

Adolescent motherhood in an Australian context

Author

Sheeran, Nicola, Jones, Liz, Farnell, Lisa, Rowe, Jennifer

Published

2016

Journal Title

Journal of Applied Youth Studies

Version

Accepted Manuscript (AM)

Rights statement

© 2016 Centre for Applied Youth Research Inc. This article may not exactly replicate the final version published in the APA journal. It is not the copy of record. Reproduced here in accordance with publisher policy. Please refer to the journal link for access to the definitive, published version.

Downloaded from

<http://hdl.handle.net/10072/100834>

Link to published version

<http://cayr.info/jays-v-1-n-3/>

Griffith Research Online

<https://research-repository.griffith.edu.au>

Adolescent motherhood in an Australian context.

Nicola Sheeran^a, Liz Jones^a, Lisa Farnell^a, and Jennifer Rowe^b

^a School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University

^b School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine, University of the Sunshine Coast

Corresponding Author

Nicola Sheeran, School of Applied Psychology, Mt Gravatt Campus, Griffith University, Mezzine ridge Road, Mt Gravatt, 4111, Brisbane, Australia.

Ph: 61 7 3735 4431 Email: N.sheeran@griffith.edu.au

Author Bios:

Nicola Sheeran PhD

Nicola is a lecturer in Clinical Psychology. Prior to PhD completion, Nicola was a counsellor and community educator on unplanned pregnancy, contraception use and adolescent pregnancy prevention for a not for profit organisation. Her PhD was on the transition to motherhood for adolescent mothers of full term and preterm infants. Current research interests include communication between adolescent mothers and health professionals, long term outcomes for adolescent mothers, and the relationship between stereotypes/attitudes of teenage mothers and outcomes in an Australian context.

Liz Jones

School of Applied Psychology, Mt Gravatt Campus, Griffith University, Mezzine ridge Road, Mt Gravatt, 4111, Brisbane, Australia. Ph: 07) 3735 3365; Email: l.jones@griffith.edu.au.

Liz is an associate professor in psychology. She is a social and organisational psychologist. Her research interests are in health and intergroup communication, as well as the transition to parenthood with a preterm infant. Her recent research projects include the impact of single family rooms in neonatal nurseries on parents and staff, investigations of adult and adolescent parenting experience and adjustment with preterm infants, effective interprofessional practice and weight stigma in physiotherapy.

Lisa Farnell

School of Applied Psychology, Mt Gravatt Campus, Griffith University, Mezzine ridge Road, Mt Gravatt, 4111, Brisbane, Australia. Ph: 07) 3735 3445. Email: l.farnell@griffith.edu.au.

Lisa Farnell is a PhD candidate exploring social influences on the emotion process.

Jennifer Rowe PhD RN

School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine, University of the Sunshine Coast, Locked Bag 4, Maroochydore DC, Queensland, 4558 Australia. Ph: 07) 54565160. Email:

JRowe1@usc.edu.au

Jennifer is an associate professor in nursing. She has a PhD in sociology and her primary research is in early parenting adjustment. She collaborates as chief/co-investigator with academics and nursing and midwifery clinicians. Recent funded projects include evaluations of community parenting support services, the development and evaluation of an mhealth breastfeeding promotion intervention, investigations of parenting experience and adjustment with preterm infants, and teenage maternal adjustment during the transition home from hospital with a preterm or low birth weight infant.

Abstract

Adolescent motherhood has historically been conceptualised as a social problem requiring intervention, particularly in the US and UK where the issue has headlined policy for several decades. We draw on Australian and international literature to explore constructions of adolescent motherhood in Australia. We interrogate the common construction of adolescent motherhood as a problem primarily based on young age, and examine alternate discourses which could influence policy. We argue that constructing adolescent motherhood as an age-based problem perpetuates stereotypes and stigma, and is potentially damaging to young mothers. We conclude that policy and funding decision makers need to reconsider how they are conceptualising the issue. Recommendations for addressing this include acknowledging the heterogeneous experiences of young mothers, reframing the issue as one of disadvantage rather than age, and shifting from a deficit to a strengths-based dialogue.

Key Words

Discourse, Disadvantage, Policy, Service Delivery, Strengths-based approach,

Adolescent motherhood in an Australian context.

In Australia, as in other developed countries, adolescent motherhood has been persistently constructed as a societal problem. However, recently there has been an increasingly insistent discourse suggesting defining adolescent pregnancy as a problem is misguided (SmithBattle 2012). Our aim is to review the comparatively limited Australian literature (although international literature and perspectives are included to provide historical and international context), and interrogate the common construction of adolescent motherhood as problematic, in order to propose alternate constructions which, in turn, could influence policy and service planning.

