent noted that for those who became pregnant since 2001, the pregnancy interrupted their schooling at least in the early stages. For the students who continued with the pregnancy, they did not return to high school after the birth. There was only one case reported by the respondents where a student wanted to return after the birth. However, because of her past school record, the school would not accept her back.

Literature claims that a supportive educational environment is essential if pregnant students and young mothers are to be encouraged to continue their education (Bissell, 2001: 3; Walsh, 2001: A13; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 7; Woodward *et al*, 2001a: 2; *et al*). A number of supports have been identified within the questionnaire data for pregnant students, including referral, practical assistance, counselling, involving parents/guardians, educational planning and goal setting, and informal follow-up. One of the most significant supports identified that schools offer, is counselling to pregnant students, and to family members if appropriate. In Baragwanath's research (1996a), it was found that counselling and providing information were the most common ways schools tended to offer support to pregnant students. The majority of respondents prefer to involve parents/guardians at all stages of the decision making. Strong mesosystem links between home and school can decrease risk factors for pregnant adolescents and student mothers (Drummond, 1999: 8; Muuss, 1996b: 326). With the student's permission, parents are involved in the decision making process around whether to continue with the pregnancy, and around school attendance.

A further strength found within the high school system for pregnant students is in the provision of educational planning and goal setting as a way of encouraging the continuation of education. Kelley (2002: 205) claims that "access to career, academic, and personal guidance is fundamental for student success". As part of educational planning, two of the counsellors expressed that correspondence schooling is often encouraged as an alternative to continuing education. One counsellor stated that the option of continuing at school is encouraged first. Baragwanath's (1996a) study showed that 72 percent of schools suggested correspondence as an alternative to high school. However, in Baragwanath's (2000: 5) opinion, this is not usually successful because of low motivation and, for some, low reading ability. Lynch's (1999: 45) evaluation also found that correspondence was rarely successful for young mothers.

Furthermore, three of the counsellors in this study claim that there is an informal follow-up system where a student who has left the school to have a baby is kept in contact with and offered support and/or counselling. In one case information was offered on Parents as First Teachers, a home-based educational parenting service. In another case, friends, family and the baby's father were also offered ongoing counselling and support after the student left school. This can strengthen the mesosystem context, between family and

school, and between peers/partner and school, which may increase a young mother's chance of continuing her education (Drummond, 1999a: 8; Muuss, 1996b: 326). In this case, the student still did not return to this high school.

Limitations are also evident in the questionnaire data. Out of three responses to a question on the level of observed peer support, support from students towards a pregnant student appears to be weak in two of the schools represented. One respondent has observed gossip amongst students, and another suggested that other students probably become judgemental. Gossip and judgement amongst students can have a negative impact on a young mother continuing her schooling, as seen earlier in this chapter with one of interview participants, and in other research also (Baragwanath, 2000: 5; He Huarahi Tamariki, 1999: no page number; Schofield, 1994: 74).

A further weakness identified within the high school system, is that none of the schools have a written policy on working with pregnant students and student mothers, possibly because the number of students who become pregnant and choose to parent is low, as suggested by one of the counsellors. In Baragwanath's (1996a: 31) questionnaire to high schools nationally, it was found that only one school had a formal initiative. The Association of Women's Educators (2003: 2) in Australia claim that a formal policy could assist in schools being able to encourage the continuation of education for a student who becomes pregnant.

For the pregnant student who wants to return to school after the birth, support is limited and possibly linked to the reasons why parenting students have not continued with their education at high school. Regarding childcare, none of the schools have a childcare facility on site, which literature says can be a major barrier for young mothers wanting to continue at school (Lynch, 1999: 46), as discussed earlier in this chapter. Two counsellors are aware of one which is nearby. Having a childcare facility, at least in walking distance of the school, may encourage educational participation (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 11; Bissell, 2000: 3; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). One of the schools near a childcare centre has a zoning policy where a student from outside of a particular geographical area needs to attend an interview prior to acceptance into the school. Academic and personal attributes, plus reasons for wanting to enrol in

the school are looked at before acceptance. From the questionnaire data, it is unknown if attending this school because a childcare centre is nearby, is an acceptable reason.

