

What pregnant adolescents think about antenatal care: a contemporary guide for midwives?

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Problem: Alienation from midwifery services by some pregnant adolescents' further increases entrenched health risks.

But how to collect relevant information?
Participant observation: Natural behaviours, conversations with pregnant adolescents...where can we blend in?
Dedicated antenatal clinic waiting rooms!

After nine months of watching and waiting....four themes emerge....



But what, if anything, is new for midwives to consider?

Midwifery action plans

1. Screen at an individual level and identify anxiety early.
2. Make antenatal clinics visually informative but not complex. Educate with relevance.
3. Investigate and use APPs, Online support groups & easy 1:1 midwifery contact
4. Encourage chosen support person(s) and include them in antenatal checks in particular partners of similar age
5. Educate mothers too, provide validation for their involvement. This is primary health care in action!

State of mind: High adolescent anxiety! Still depends on socioeconomic, educational cultural and educational status. However identifying degrees of resilience ameliorate this.

Q: What antenatal anxiety assessment tools are used in your area?

Searching for information: Adolescents are sponges, they are however, selective who they listen to! Mothers and significant females, including pregnant peers are approached first- information from these sources needs verification!

Q? Midwives, how full are your antenatal classes? With adolescents? Adolescents prefer visual and immediately relevant (during antenatal checks, APPs) information.

Our needed sources of support: practical & social – parents (mainly mothers), emotional – partners, cultural- peers. Maternal support is a double edged sword, huge advocates for midwifery care BUT sources of myth and misinformation!

Engaging with my pregnancy: Excited, subdued, poor view of reality or ambivalent? Poor and/or ambivalent engagement with pregnancy has negative impact on future adaptation to my mothering role. Q? midwives how can you help me?