Adolescent motherhood as a societal problem

Research investigating the impact of adolescent motherhood on both the adolescent and the infant began in earnest in the 1980's, particularly in the United States (US). The literature suggested that women who became mothers during their adolescent years were not developmentally ready to manage the demands of motherhood (Sadler 1983), placing both the young mothers and their infants at risk of poor outcomes (Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn and Morgan 1987). Since then, internationally there has been a consistent deficit discourse regarding adolescent motherhood, focusing on the psychological health of the young mothers, and the effect on the young women's life chances and their children.

The early international literature on adolescent mothers' psychological health suggested they are more likely to become depressed, anxious and stressed than their older counterparts (Baldwin and Cain 1980; Barth, Schinke and Maxwell 1983; Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn and Morgan 1987; Reis 1989; Williams, Joy, Travis, Gotowiec et al. 1987). However, these studies frequently compared young women (often African American) from low SES backgrounds to married or middle class adult mothers. When young mothers are instead compared to samples matched on pre-existing economic disadvantage, education or race, there are few differences in reported levels of stress (Barratt and Roach 1995), distress (Milan, Ickovics, Kershaw, Lewis et al. 2004) and depression (Troutman and Cutrona 1990). Similarly, associations between adolescent motherhood and poorer physical and mental health outcomes compared to adult mothers are reduced or eliminated when familial, demographic and environmental factors are controlled for (Patel and Sen 2012). In Australia, Farnell, Jones, Rowe and Sheeran (2012) found that adolescent mothers of preterm infants experienced less stress and better psychological health than adult mothers as they transitioned home from hospital.

Lee and Gramatov (2006) used the Australian longitudinal study on women's health to investigate predictors and outcomes of early motherhood. Their findings suggested young mothers experienced socioeconomic disadvantages and unhealthy lifestyles. However, when pre-existing disadvantage was controlled for, the problems experienced by young mothers were relatively minor. Their analysis also suggested that adolescent motherhood is not the precipitator of the trajectory of longer term unhealthy lifestyles, low education or the ensuing ill health and disadvantage, and, overall, young Australian mothers were coping well emotionally and maintaining good health (Lee and Gramatnev 2006). Hence, what may appear to be a strong relationship between age of parenting and psychological distress may be accounted for by pre-existing differences.

International research also suggests adolescent mothers have poorer life chances and are economically disadvantaged compared to women who delay child bearing (Card and Wise 1978; Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn and Chase-Lansdale 1989; Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn and Morgan 1987; Rudd, McKenry and Nah 1990). Australian research by Bradbury (2006) similarly found adolescent mothers are one of the most disadvantaged groups in Australian society, having low levels of education and high reliance on income support payments. Long

term, Bradbury found adolescent mothers were less likely to be partnered, less likely to own their own home and, if partnered, their partner was more likely to be low-income. Further, Australian adolescent mothers are also highly mobile, with instability in relationships, accommodation and employment interfering with tasks of daily living (Quinlivan, Box and Evans 2003; Quinlivan, Petersen and Gurrin 1999). However, these studies are primarily descriptive, often comparing groups of mothers, but not establishing causation (Bradbury 2006).

Pre-existing differences similarly call into question the causal role of young maternal age in educational and financial outcomes for adolescent mothers. For example, longitudinal US research used a large national data set to compare a subset of sister dyads who were either early or late child-bearers with the overall sample. They found few differences in high school completion or employment rates for sister dyads regardless of whether they were early or late child-bearers, despite differences in welfare assistance, education, and marital and employment status, when the early child bearers (i.e., adolescent mothers) were compared to the overall sample (Geronimus, Korenman and Hillemeier 1994). Further, longitudinal research from NZ found many adolescent women who became mothers had disengaged from education *prior* to falling pregnant and not as a result of becoming pregnant, suggesting mutual predictors of school disengagement and early pregnancy (Fergusson and Woodward 2000).

Internationally, being an adolescent mother has also been found to have a negative impact on the young mother's children (Baldwin and Cain 1980; Haskett, Johnson and Miller 1994). However, the causal role of young maternal age in the outcomes for infants of young mothers has been questioned. For instance, Shaw, Lawlor and Najman (2006), in a prospective study of Australian women who received antenatal care, investigated the effect of maternal age on children's outcomes 14 years later, finding the associations between maternal age, psychological distress, school performance and smoking and alcohol use were all largely explained by socioeconomic factors, family structure and maternal health. They also confirmed that the majority of Australian adolescent mothers and their offspring had good outcomes.