In relation to flexibility, part-time study options, and acquiring parenting and life skills, the support level is quite low. It is contended in literature that a flexible educational programme, which includes parenting and life skills education, as well as continuing formal education, is important if young mothers and their children are to have good outcomes (Walsh, 2001: 13; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 7; Dusek, 1996: 224; Zabin & Haywood, 1993: 105). In three cases, part-time study is not feasible, and one stated that this is because of the schools' timetable. However, two respondents claim that part-time study may be an option if the situation arises. Flexibility for baby cares is offered by one school only. In most cases it would be expected that the child's carer would provide the necessary baby cares while the young mother was at school. Flexibility may be required, however, if the child's carer was unavailable or if the baby was unwell, for example. The questionnaire data shows that a small degree of parenting, child development and life skills education is provided in all of the schools, except for one which does not provide life skills education. The level of life skills and parenting education required by young mothers may be insufficient for their learning and developmental needs.

Summary of objective four

High Schools reported that pregnancies have been handled by using referral processes; through counselling (students and family); liaison with parents; practical assistance; assistance with educational planning; and informal follow-up. Peer support is limited, although one school reported a positive reaction from peers in the school towards pregnant students. For the student mother, the level of support appears to be limited. The responding schools reported a very small number of pregnancies within their schools from 2001 until mid 2003, which the counsellors are aware of. The five who continued with the pregnancy did not return to school after the birth. This could, in part, be because of the limited support and resources within the high school system that young mothers require. None of the schools have a childcare facility on site; flexibility within the school timetables are limited (although two schools would consider part-time attendance if the situation arises); and parenting and life skills education is minimal. A further weakness found within the school systems, is that no written policy has been

formulated to help ensure that pregnant students are handled sensitively, and in a way that the continuation of their education is encouraged.

Recommendations

The interview and questionnaire brings to light a number of issues which may hinder a young mother in continuing education. Following are recommendations for policy and practice, which have come from the voices heard and from the questionnaire data. The aim of the recommendations is that young mothers are given every opportunity to continue their education, so that the developmental and life outcomes for themselves and their children are enhanced..

Recommendations for Policy

1. There should be a written high school policy for pregnant students and young mothers, nationally.

A policy has recently been developed in Australia by The Association of Women Educators (2003: 1), which is underpinned by the belief that "education systems, schools, and school staff have a responsibility to ensure that all steps are taken to maximise the opportunity for pregnant students and young mothers to complete secondary education" (Ibid). The objectives of the policy include the promotion of curriculum and school policies which effectively address issues of pregnancy and parenthood (The Association of Women Educators, 2003: 1). None of the responding high schools in this study have a written policy on how to handle a pregnancy within their school, how to treat her with the respect and care she needs and how to encourage the pregnant student and young mother in continuing education. Because of the low numbers of reported pregnancies within the responding schools, it may not be an issue that has seemed relevant. However, a written policy could help ensure positive outcomes for students who do become pregnant, even if the number is only small. The student's educational outcomes and choices regarding the pregnancy can vary, and her first point of contact within the school can be highly influential. A written policy would ensure all staff have guidelines in how to respond to the pregnancy in the student's best interests. The written policy should include guidelines in formulating an educational plan during pregnancy and also after the birth.

2. Young mothers who are married or in a defacto relationship and receiving an accommodation allowance because of their partner's income level, should be able to apply for a TIA.

Currently, the TIA is not available to young mothers in a relationship where they are being supported or even if they are receiving an unemployment benefit (WINZ, Telephone conversation with the Call Centre, 2003). One of the young mothers interviewed is in this situation and would like to study when she has saved enough money to do so. The participant and her partner cannot afford to be in debt and do not agree with having large loans which they are paying interest on. The participant has educational goals, but will only make definite plans once she has saved enough money to pay for a course. This is not likely for quite some time. As discussed in chapter two, literature claims that government agencies need to be responsive to young mothers to ensure that they have every opportunity to continue their education (The Association of Women Educators, 2002: 1; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 17; Drummond, 1998: 15; Schofield, 1994: 130). Extending the criteria for receiving a TIA could provide many young mothers with opportunities which will benefit them and their family and thus, benefit society.

3. Professional careers advice should be provided for young parents needing WINZ assistance.

As already discussed, teen parents have often not established a sense of educational and career direction for their lives, partly because of the developmental timing of parenthood (McDonagh, 2001: 57). When talking with the young mothers involved in this study, two wanted to do some form of education, but had no idea what. Both of these participants were receiving the EMA at the time of the interviews, and had attended a meeting with their case manager to devise an educational/employment plan. However, no specific plan was been put in place. These participants both expressed that assistance with educational and career planning would be helpful. Kelley (2002: 205) asserts that access to careers and academic counselling is fundamental to student success. It is recommended that WINZ should provide professional careers advice, which takes into consideration personality, skills, what the individual would enjoy doing and gain satisfaction from, motivational factors, prior education, prior employment and any other relevant factors. Professional assistance could help establish a sense of direction and the

setting of educational goals, which may then increase levels of motivation towards continuing education (Fox, 1993: 121; Sternberg & Williams, 2002: 361).

