

# Teenage Pregnancy: The Making and Unmaking of a Problem (Health & Society)

Lisa Arai

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## Teenage Pregnancy: The Making and Unmaking of a Problem (Health & Society)

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Teenage Pregnancy: The Making and Unmaking of a Problem (Health & Society) Lisa Arai In the last decades of the 20th century, successive British governments have regarded adolescent pregnancy and childbearing as a significant public health and social problem. Youthful pregnancy was once tackled by attacking young, single mothers but New Labour, through its Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, linked early pregnancy to social exclusion rather than personal morality and aimed, instead, to reduce teenage pregnancy and increase young mothers' participation in education and employment. However, the problematisation of early pregnancy has been contested, and it has been suggested that teenage mothers have been made scapegoats for wider, often unsettling, social and demographic changes. The re-evaluation of early pregnancy as problematic means that, in some respects, teenage pregnancy has been 'made' and 'unmade' as a problem. Focusing on the period from the late-1990s to the present, "Teenage pregnancy" examines who is likely to have a baby as a teenager, the consequences of early motherhood and how teenage pregnancy is dealt with in the media. The author argues that society's negative attitude to young mothers is likely to marginalise an already excluded group and that efforts should be focused primarily on supporting young mothers and their children. This comprehensive examination of teenage pregnancy focuses on the situation in the UK, but will be useful for readers in other developed world countries. It will be of interest to students in sociology, social policy, health studies and public health, and also to policy makers and young people's interest groups.



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