In summary, contemporary studies have highlight how pre-existing differences between adult and adolescent mothers have not often been considered. Adolescent mothers are a heterogeneous group. Thus, when factors such as SES are controlled for and appropriate comparison groups used, fewer or no differences are found, suggesting that negative outcomes for adolescent mothers may have been overstated and, instead, it is pre-existing disadvantage that is a risk factor for and predictor of long term disadvantage for adolescent mothers. This raises the question of why age has been targeted as the problem.

The construction of adolescent motherhood as a social problem

Adolescent motherhood as a social problem is a 20th Century construct (Rhode and Lawson 1993). Historically, women married and gave birth in their adolescent years. Those who were not married either gave their babies away or entrusted them to family to be cared for. It is only in recent years, as a result of societal changes, including a greater emphasis on education and career attainment for women, and changing social policies, that giving birth as an adolescent woman has been defined as problematic (Rhode and Lawson 1993). Further, factors that are analytically and empirically distinct, such as chronological age, marital status, and the planned or wanted nature of the pregnancy, have been conflated (Macintyre and Cunningham-Burley 1993), resulting in adolescent pregnancy and motherhood being defined as 'the problem'.

The ongoing increase in the average age of mothers in Australia (30.1 years in 2012) and the decrease in the average number of children per woman (declining from 2.74 in 1972 to 1.8 in 2012) (ABS 2010; AIHW 2014) has made adolescent mothers appear increasingly

deviant, with a UNICEF report in 2001 highlighting that "...adolescent parenthood has come to be regarded as a significant disadvantage in a world which increasingly demands an extended education, and in which delayed childbearing, smaller families, and two-income household, and careers for women are increasingly becoming the norm" (UNICEF 2001, pp. 5-6).

Expectations of, and experiences around parenting have fundamentally shifted in the past few decades, with children seen as more vulnerable (Faircloth 2014), precipitating a shift in parenting practices to an intensive parenting ideology (Hays 1996). This parenting ideology (Hays 1996) proposes that being a good parent is less about the provision of basic needs and more about material and social resources (Gillies 2005). Mothers do far more than feed, change and shelter their children, devoting large amounts of time, energy and emotional and material resources to their children, and parenting has become more public: "What parents feed their children, how they discipline them, where they put them to bed, how they play with them: all of these have become politically, and morally, charged questions." (Faircloth 2014 p.29). Expertise on children and their care, up to date knowledge on child development research, and an affiliation to particular education and child raising strategies are skills needed to enact this new style of parenting (Faircloth, 2014). However, women from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as adolescent mothers, are seen as lacking these skills and are targeted for surveillance and intervention (Pitt 2002; Romagnoli and Wall 2012). The discourse of risk to the child, coupled with mothers being seen as responsible agents, perpetuates the negative perceptions of adolescent mothers, who are judged as lacking the required resources or skills. Breheny and Stephens (2010) concluded that "concern about adolescent motherhood is as much about the wrong sort of women becoming mothers, as mothering too soon" (p. 307).

In summary, the continued emphasis on age as the defining problem can be understood from a historical and current cultural perspective, where shifting societal norms mean childbearing at a young age has become increasingly counter-normative and where pre-existing disadvantage has been ignored. What has also been ignored is evidence about the positive aspects of adolescent parenting.

Motherhood as positively influencing young women

A growing body of research has investigated adolescent women's experiences of motherhood, giving rise to an alternative discourse of adolescent parenting that challenges existing constructions. Spear and Lock (2003) reviewed 22 qualitative studies investigating adolescent motherhood and found that most adolescent mothers viewed parenting as a positive experience. Further, research from the US and UK suggests adolescent mothers often return to school, value education and report being committed to providing the best life for their children that they can (Arai 2003; Arenson 1994; Carey, Ratliff and Lyle 1998; Clarke 2013; Spear and Lock 2003). Australian research has found becoming a mother is associated with increased self-esteem and sense of identity (Mulherin and Johnstone 2015; Shea, Bryant and Wendt 2015; Sheeran, Jones and Rowe in press). including Indigenous women from extremely disadvantaged backgrounds in Queensland (Larkins, Page, Panaretto, Mitchell et al. 2011). Becoming a mother is globally reported as a catalyst for changes in lifestyle, often dramatically changing trajectories, facilitating maturity and career development, and decreasing risk taking behaviour (Breen 2014; Hanna 2001; Seamark and Lings 2004; SmithBattle and Leonard 1998). Further, SmithBattle (1995) found adolescent mothers did not share the social scientific view that mothering jeopardised or limited their lives. Instead, adolescent women saw pregnancy and motherhood as a positive experience, but the stigma associated with the label "adolescent mother" added to the challenges they faced.

