Teens and Toddlers integrated process evaluation

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About Teens and Toddlers

Teens and Toddlers (T&T) is a youth development and teenage pregnancy prevention programme and the central project of the *Children: Our Ultimate Investment* (COUI) organisation. COUI UK was founded in 2001 and introduced the Teens and Toddlers programme to address social exclusion and high teenage pregnancy rates.

The T&T programme aims to prevent teenage pregnancies through:

- Providing practical experience of working with children and developing an appreciation of the enormous privilege, responsibility and hard work involved in having a child.
- Raising awareness of the personal and financial responsibilities implied by an unexpected pregnancy through developing an understanding of the impact of a child on family life and personal lifestyle.
- Encouraging the development of alternative goals to being pregnant, such as satisfying work and relationships.
- Educating teens about the realities of pregnancy, the importance of sexual responsibility and the effects of harmful behaviours (such as drugs and violence) and health related factors - from foetus to neonate to child.
- Providing one-to-one counselling and mentoring/coaching to young people who are emotionally challenged and need support, to enhance the outcomes of T&T.
- Providing the knowledge and skills required for successful relationships and sexual responsibility, to prevent conception and protect sexual health.

T&T targets 'hot spots' of high rates of teenage pregnancy and works with local authorities to develop programmes in secondary schools. The programme selects young people aged 13-17 considered to be at risk for teenage parenthood and works with them for three hour weekly sessions over 18-20 weeks in a nursery setting. The young person supports a child, typically under the age of 5 and 'needing special attention', for about one and a half hours per session and also spends around 90 minutes per session in a classroom working with a facilitator trained in the pedagogy and curriculum of T&T. This classroom time focuses on child development, effective parenting skills, anger management, sexuality and relationships. Participants also have access to individual time with a trained counsellor. Participation in the programme enables the young people to achieve a National Award in Interpersonal Skills, Level 1 (NCFE).

The evaluation

NatCen was commissioned to carry out a rigorous outcome and process evaluation of the T&T programme via a randomised controlled trial (RCT) with an embedded process evaluation. The three main elements of the evaluation are:

    a) the formative evaluation (to agree a logic model and outcome measures);

    b) the RCT design to test impact on those agreed measures;

    c) the process evaluation looking at fidelity of implementation, programme acceptability and stakeholder perceptions of impact and causal pathways.

This report sets out the findings of the process evaluation which has been conducted with the following aims:

1. To test programme fidelity, that is, whether the programme is delivered as described both in the programme description and in the logic model.
2. To obtain the perspectives of the key players involved in the programme to:

    a) explore their understandings of the aims and purpose of the intervention;

    b) explore their perceptions of the impacts of the programme;

    c) gather some interpretative data with which to enrich or theorise on the results of the RCT when they become available.

The research design incorporated the following main elements:

- A series of face to face in-depth interviews with school staff involved in the selection of pupils for participation in Teens and Toddlers in 16 of the 22 schools;
- Case studies of four schools, following each school and associated nursery from the earliest stages of selecting participants to take part, to observing the final award ceremony at the end of the programme;
- 'Snapshot' observations of practice and interviews in a wider sample of 15 participating schools.

Intervention fidelity: Delivering Teens and Toddlers

One aim of the process evaluation was to determine the *fidelity* of Teens and Toddlers delivery, both to the logic model developed during the formative evaluation, and across the settings in which the programme is delivered.

The logic model (Appendix B) described three components of the T&T programme:
- A classroom curriculum;
- Experiential learning with toddlers in the nursery;
- One-to-one counselling for those requiring it.

For each component, the study examines both variance and fidelity across settings and in relation to the logic model.

The selection process

The selection of participants to take part in the programme is undertaken by the school, not by Teens and Toddler staff. Interviews with staff in schools responsible for selection focused on: who was responsible for selection; what criteria were used to select potential participants; and how pupils were recruited to the programme (including what information was provided to pupils).

The T&T programme provides schools with a checklist of criteria to consider when selecting young people to participate in the programme (Appendix D). School staff are advised by Teens and Toddlers to use the checklist as *guidance* for making selection and not necessarily as strict criteria for inclusion or exclusion. The checklist includes risk factors for teenage pregnancy and other factors that may indicate more general disengagement and vulnerability.

The type of school staff making the selection tended to be those responsible for pastoral care or inclusion, including heads of years or groups, learning support mentors, counsellors, school nurses, PSHE or SRE teachers, or SEN coordinators. Selection was commonly a consultative process between several members of school staff.

The formative evaluation highlighted variance in the process of selecting participants for the T&T programme. This process evaluation has found similar variance. Those responsible for selection vary in their roles and consequent knowledge about individual young people, particularly in respect of risk factors such as sexual behaviour and family-based issues. As advised by T&T, the selection tool provided is not generally used to assess individual young people, though it is used to inform school staffs' consideration of which young people may be suitable for the programme. Staff tended to apply their own subjective criteria when selecting young people and the reasons for selecting individuals were rarely recorded.

School staff did not generally inform young people about why they have been selected for the programme and were particularly reluctant to make explicit to young people that they were considered to be at risk of early pregnancy. They were more likely to emphasise the opportunities presented by the programme to gain work experience with young children and obtain accreditation.