4. The cost of extra tutoring should be provided by the government for young mothers who are receiving the EMA or DPB and continuing their education.

An adolescent mother may need extra tutoring to keep up with her education when faced with the high demands of mothering. Extra tutoring may also be required if a young mother has already fallen behind with her schooling before conception or struggles academically. One of the participants in this study, expressed that extra tutoring would be helpful to her, particularly as she struggled in school prior to becoming pregnant. When a young mother struggles academically and faces a strong possibility of further academic failure, the likelihood of continuing with her education is minimal (Gaskill & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001: 188; Brynes, 2001: 110). If a young mother is making an effort to continue her education and needs extra tutoring, then every effort should be made by government agencies to ensure that academic assistance is provided. A TIA would not cover the costs of extra tutoring, as it only allows for course fees, course materials and travel costs to be paid for (Fair Centre, 2002: no page no.).

Recommendations for Educational Practice

1. All students and teachers should be educated on the need to support pregnant students or young mothers within their school.

Young (1990, cited Pilat, 1997: 119) and Baragwanath (1996a: 28) claims that in relation to pregnant students and teen parents, school staff should encourage positive peer relationships for effective educational outcomes. One young mother who was interviewed talked about how teachers and peers at school made her feel uncomfortable about the pregnancy. This impacted significantly on her decision to leave school. Another one of the young mothers talked about how good teacher and peer support influenced her to remain at school. School counsellors also reported negative reactions from peers. As good teacher support can significantly affect a pregnant student's/student mother's decision to remain at school (Lerner, 2002: 27; Lynch, 1999: 47; Pilat, 1997: 119), not only is it vital that teachers are trained in how to provide appropriate support, but schools need to also ensure that all students are educated in this area. If students are educated on how to support a pregnant student/student mother, and are expected to treat those who become pregnant with respect and dignity, then pregnant students and young

mothers may be more inclined to remain at school (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12, 13; The Department of Health, 1990: 34).

2. High School should provide the opportunity for pregnant students/student mothers to become educated on child development and parenting, as well as complete their formal education.

In this research, high schools reported a limited amount of child development, parenting and life skills education within the school curriculum. One of the young mothers interviewed, expressed that the opportunity to learn parenting skills and about child development, as well as continue her formal education, would be beneficial (p.139). If pregnant students are to be encouraged to continue at school and return after the birth, it is recommended that the opportunity is provided to undertake education on parenting, child development and life skills, to a level that meets students' needs. This could be done through the use of correspondence schooling modules. Students should be allowed to reduce other subjects (excluding the standard school subjects of Maths, English and Science) offered by the high school, in order that the work load is realistic and achievable.

3. A mentoring programme should be offered to young mothers.

Young mothers need encouragement, educational and parenting support, and help with formulating and achieving goals. A mentoring programme could provide such support (The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 12; Lynch, 1999: 45, 46). Two of the young mothers in this study felt that being involved in a mentoring programme, or having a type of role model to look up to and to have for support, would be beneficial. It is recommended that mentoring for young mothers could form part of a written high school policy, and could be provided by a community mentoring agency. A mentoring programme for young mothers could also be a service offered through government and non-government agencies. The agency could match mentors, who are trained, reliable, safe and who understand the needs of young mothers, to young mothers who would like mentoring.

4. A school for young mothers should be provided nationally in all major centres, including the North Shore, Auckland, for pregnant students and young mothers who do not feel they fit into the high school system. This school should provide transportation and childcare on site.

Although this research had difficulties in finding young mothers to interview on the North Shore, Auckland, and school counsellors only reported a small number of students who became pregnant and choose to parent since 2001, statistics show that there is a significant number of adolescents of high school age who give birth each year nationally (Statistics NZ, 2003: 138). There are a number of schools for young mothers which have been set up throughout New Zealand. In Auckland alone, there are three schools for young parents (in west, south and now central Auckland), as discussed in chapter two. There are still, however, major centres nationally which do not have a specific school for adolescent parents, Auckland's North Shore being one of them. Of the five interviewees in this study, three said they would be interested in attending a school specifically for young mothers if there was one available on the North Shore.