Becoming an adolescent mother may in particular be a positive life choice for women from disadvantaged backgrounds, compared to alternative options. As highlighted by

SmithBattle (2005), postponing parenthood would not enhance the life experiences for some young women unless the disadvantage that existed pre pregnancy was addressed. According to Arai (2009), it is the political and middle class perspectives of adolescent pregnancy that should be subject to scrutiny, not the young women's decision to become parents. Indeed, Breheny and Stephens (2007) argue that adolescent mothers are not seen as contributing value to society by being mothers, because motherhood is only sanctioned when social conditions such as financial independence and marriage are met. Yet, there is little consideration that these may be unachievable for some women at any age (Breheny & Stephens, 2007).

Implications of the 'age is the problem' construction

Using age to define mothers as a social problem has a range of implications for adolescent mothers. First, adolescent mothers are viewed as a homogenous group, where negative outcomes pertaining to a small number of adolescent mothers are generalised to all adolescent mothers, who are then automatically assumed to be bad parents, incapable of raising their children appropriately. In Australia, adolescent mothers face negative attitudes, harsh stereotypes and perceive differential treatment from members of communities and health and service providers due to their age (Hanna 2001; Robb, McInery and Hollins Martin 2013; Roberts, Graham and Barter-Godfrey 2011), with young mothers perceived as less able than adult mothers (Perolini 2015).

Policy decisions designed to make motherhood a less attractive option for adolescents often mean young mothers are treated differently to adult mothers, possibly exacerbating the stigma and perpetuating the poverty cycle (Fessler 2008). One example in contemporary Australia is the baby bonus government payment provided to women once they give birth. This government initiative was introduced to increase the attractiveness of having children, as a result of the ageing workforce and declining reproductive rates (Guest 2008; Guest and Parr 2010). However, one widespread belief was that providing young mothers with monetary incentives increased the attractiveness of becoming a parent at a young age, where there would be an increase in adolescent pregnancy rates as they became parents purely 'for the money' (Grattan and Nguyen 2004). This attitude prevailed in the media and in popular discourse (Grattan and Nguyen 2004) despite no discernible increase in rates of adolescent pregnancy following the introduction of the baby bonus (Laws, Grayson and Sullivan 2006; Laws and Hilder 2008; Laws, Li and Sullivan 2010). At best, the incentive program slowed the rate of decline in adolescent pregnancy in Australia (Lain, Ford, Raynes-Greenow, Hadfield et al. 2009). Recently, discriminatory practises at a structural level have been introduced, for instance, changing payment schemes so that young women must return to study or work when their infants are 12 months old versus 7 years for adult mothers, and issuing lump sum payments to adult mothers and part payments to young women (Milne 2006). McArthur and Winkworth (2013) found consistency between the hopes and dreams of young mothers on income support and Australia's key policy outcomes for children and families. However, many factors hampered the achievement of those hopes and dreams including stigma, lack of access to resources, networks and social support, and the everyday realities of caring for very young children. Policies and practices that mandate change in personal behaviour rather than addressing structural inequalities reinforce negative stereotypes of adolescent mothers by not acknowledging individual circumstances; a criticism levelled at other policy decisions that are both overly prescriptive and fail to address heterogeneity in groups (i.e. the Indigenous welfare payment scheme; Mendes, Waugh and Flynn 2014).

A consequence of feeling stigmatised is the reluctance of adolescent mothers to access services (McArthur and Winkworth 2013). Research in Australia investigating the uptake and experiences of young mothers utilising support services (Author (2008) identified several

factors influencing whether young mothers would access services. All mothers in the study were highly aware of the negative connotations of being an adolescent mother and thus strove to distance themselves from this label, which often meant they would not ask for help from anyone, including family. They also related to a person not a service, so if the mother had not built a good relationship with the individual they would not engage with the service. Thus, mothers who experienced service providers as rude and judgmental would no longer access the service. Adolescent mothers who most needed help (i.e., those not transitioning well to parenting, reporting diagnoses of post-natal depression, having no partner support, with histories of drug use and/or violence/DV or living in rural or regional areas with no transport) also reported poorer relationships with service providers and were particularly reluctant to ask for help (Jones, Rowe and Sheeran 2008). In contrast, group programs specifically aimed at supporting young mothers were praised, for normalising the experience of difficulties associated with parenting, for the non-judgmental attitude of those running the group, and for providing the opportunity to take time out from the demands of parenting. This is consistent with international research showing group programs are well received and important to adolescent mothers (Ellis-Sloan 2015). However, most young mothers who needed additional support did not have access to group programs.

