



# **Surviving Teenage Motherhood: Myths and Realities (Studies in Childhood and Youth)**

*Helen Stapleton*

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The 'problem' of teenage motherhood remains high on national and international political, policy, public and media agendas. This book examines the experiences of teenage girls themselves, and their significant others, from pregnancy realization through the early years of motherhood, showing that the transmission of childbearing and rearing knowledges and practices, as passed from mothers to daughters, is of central importance. The teenagers' narratives expose, and articulate, recurring themes: their sense of unwantedness and powerlessness, and negative attitudes to adolescent sexuality and reproduction. The roles of midwives and the function of hierarchically organised institutions are revealed and set alongside discourses of choice and control. The empirical research on which this book is based provides another set of lenses through which to examine the interplay of power and personal agency in the lives of pregnant teenagers and young mothers.

The book contributes to the sociology of the female body at the convergence of two major life cycle transitions: adolescence and motherhood; the relationship between the body and self-identity is thus foregrounded.



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