There are specific resources the young mothers expressed that they would like as part of an educational programme: (1) An 'onsite' childcare facility is preferred by all the young mothers, and is particularly important to one of the mothers, as childcare offsite is not an option the participant will consider at all. Having childcare on site, or even next door to the school, would help address issues of insecurity held by the young mother and/or the child and would allow easy access for baby/child cares. *He Huarahi Tamariki* (Porirua), discussed in chapter three, provides childcare on site, which has been one of their keys to success (Baragwanath, 1996, cited Rae, 1996: 18). (2) The provision of transport is desired by two of the participants. One of the young mothers very adamantly expressed that she would not attend a course if she had to catch a bus as "*it would be too much hassle with a baby*" (Katrina). The provision of transport has been a key factor in the success of *He Huarahi Tamariki* (Baragwanath, 1996, cited Rae, 1996: 18). (3) Being able to continue formal education and learn parenting skills was expressed by one of the participants (and also recommended in '*Recommendations for Practice no. 2*' of this thesis). Literature claims that is important for healthy developmental and life outcomes for young mothers and their children (Walsh, 2001 13; The Teen Parent Focus Group, 2001: 7; Duesk, 1996: 224; Zabin & Hayward, 1993: 105), as already discussed.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Further research is needed on the effect teenage parenting has on the birth fathers.

This research only briefly touched on issues concerning the birth fathers. However, what was identified in this study was that the birth fathers seem to be generally unsupportive, as literature also suggests (Cray, 2002: 26; Paewai-Young, 2001: 53). However, this may not continue to be the case if birth fathers are more valued, have their needs met and are educated about parenting and the importance of their fathering. Research into the experiences and needs of young fathers could highlight some areas that need addressing. Addressing these areas and needs could provide young mothers and their children with a higher level of support.

2. Further research is needed on the affect of teen pregnancy and childrearing on the young mothers' families.

As discussed in chapter two and earlier in this chapter, family support is considered a vital factor in a young mother's educational continuation and success (Baragwanath, 2001: 3; Steinberg, 1996, cited Cray, 2002: 26; Cray, 2002: 27; The Department of Health, 1990: 34). All the young mothers interviewed in this study depend on their families for financial, practical and emotional support to some degree. In one case, although her own parents could not provide much in the way of support, her partner's family was looked to for financial assistance. Research into the experiences families face, the stresses it brings, and the supports they need, could benefit young mother's, their children and their families.

Conclusion

Feminist research calls for the voices of women to be heard. This thesis provided an opportunity for five young mothers to express their hopes and dreams of continuing their education, the factors which hinder this and the supports they need to achieve their goals. In addition, five school counsellors added to an examination of the level of high school support for pregnant students and student mothers. In this study, all of the young mothers were undertaking education at the time of conception, and their voices expressed the feelings, hopes and experiences they faced since becoming pregnant. For two young mothers the passion to achieve educational goals during pregnancy was strong, and for the others, preparing to be a mother took utmost priority. The impact of

mothering on educational goals has been such that the young mothers feel inspired to undertake further education at some stage, to have the chance of better life outcomes for themselves and their children. Only one was involved in education at the time of the interview, and another, although educational goals had been abandoned during pregnancy, had a plan in place. Of the five adolescents reported by the school counsellors who became pregnant and gave birth, none returned to high school.

Motherhood presents several barriers in terms of continuing education. Barriers which became apparent from listening to the voices of the young mothers, similar to factors examined in the literature review, included lack of school and peer support; childcare, transportation, and financial issues; and lack of time, because of mothering responsibilities. The risk is that the longer a young mother is disconnected from education, the less likely she is to continue her education and find well-paid employment in the future (The Association of Women Educators, 2003: 1). Development may be affected, and the risk is that the young mother may move into young adulthood with the responsibility and commitment of motherhood, without emotional, physical, social and financial independence (Sugar, 1993: 227).

The voices of the young mothers strongly conveyed that what makes the most significant difference in refusing to let barriers stand in the way of achieving their educational goals is good support, a passion to be successful, a strong desire to provide well for themselves and their child, and an educational plan. For young mothers who struggle with turning their aspirations into workable goals, what is needed are the right kind of supports and encouragement. For young mothers to be in control of their own futures, they first need to be supported, encouraged and helped to walk in the direction of their own dreams. As Donagh (2001: 62) states, “the young people who find themselves expecting a child need all the support, encouragement and love we can offer”. To encourage those who want to continue their education, and inspire those who don't, a combination of personal, professional, political and social planning is required. Then, the opportunities for young mothers and their children will be increased, and the risk of poor health and developmental outcomes reduced.