Overall, then, classifying mothers by age perpetuates stigma, resulting in feelings of judgment that may act as a barrier to help-seeking, diminish satisfaction with motherhood and jeopardise mental health. One final implication from defining age as the problem, rather than acknowledging the precipitating role of disadvantage, is that blame and responsibility for change are placed on the adolescent mother – when they may not have the agency to change it. Resolving systemic disadvantage presents a complex challenge for researchers and policy-makers alike (Committee for Economic Development of Australia 2015). Thus, shifting the focus to adolescent motherhood as the problem may seem a comparatively attractive option for policy-makers, service providers, media and the community.

Supporting adolescent motherhood in Australia

In Australia, interventions to support young mothers have typically adopted a deficit model of adolescent parenting (Brand, Morrison and Down 2014); what adolescent mothers are not doing well. However, deficit models may inadvertently promote negative outcomes by eroding trust between young mothers and health workers, perpetuating stigma and stereotyping, negating adolescent mothers' positive experience of motherhood, and undermining their sense of efficacy as mothers. Deficit models are also at odds with how adolescent mothers view themselves and their daily experience of parenting and challenges (Sheeran, Jones and Rowe 2015). In contrast, a strengths-based model, focusing on aspects of parenting that young women are doing well, is more likely to promote trusting and effective relationships between young mothers and health workers, in turn maximising the uptake and success of interventions to support adolescent mothers. Congruent with this, Ellis-Sloan (2015) found support services are effective when they are informed by an ethic of care; a model responsive to need and congruent with the women's view of themselves.

In addition, service providers and policy makers alike should be mindful that many of the challenges associated with adolescent parenting are a result of systemic disadvantage. As such, they are unlikely to be resolved by interventions that focus on the individual. For example, a recent meta-analysis of youth and early intervention programs aimed at reducing adolescent childbearing in the US showed a moderate reduction in risk but also found that early intervention programs do not influence the complex factors leading to early parenthood (Harden, Brunton, Fletcher and Oakley 2009). Instead, interventions addressing systemic pre-existing disadvantage, including social inequality, housing and transportation, poverty, and engagement in education and the workforce are needed. However, the first step appears to be acknowledging that disadvantage is the main problem, not age. A second step is shifting from

simple models of adolescent childbearing to considering the more complex biological nature of reproductive behaviour (Dickens, Johns and Chipman 2012), and how childbearing is related to environmental factors (Roberts, Graham and Barter-Godfrey 2011). Interventions that increase safety and improve the environment may have flow on effects to issues such as early childbearing (Dickens, Johns and Chipman 2012). Both these suggestions require a reconceptualization of adolescent pregnancy to inform policy.

Australia has some unique challenges when addressing adolescent parenting that have thus far been ignored in the literature. For example, Australia has 6 times the national rate of adolescent pregnancy in Indigenous populations (ABS 2010), yet little research has explored adolescent pregnancy for these women (Ireland, Narjic, Belton, Saggars et al. 2015; Senior and Chenhall 2008; 2012). Conflated with this issue is the difference in access to health services/health outcomes between rural, regional and urban areas (Hennegan, Kruske and Redshaw 2014; Matich, Harvey, Page, Johnston et al. 2015), as most Indigenous adolescent parents live in rural areas. The psychosocial profile of women who become mothers in regional/rural areas, as well as environmental factors (i.e. access to services) may increase risk of both pregnancy and poor outcomes (Roberts, Graham and Barter-Godfrey 2011; Smith and Grenyer 1999). Further, Australia has a growing population of adolescent mothers from immigrant/refugee backgrounds who face substantial challenges (McMichael 2013; Ngum Chi Watts, Liamputtong and McMichael 2015). To the extent that research needs to explore and address pre-existing disadvantage and risk, we argue it is important to understand the intersection between such risk factors and outcomes for adolescent mothers.

