



# Your Rights as a Pregnant or Parenting Youth under 18 in California

Visit [www.pregnantyouth.org](http://www.pregnantyouth.org) for more information

Topic	Examples of Rights You Have and Limits on Your Rights
<p><b>Health</b></p>	<p>You have the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To get <b>mental health</b> counseling, <b>drug treatment</b> and <b>STI services</b> on your own when you are 12 or older</li> <li>● To get <b>birth control, pregnancy testing, abortion</b> and <b>prenatal care</b> on your own and in private <b>AT ANY AGE</b></li> <li>● To keep your pregnancy and reproductive health information <b>private from your parents</b> when you want to keep it private</li> <li>● To get an <b>abortion</b> if you want one, or not have an <b>abortion</b> if you don't want one</li> </ul> <p>But:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Your parents must sign for you to receive most other kinds of health care.</li> <li>● Your parents can see your health records for most other kinds of health care -- except they can't see your health records for care you are able to get on your own consent like pregnancy related care.</li> </ul>
<p><b>School</b></p>	<p>You have the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To go to school and get an education</li> <li>● To receive the support you need to learn. This includes support you might need when you are pregnant or a parent in school, like special permission to go to the bathroom whenever you need or not having to take P.E. if a doctor says you shouldn't while pregnant.</li> <li>● To be free from discrimination or bullying, including for being a pregnant or parenting teen</li> <li>● To not be punished or marked tardy or truant for missing school for health reasons (like medical appointments or sickness) or for childcare reasons</li> </ul> <p>But:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You must go to school until you are 17 or have graduated or have your GED.</li> <li>● You cannot miss school without a valid excuse or you could be called truant.</li> </ul>

Topic	Examples of Rights You Have and Limits on Your Rights
<p><b>Your Parent Or Guardian</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Your parent/ guardian must provide you with <b>food, housing, medical care, and supervision.</b></li> <li>● The <b>State must help</b> if your parents / guardian can't or won't care for you.</li> <li>● You have the right to be <b>safe and free from harm</b> by your parents or caregiver.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Being a Teen Parent</b></p>	<p>You have the right and responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To keep your child or to choose adoption</li> <li>● To make all decisions about and for your child, usually with the other parent</li> <li>● To provide your child with food, housing, medical care, and supervision.</li> </ul> <p>But:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Being a parent does not emancipate you. You are still a minor under your parent or guardian's protection.</li> <li>● Some benefit programs require you to apply through your parents, even when you are a parent.</li> </ul>
<p><b>"Age of" laws</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Your parent or guardian must sign most <b>contracts</b> for you before you are 18 (like to buy a car, get a credit card, or rent an apartment).</li> <li>● Your parent or guardian must give permission for you to <b>marry</b> before you are 18.</li> <li>● You cannot even consider emancipation until you are at least 14.</li> <li>● You can't <b>drive</b> by yourself until you are 18, unless you have a provisional license and logged 50 hours of driving time with an adult over 25.</li> <li>● It is illegal to <b>drink alcohol</b> until you are 21.</li> <li>● It is illegal to <b>vote</b> until you are 18.</li> <li>● It is illegal to have <b>sex</b> before you are 18.</li> </ul>

Topic	Examples of Rights You Have and Limits on Your Rights
<p><b>Working</b></p>	<p>You have the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To work during school vacation starting at age 12 and outside school hours starting at age 14.</li> </ul> <p>But:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are limits on how many hours you can work.</li> <li>● Your parents may be able to get some (or all) of your paycheck.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Legal / Criminal</b></p>	<p>You have the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To speak to your parent/ guardian if you are picked up by the police</li> <li>● To ask for and receive three phone calls once booked</li> <li>● To ask for and get an attorney if you are questioned by the police</li> <li>● To remain silent if you are questioned by the police</li> <li>● To be treated respectfully by police</li> <li>● To talk in private with a lawyer about any matter, including any criminal, immigration or status questions</li> </ul> <p>But:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You can still be charged for crimes when you are under 18.</li> <li>● In some serious cases, you may be charged as an “adult” when you are 14 or older.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Foster Care/ Juvenile Justice</b></p>	<p>You have the right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To get birth control, pregnancy testing, prenatal care and abortion on your own and confidentially.</li> <li>● To choose an abortion or choose not to have an abortion. No one but you can make that choice.</li> <li>● To have custody of your child as long as you do not neglect or abuse your child. Child welfare cannot take your child from you just because you are in foster care or on probation.</li> <li>● To have a lawyer to help you fight for the services and placement you want.</li> </ul>