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Date

Organisation

Address

Dear.....,

Following our telephone conversation today I have enclosed two Information Sheets regarding my research.

I am very passionate about my topic of research as I was a young mother myself, my daughter now being almost 17 years of age. I eventually gained a degree in social work in 2000 and have continued with post graduate research. I have also worked at the Bethany Centre for almost three years, although I'm currently on maternity leave. I am concerned about young mothers having access to education to help break the cycle of disadvantage and dependency which often follows early motherhood.

If you or anyone else on the team does come in contact with a young mother who meets the criteria, please show her the Information Sheet and gain permission first for us to be put in contact.

I have filled in one of the forms regarding how a name has been obtained and left the other blank in case something different should be written. Please feel free to photocopy the information sheet or request more to be sent. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further inquiries.

Thank you very much for your assistance. It is very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Nikki Hill BSW(hons)

"A look at the impact of pregnancy and childrearing on educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations of young mothers"

INFORMATION SHEET (for interview participants)

My name is Nikki Hill. I am a postgraduate student carrying out a research project to complete a Masters in Philosophy - in social work.

The purpose of my research is three fold. One, to gain an understanding of the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations of young mothers on the North Shore aged 15-17 years. Two, to highlight any barriers to the continuation of education for young mothers and supports needed. Three, to look at the degree to which North Shore high schools meet the needs of young mothers.

The research consists of three particular stages in which I am asking people to participate. The first is involvement in a pilot interview, the second is in a one-on-one interview process and the third is by filling out a self-completion questionnaire.

I would like to invite you to participate in the one-on-one interview phase of the research.

For the interview stage I require 6-8 young mothers to participate in a 90 minute interview. You will need to be aged 15-17 years, living on the North Shore, describe yourself as New Zealand European, with one child up to 18 months of age. The interviews will be 'one-on-one' and will be held at a time and place agreed upon by both of us.

I have obtained your name through
It is my understanding they have gained your permission for us to be put into contact.

The interviews will be audio taped with your agreement only. Information obtained will be duplicated and stored at two different locations in locked cabinets. Identifying data (i.e. names, phone numbers and addresses) will be kept confidential. Only I will have access to the material.

I will personally transcribe the audio tapes. You will have the opportunity to review the transcripts and change, clarify or delete any wording that you choose.

Once the report is written the information will be kept for 5 years as a requirement of the Research Policy of Massey University then destroyed or returned to you if requested.

The information collected from the interviews will only be used to write a report, which will be submitted to the university. No names or identifying information will be used. If in the future the thesis material is used for publications you can be assured of confidentiality.

It is important to note that you have the right:

- to decline to participate;*
- to refuse to answer any particular questions or discuss any issues;*
- to withdraw from the study at any time before or during the interviews;*
- to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- to provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used;*
- to be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded;*
- to be given access to any information you have given.*

I can be contacted on (09) 4245095 or in writing to: Attention: Nikki Hill
C/- Jill Worrall
Massey University
Private Bag 102904
North Shore Mail Centre

My supervisor, Jill Worrall, can also be contacted on (09) 4439700 during working hours if you have any concerns or questions regarding the research.

"A look at the impact of pregnancy and childrearing
on the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations
of young mothers"

CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time before or during the interview/s and to decline to answer any questions. If I choose to leave during an interview I can request to have my information from that interview withdrawn from the study. Once an interview has been completed I cannot withdraw my information from that stage but I can view the recorded material and change or elucidate any information.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission. (The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project).

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I also understand that I have the right to ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. If I am under 16 years of age I will also gain guardian consent.

Name: Guardian Name:

Signed: Signed:

Date: Date:

Age:

Date

..... High School
(Address)

To

I am writing following a telephone conversation I had with your secretary today. To recap, I am a postgraduate student at Massey University, completing a Masters Degree in Philosophy - in Social Work. I am undertaking research this year with the aim to look at 'The Impact of Pregnancy and Childrearing on the Educational Experiences, Attitudes and Aspirations of Young Mothers'.

I am interviewing young mothers aged between 15 and 17 years who live on the North Shore, and hoping to have High Schools on the North Shore also participate. For this part of the research I am sending out questionnaires to be filled out by School Counsellors. The aim of this is to look at the level of support offered to young mothers within North Shore high schools. All questionnaires will remain anonymous.