Finally, some researchers have questioned a fundamental assumptions underpinning the collective discourse around motherhood perpetuated by other researchers, policy makers and community members; the belief that motherhood is chosen in the absence of a promising future. Such an assumption negates the view that motherhood *is* a promising future and that social structures do not support or acknowledge this path (Arai 2003). Current society dictates that motherhood is a substandard profession, not the young mothers (SmithBattle 1995). As such, we need to explore the way adolescent motherhood is embedded within the larger discussion of women in the workforce and the impact of child rearing on women's financial and career aspirations.

Conclusion

We have reviewed the limited Australian literature on adolescent pregnancy and parenting to identify issues pertinent to the Australia context. We have argued that historically international research, which has informed our perspectives, has overstated the negative outcomes for adolescent mothers and their children. More recently, research has shown that many of the negative outcomes have less to do with age and more to do with pre-existing social disadvantage. Moreover, the outcomes for many of these women would not have been significantly better had they delayed childbearing. However, a pervasive discourse around the negative impacts of early childbearing and a relative disregard of the adolescent mothers' positive experience of parenting has perpetuated negative stereotypes and the stigma experienced by young mothers, with ramifications for the mother's internal view of self and willingness to access support when needed. Policy decisions also differentiate mothers due to age, contributing to stigma and stereotypes. Recommendations for addressing this are: acknowledging the heterogeneity of young mothers' experiences, shifting from a deficits dialogue to a strengths based dialogue and reframing the issue as one of disadvantage rather than age. We also argue for a more nuanced understanding of how contextual factors relate to reproductive behaviour and outcomes, and how pre-existing disadvantage can be mitigated.

References

- Arai, L., 2003, 'Low expectations, sexual attitudes and knowledge: explaining teenage pregnancy and fertility in English communities. Insights from qualitative research.', *The Sociological Review*, v.51, n.2, pp.199-218.
- Arai, L. 2009 'Teenage Pregnancy: The making and unmaking of a problem' in *Book Teenage Pregnancy: The making and unmaking of a problem*, eds Policy Press, Bristol.
- Arenson, J.D., 1994, 'Strengths and self-perceptions of parenting in adolescent mothers', *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, v.9, n.4, pp.251-258.
- Barth, R.P. Schinke, S.P. & Maxwell, J.S., 1983, 'Psychological correlates of teenage motherhood', *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, v.12, n.6, pp.471-487.
- Bradbury, B., 2006, 'Disadvantage among Australian young mothers', *Australian Journal of Labour Economics*, v.9, n.2, pp.147-171.
- Brand, G. Morrison, P. & Down, B., 2014, 'How do health professionals support pregnant and parenting young mothers in the community? A selective reiew of the research literature', *Women and Birth*, v.27, pp.174-178.
- Breen, A.V., 2014, 'Changing behaviour and changing personal identity: The case of pregnant and parenting young women and antisocial behaviour', *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, v.14, n.1, pp.60-79.
- Breheny, M. & Stephens, C., 2010, 'Youth or disadvantage? The construction of teenage mothers in medical journals', *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, v.12, n.3, pp.307-322.
- Carey, G. Ratliff, D.A. & Lyle, R.R., 1998, 'Resilient adolescent mothers: Ethnographic interviews', *Families, Systems & Health*, v.16, n.4, pp.347(1).
- Clarke, J., 2013, 'It's not all doom and gloom for teenage mothers – exploring the factors that contribute to positive outcomes', *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, pp.1-15.

- Dickens, T.E. Johns, S.E. & Chipman, A., 2012, 'Teenage pregnancy in the United Kingdom: A behavioural ecological perspective', *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology*, v.6, n.3, pp.344-359.
- Ellis-Sloan, K., 2015, 'Practising care in teenage mother support groups', *Critical Social Policy*, v.35, n.4, pp.535-555.
- Faircloth, C. 2014, Intensive parenting and the expansion of parenting in *Parenting Culture Studies*, eds E. Lee, J. Bristow, C. Faircloth and J. Macvarish, Palgrave Macmillan, London, UK, pp.25-50.
- Fergusson, D.M. & Woodward, L.J., 2000, 'Teenage pregnancy and female education underachievement: A prospective study of a New Zealand birth cohort', *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, v.62, pp.147-161.
- Furstenberg, F.F. Brooks-Gunn, J. & Chase-Lansdale, L., 1989, 'Teenaged pregnancy and childbearing', *American Psychologist*, v.44, n.2, pp.313-320.
- Furstenberg, F.F. Brooks-Gunn, S. & Morgan, P., 1987, 'Adolescent mothers and their children in later life', *Family Planning Perspectives*, v.19, n.4, pp.142-151.
- Geronimus, A.T. Korenman, S. & Hillemeier, M.M., 1994, 'Does young maternal age adversely affect child development? Evidence from cousin comparisons in the United States', *Population and Development Review*, v.20, n.3, pp.585-609.
- Gillies, V., 2005, 'Raising the 'Meritocracy': Parenting and the Individualization of Social Class', *Sociology*, v.39, n.5, pp.835-853.
- Guest, R., 2008, 'Evaluating public policy responses to the economic burden of population ageing with application to Australia', *Journal of Population Research*, v.25, n.2, pp.99-118.