I have enclosed an Information Sheet and the questionnaire itself. If you decide it would be fine to participate, please pass it on to your school counsellor to complete. The questionnaire can then be sent back in the self addressed envelope provided. I will call you to make sure you have received this pack in about a weeks time.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Comments from your school would be very much valued and appreciated. If you have any inquiries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Nikki Hill BSW(hons)

"A look at the impact of pregnancy and childrearing
on the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations
of young mothers"

INFORMATION SHEET (for questionnaire participants)

My name is Nikki Hill. I am a postgraduate student carrying out a research project to complete a Masters in Philosophy - in social work. The purpose of my research is three fold. One, to gain an understanding of the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations of young mothers on the North Shore aged 15-17 years. Two, to highlight any barriers to the continuation of education for young mothers and supports needed. Three, to look at the degree to which North Shore high schools meet the needs of young mothers.

The research consists of three particular stages in which I am asking people to participate. The first is involvement in a pilot interview, the second is in a one-on-one interview process and the third is by filling out a self-completion and anonymous questionnaire. I would like to invite you to participate in the questionnaire stage of the research. For this you will simply be required to fill out the questionnaire and send it in the stamp addressed envelope provided.

The information collected from the questionnaires will only be used to write a report, which will be submitted to the university. If in the future the thesis material is used for publications you can be assured of confidentiality. Once the final report is written the questionnaires will be kept for five years to meet the requirements of the Massey University Research Policy then destroyed.

It is important to note that you have the right

to decline to participate;

to refuse to answer any particular questions;

to ask any questions about the study at any time;

to be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded;

Once the questionnaire has been received it cannot be excluded from the study as it is expected they will be anonymous. It is assumed filling in the questionnaire implies consent.

I can be contacted on (09) 4245095 or in writing to: Attention: Nikki Hill, C/- Jill Worrall, Massey University, Private Bag 102904, North Shore Mail Centre.

My supervisor Jill Worrall, can also be contacted on (09) 4439700 during working hours if you have any concerns or questions regarding the research.

Questionnaire for High Schools on the North Shore:

With the aim to look at the degree to which High School meets the needs of young mothers.

Filling in this questionnaire implies consent.

Please mark correct answers in the appropriate with X or fill in the correct figure. Please write N/A if a question is not applicable.

1. Are you the school's Guidance Counsellor YES ₍₁₎ NO ₍₂₎

(If no, then please do not continue to fill out this form?)

2. What is your gender? Female ₍₁₎ Male ₍₂₎

3. How many students are currently on the school's roll? _____

4. How many are female? _____

5. What is the Ethnic make-up of the school? (in percentage if possible)

New Zealand European/Pakeha _____(1)

Maori _____ (2)

Pacific Island _____ (3)

Asian _____ (4)

Other _____ (5)

6. Does your school have zoning policies which can hinder acceptance into the school?

YES (1)

NO (2)

7. How many students have become pregnant while attending your school who continued with the pregnancy?

in 2002? _____ (1)

in 2001? _____ (2)

in 2000? _____ (3)

8. Over the last three years, how many were in each age group?

13 years _____ (1)

14 years _____ (2)

15 years _____ (3)

16 years _____ (4)

17 years _____ (5)

9. How many were in each ethnic group?

New Zealand European/Pakeha _____ (1)

Maori _____ (2)

Pacific Island _____ (3)

Asian _____ (4)

Other _____ (5)

10. How many of these students returned to your school as *full-time* students since the birth of their baby? _____

11. What was the total in each age group:

13 years _____ (1)

14 years _____ (2)

15 years _____ (3)

16 years _____ (4)

17 years _____ (5)

12. What was the total of these full-time students in each ethnic group?

New Zealand European/Pakeha _____ (1)

Maori _____ (2)

Pacific Island _____ (3)

Asian _____ (4)

Other _____ (5), please specify

13. Since 2000, how many returned as *part-time* students to your school? _____

14. What was the total number of part-time students in each age group?

13 years _____ (1)

14 years _____ (2)

15 years _____ (3)

16 years _____ (4)

17 years _____ (5)

15. What was the total number of these part-time students in each ethnic group?

New Zealand European/Pakeha _____ (1)

Maori _____ (2)

Pacific Island _____ (3)

Asian _____ (4)

Other _____ (5), please specify

16. Do you have any follow-up system for pregnant students if they do not return to school after the birth?

YES (1), please specify

.....

.....

NO (2)

17. Have you observed any links between teenage pregnancy and educational underachievement within your school (either prior to pregnancy or after)?

YES ₍₁₎, please explain

.....

.....

NO ₍₂₎

18. How would you describe the reactions of other students towards pregnant students and young student mothers at your school?