- Guest, R. & Parr, N., 2010, 'The effects of family benefits on childbearing decisions: A household optimising approach applied to Australia', *Economic Record*, v.86, n.275, pp.609-619.
- Hanna, B., 2001, 'Negotiating motherhood: the struggles of teenage mothers', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, v.34, n.4, pp.456-464.
- Harden, A. Brunton, G. Fletcher, A. & Oakley, A., 2009, 'Teenage pregnancy and social disadvantage: systematic review integrating controlled trials and qualitative studies', *BMJ*, v.339,
- Haskett, M.E. Johnson, C.A. & Miller, J.W., 1994, 'Individual differences in risk of child abuse by adolescent mothers: Assessment in the perinatal period', *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, v.35, n.3, pp.461-476.
- Hays, S. 1996 'The cultural contradictions of motherhood' in *Book The cultural contradictions of motherhood*, eds Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Hennegan, J. Kruske, S. & Redshaw, M., 2014, 'Remote access and care: A comparison of Queensland women's maternity care experience according to area of residence', *Women and Birth*, v.27, n.4, pp.281-291.
- Ireland, S. Narjic, C.W. Belton, S. Siggers, S. & McGrath, A., 2015, '“Jumping around”: exploring young women's behaviour and knowledge in relation to sexual health in a remote Aboriginal Australian community', *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, v.17, n.1, pp.1-16.
- Lain, S.J. Ford, J.B. Raynes-Greenow, C.H. Hadfield, R.M. Simpson, J.M. Morris, J.M. & Roberts, C.L., 2009, 'The impact of the baby bonus payment in New South Wales: who is having "one for the country"?', *Medical Journal of Australia*, v.190, n.5, pp.238-241.
- Larkins, S.L. Page, P.R. Panaretto, K.S. Mitchell, M. Alberts, V. McGinty, S. & Veitch, P.C., 2011, 'The transformative potential of young motherhood for disadvantaged Aboriginal and

- Torres Strait Islands women in Trownsbill, Australia', *Medical Journal of Australia*, v.194, n.10, pp.551-555.
- Laws, P. & Hilder, L. 2008 'Australia's mothers and babies 2006. ' in *Book Australia's mothers and babies 2006.* , eds AIHW National Perinatal Statistics Unit, Sydney
- Laws, P. Li, Z. & Sullivan, E.A. 2010 'Australia's mothers and babies 2008' in *Book Australia's mothers and babies 2008*, eds AIHW., Canberra:.
- Lee, C. & Gramatnev, H., 2006, 'Predictors and outcomes of early motherhood in the Australian longitudinal study on women's health', *Psychology, Health, & Medicine*, v.11, n.1, pp.29-47.
- Macintyre, S. & Cunningham-Burley, S. 1993, Teenage pregnancy as a social problem: A perspective from the United Kingdom in *The Politics of Pregnancy: Adolescent Sexuality and Public Policy*, eds A. Lawson and D. L. Rhode, Yale University Press, New Haven, pp.59-73.
- Matich, P. Harvey, C. Page, P. Johnston, K. Jukka, C. Hiollins, J. & Larkins, S., 2015, 'Young people's perceptions of sexual and reproductive health in regional and rural Queensland: capturing the views of adolescents through reference groups and a user-friendly electronic survey', *Sexual Health*, v.12, pp.231-239.
- McArthur, M. & Winkworth, G., 2013, 'The hopes and dreams of Australian young mothers in receipt of income support', *Communities, Children and Families Australia*, v.7, n.1, pp.47-62.
- McMichael, C., 2013, 'Unplanned but not unwanted? Teen pregnancy and parenthood among young people with refugee backgrounds', *Journal of Youth Studies*, v.16, n.5, pp.663-678.
- Mendes, P. Waugh, J. & Flynn, C., 2014, 'Income management in Australia: A critical examination of the evidence', *International Journal of Social Welfare*, v.23, n.4, pp.362-372.