.....

.....

.....

19. Is there a childcare facility available in your school? YES ₍₁₎ NO ₍₂₎

20. Is there a childcare facility within walking distance that could be accessed by your students? YES ₍₁₎ NO ₍₂₎

21. Does your school have a specific Policy on pregnant students?

YES ₍₁₎ NO ₍₂₎

22. Does your school have a specific policy on student mothers?

YES ₍₁₎ NO ₍₂₎

23. If yes to either of the above, does this policy encourage the continuation of education within your school?

YES (1) NO (2)

24. Does your school encourage pregnant students/young mothers in alternative forms of education?

YES (1), please specify

NO (2)

25. Do you liaise with the Correspondence School regarding adolescent mothers?

YES (1) NO (2)

26. What are the school's processes in handling a known pregnancy within the school?

.....
.....
.....

27. Does your school provide any parenting / child development programme?

YES (1), please specify

NO (2)

28. Does your school provide life skills education appropriate for young mothers?

YES (1), please specify

NO (2)

29. Is there flexibility in the daily school programme for any babycares needed? i.e. breastfeeding?

YES (1), please explain to what degree?.....

.....

NO (2)

30. Are pregnant students/student mothers offered assistance with educational planning and goals setting?

YES (1), by whom.....

NO (2)

31. Is there any mentoring programme in place for your students (not just those who are pregnant/young mothers)?

YES (1), please specify the criteria for partaking in the programme and who runs the programme.....

.....

NO (2)

32. Are there any other ways in which your school supports the pregnant teen young mother in her ability to continue her education?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for partaking in this research project. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

Date

..... High School
(Address)

To

Thank you for your time today and your willingness to receive a questionnaire pack. I am a postgraduate student at Massey University, completing a Masters Degree in Philosophy - in Social Work. I am undertaking research this year with the aim to look at 'The Impact of Pregnancy and Childrearing on the Educational Experiences, Attitudes and Aspirations of Young Mothers'.

I have been interviewing young mothers aged 15 to 17 years who live on the North Shore, and hope to also have High Schools on the North Shore participate. For this part of the research I am sending out questionnaires to be filled out by School Counsellors. The aim of this is to look at the level of support offered to young mothers within North Shore high schools. All questionnaires will remain anonymous.

I have enclosed a questionnaire pack, which consists of an Information Sheet, the questionnaire, and an addressed, stamped envelope for returning. If you decide to participate, please follow your own school protocol, for example, gaining consent to complete the questionnaire from the principal if this is necessary. The questionnaire can then be sent back in the self addressed envelope provided. I will call within the following week to check you have received this pack.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Comments from your school would be very much valued and appreciated. If you have any inquiries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Nikki Hill BSW(hons)

"A look at the impact of pregnancy and childrearing
on educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations
of young mothers"

INFORMATION SHEET (for pilot interview participants)

My name is Nikki Hill. I am a postgraduate student carrying out a research project to complete a Masters in Philosophy - in social work.

The purpose of my research is three fold. One, to gain an understanding of the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations of young mothers on the North Shore aged 15-17 years. Two, to highlight any barriers to the continuation of education for young mothers and supports needed. Three, to look at the degree to which North Shore high schools meet the needs of young mothers.

The research consists of three particular stages in which I am asking people to participate. The first is in a semiformal 'pilot' interview, the second is in a 'one-on-one' interview process and the third is by filling out a self-completion questionnaire.

I am inviting you to participate in the pilot interview stage of the research. The purpose of the interview is to widen my understanding of some of the associated issues with teenage parenting and education, and to assist me in designing the interviews for the next stage of my research project.

For this I require 4-6 young mothers, aged 15-17 years, with one child up to 18 months of age, who describe themselves as New Zealand European, and live in the Auckland area, excluding the North Shore

The interview will take approximately 90 minutes, and will take place at a time and place agreed upon. The interviews will be audio taped with your agreement only.

Information obtained will be duplicated and stored at two different locations in locked cabinets. Identifying data (i.e. names, phone numbers and addresses) will be kept confidential. Only I will have access to the material. The tapes will not be fully transcribed, but notes will be taken from them in order to write up the interview schedule. Information will be kept for 5 years as required by the Massey University Research Policy.

Once the final thesis report is written it will be submitted to the university. No names or identifying information will be used. If in the future the thesis material is used for publications you can be assured of confidentiality.

It is important to note that you have the right:

- to decline to participate;*
- to refuse to answer any particular questions or discuss any issues;*
- to withdraw from the study at any time before or during the interview;*
- to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- to provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used;*
- to be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded;*
- to be given access to any information you have given.*

I can be contacted on (09) 4245095 or in writing to: Attention: Nikki Hill
C/- Jill Worrall
Massey University
Private Bag 102904
North Shore Mail Centre

My supervisor, Jill Worrall, can also be contacted on (09) 4439700 during working hours if you have any concerns or questions regarding the research.

Interview Guide

Demographics, including:

- Geographical area young mother lives in
- Age, ethnicity, educational status (when conceived, current)
- Number of children, ages
- Number of people in household, relationship to young mother

Young mothers' responses to the pregnancy:

- Initial emotions and feelings
- Deciding to parent, those involved in the process
- Educational decisions
- Readiness to parent a child: Parenting skills, life skills
Child development education

Birth father involvement:

- Occupational or educational status
- Support offered - practical
 - financial
 - educational

Income:

- Current source, financial plan

Parental issues:

- Relationship with parents/guardians as a teenager
 - prior to conception, since pregnancy
- Initial response to the pregnancy
- Parental/guardian support
 - during pregnancy, post-natally
- Educational influence
 - prior to conception, during pregnancy, post-natally

Peer Issues:

- Initial response to the pregnancy, how this could have been more helpful
- Educational influence
 - prior to conception, during pregnancy, post-natally

Personal attributes regarding education:

(Prior to conception, during pregnancy, post-natally)

Self-motivation

Academic ability, academic achievement

Educational goals

- purpose of the goals,
- benefits/disadvantages to continuing education

High school/alternative education issues:

Initial response to the pregnancy

- how this could have been more helpful

Support offered by the educational institute

- with preparing to parent
- to continue education

Length of time studying after conception

Reasons for leaving school/course

Plans to return or not, what would make the difference

Continuing education as a young mother:

Ideal educational environment

To what extent is flexibility required

Is a dual focus (parenting and formal education) desired

Childcare issues

Incentives for continuing education

Barriers to continuing education:

What are the barriers perceived by the young mothers

- *internal* (self-motivation, academic ability, self-confidence, enthusiasm)
- *external* (childcare, transport, financial resources, educational options)

The impact of mothering responsibilities on education

Supports needed to continue education:

The supports the young mothers feel are necessary

- family, financial, peer, partner, school/tutor,
- mentor support, careers advice

“A look at the impact of pregnancy and childrearing
on the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations
of young mothers”

CONSENT FORM FOR USING TRANSCRIPTS

I understand that Nikki Hill, who is carrying out the research, transcribed the interviews at a time and place where no one else was around. All real names, including names of people and places, have been excluded from the transcripts. My name has been changed.

I have viewed the transcripts and have changed, clarified and asked for information to be removed that I don't want in the transcript.

I am aware that, although my name has been kept confidential, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. This means that somebody who knows me may recognise me because of the information I shared.

I consent to the reviewed transcripts being used in the analysis.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

"A look at the impact of pregnancy and childrearing
 on educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations
 of young mothers"

INFORMATION SHEET (for pilot questionnaires)

My name is Nikki Hill. I am a postgraduate student carrying out a research project to complete a Masters in Philosophy - in social work.

The purpose of my research is three fold. One, to gain an understanding of the educational experiences, attitudes and aspirations of young mothers on the North Shore aged 15-17 years. Two, to highlight any barriers to the continuation of education for young mothers and supports needed. Three, to look at the degree to which North Shore high schools meet the needs of young mothers.

The research consists of three particular stages in which I am asking people to participate. The first is involvement in a pilot interview, the second is in a one-on-one interview process and the third is by filling out a self-completion questionnaire.

For the questionnaire stage I need to pilot the devised questions in order to articulate the schedule. I would like to invite you to participate in this vital stage. Any information that you offer, your name or the name of your school will not be used in my research in any way.

It is important to note that you have the right:

to decline to participate;
to refuse to answer any particular questions;
to ask any questions about the study at any time;

Once the questionnaire is received it cannot be excluded from assisting me in designing the final questionnaire schedule. It is assumed that filling in the questionnaire, or letting me know your thoughts in writing or over the phone, implies consent.

I can be contacted on (09) 4245095 / 021 1473 425 or in writing to: Attention: Nikki Hill, C/- Jill Worrall, Massey University, Private Bag 102904, North Shore Mail Centre.

My supervisor Jill Worrall, can also be contacted on (09) 4439700 during working hours if you have any concerns or questions regarding the research.