- Mulherin, K. & Johnstone, M., 2015, 'Qualitative accounts of teenage and emerging adult women adjusting to motherhood', *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology*, v.33, n.4, pp.388-401.
- Ngum Chi Watts, M.C. Liamputtong, P. & McMichael, C., 2015, 'Early Motherhood: a qualitative study exploring the experiences of African Australian teenage mothers in Melbourne, Australia ', *BMC Public Health*, v.15, n.873,
- Pitt, K., 2002, 'Being a new capitalist mother', *Discourse & Society*, v.13, n.2, pp.251-267.
- Quinlivan, J.A. Petersen, R.W. & Gurrin, L.C., 1999, 'Adolescent pregnancy: psychopathology missed', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, v.33, pp.864-868.
- Rhode, D.L. & Lawson, A. 1993, Introduction in *The Politics of Pregnancy: Adolescent Sexuality and Public Policy*, eds A. Lawson and D. L. Rhode, Yale University Press, New Haven, pp.1-22.
- Robb, Y. McNery, D. & Hollins Martin, C.J., 2013, 'Exploration of the experiences of young mothers seeking and accessing health services', *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology*, v.31, n.4, pp.399-412.
- Roberts, S. Graham, M. & Barter-Godfrey, S., 2011, 'Young mothers' lived experiences prior to becoming pregnant in rural Victoria: A phenomenological study', *Australian Journal of Rural Health*, v.19, n.6, pp.312-317.
- Romagnoli, A. & Wall, G., 2012, 'I know I'm a good mom': Young, low-income mothers' experiences with risk perception, intensive parenting ideology and parenting education programmes', *Health, Risk & Society*, v.14, n.3, pp.273-289.
- Rudd, N.M. McKenry, P.C. & Nah, M., 1990, 'Welfare receipt among black and white adolescent mothers', *Journal of Family Issues*, v.11, n.3, pp.334-352.

- Sadler, L.S., 1983, 'The adolescent parent: A dual developmental crisis', *Journal of Adolescent Health Care*, v.4, pp.100-105.
- Senior, K.A. & Chenhall, R.D., 2008, '“Walkin’ about at night’: the background to teenage pregnancy in a remote Aboriginal community', *Journal of Youth Studies*, v.11, n.3, pp.269-281.
- Senior, K.A. & Chenhall, R.D., 2012, 'Boyfriends, babies and basketball: present lives and future aspirations of young women in a remote Australian Aboriginal community', *Journal of Youth Studies*, v.15, n.3, pp.369-388.
- Shaw, M. Lawlor, D.A. & Najman, J.M., 2006, 'Teenage children of teenage mothers: Psychological, behavioural and health outcomes from an Australian prospective longitudinal study', *Social Science & Medicine*, v.62, pp.2526-2539.
- Shea, R. Bryant, L. & Wendt, S., 2015, 'Nappy Bags instead of handbags': Young motherhood and self-identity', *Journal of Sociology*, pp.1-16.
- Sheeran, N. Jones, L. & Rowe, J., 2015, 'Joys and challenges of motherhood for Australian young women of preterm and full-term infants: an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis', *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Health*, v.33, n.5, pp.512-527.
- Sheeran, N. Jones, L. & Rowe, J., in press, 'Motherhood as the vehicle for change in Australian adolescent women of preterm and full term infants', *Journal of Adolescent Research*,
- Smith, M.M. & Grenyer, B.F.S., 1999, 'Psychosocial profile of adolescents in a large Australian regional area', *Australian Journal of Rural Health*, v.7, n.1, pp.28-33.
- SmithBattle, L., 2012, 'Moving policies upstream to mitigate the social determinants of early childbearing', *Public Health Nursing*, v.29, n.5, pp.444-454.
- SmithBattle, L. & Leonard, W., 1998, 'Adolescent mothers four years later: Narratives of the self and visions for the future', *Development and Aging*, v.20, n.3, pp.36-49.

Spear, H.J. & Lock, S., 2003, 'Qualitative research on adolescent pregnancy: a descriptive review and analysis', *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, v.18, n.6, pp.397-408.

Williams, T.M. Joy, L.A. Travis, L. Gotowiec, A. Blum-Steele, M. Aiken, L.S. & al., e., 1987, 'Transition to motherhood: A longitudinal study.', *Infant Mental Health Journal*, v.8, pp.251-265.