Young people themselves were often unaware of the reasons for their selection. Although information about the purposes of the programme, including teenage

pregnancy prevention, were given during the briefing session, young people were more likely to focus on the work experience and accreditation aspects of the programme. Nevertheless, our interviews indicate that participants did gradually acquire an awareness of the programme's pregnancy prevention objectives. They sometimes expressed resentment at the implication that they themselves are at risk.

Teens and Toddlers facilitators reported that they perceived that the 'right' girls were being referred to the programme.

The classroom curriculum
The T&T curriculum is comprised of the following:

- On-going journaling activity where participants are encouraged to explore their thoughts and feelings about events occurring in their lives and record their experiences working with the children in the nursery;
- Education in each session on an aspect of interpersonal skills, such as communication, listening, constructive conversation, receiving criticism, and giving and receiving feedback;
- Education on human development, emphasising the growth of toddlers and children;
- Education about healthy parenting skills including the importance and role of fathers in children's development;
- Discussions about teenage sex, the consequences of unplanned pregnancy and exploration of the characteristics of a sexually healthy adolescent;
- Information on sources of support for mental and physical health, including sexual health;
- When the curriculum is completed participants obtain an accredited level 1 qualification.

The curriculum is designed to address the determinants of teenage pregnancy via improving:

- Emotional literacy and social skills (self-reflection, self-management, awareness of others);
- Awareness of options for future education/employment;
- Sense of self-worth and self-esteem;
- Knowledge and awareness of contraception;
- Future aspirations and ability to set goals and markers of success;
- Sense of control over their life; and
- Understanding and appreciating the responsibility and work involved in parenting.

Interpersonal and social skills development

The development of effective interpersonal and social skills was one of the main aims of the programme for many facilitators. Desired outcomes included improving the young women's communication skills, and raising their confidence and self-esteem.

Facilitators varied in their emphasis on either modelling interpersonal and social skills through their own behaviour and management of the group, or focusing more directly on the curriculum content. There was a commitment to ensure that group time was '*not like school*', to avoid a didactic approach to delivering the curriculum and create a relaxed, safe environment in which to develop interpersonal skills. Elements of the curriculum were delivered using a range of methods including group discussion, role plays and card games etc.

For some facilitators, creating an effective group dynamic to enable young women to learn how to communicate and work effectively as a group, and experience positive relationships with others was a key objective of the Teens and Toddlers programme.

The experience of caring for a young child is intended to provide a further opportunity for young people to develop interpersonal skills, as facilitators encourage participants to use what they learn in the curriculum to observe and reflect on the toddlers' behaviour.

Self-assertion and potential

Facilitators addressed potential and self-assertion in three key ways. First, praise was extensively used about participants' behaviour with the toddlers, throughout activities such as role plays and as written feedback in journals. Second, the creation of a supportive group dynamic was seen by facilitators as a key means of building confidence. Finally, participants were encouraged to think about the potential of the toddlers they worked with, before reflecting on their own capacities.

Sexual health and pregnancy

A key element of the Teens and Toddlers curriculum is discussions about sex, the consequences of unplanned pregnancy and unprotected sex, and exploration of the characteristics of a sexually healthy adolescent.

Variance existed in the emphasis between content and process, that is, the emphasis placed on providing information about sexual health and teenage pregnancy, and on creating a 'safe space' in which to discuss it. During our observations, we noted variance in facilitators' knowledge of the answers to the questions about sexual health.

Child development and parenting skills

Facilitators varied in their emphasis on parenting skills. Some felt that it was not a core element of the programme. Discussions about child development and parenting skills were commonly anchored in young women's experiences during nursery time.

We did not observe any discussion about the role of fathers during our observations; nor did it emerge in interviews. Where fathers were mentioned, this was usually in relation to their absence.

Support for mental, physical and sexual health

Sexual health is a strong element of the T&T curriculum. We did not observe any examples of support for other aspects of physical health during our observations and it did not emerge as a theme in our in-depth interviews. However, it is clear that emotional well-being is addressed throughout the programme.

Journals and National Award

Participants have the option of preparing evidence in a portfolio to receive a national award and in practice this meant that the last 15-30 minutes of team time was usually dedicated to some form of paperwork. There was very little variance across groups and most completed evidence for the National Award.

Participant engagement

A key area of variance was the engagement of the young women during group time, including their comprehension of the topics being discussed, their mood throughout the group session, and their attendance.

We commonly observed groups where the participants seemed attentive and demonstrating full comprehension of the day's topic. However in a few instances the group was less engaged and it was not always easy to tell whether participants were failing to understand, or refusing to engage (which could be explained by a range of reasons such as boredom, embarrassment etc).

Figures obtained from Teens and Toddlers for all participants involved in the RCT indicate that 26% of participants attended less than half of the programme. Some do not disengage entirely, but their attendance is sporadic, frequently missing weeks.

Facilitators and teachers outlined a range of reasons for poor attendance and drop-off, including:

- Disorganisation/poor memory; the girls simply *forget* to attend;

- School-led reasons; for example, some participants may have been given detention on Teens & Toddlers day, or school trips/exam preparation etc may interfere with attendance;
- Participant apathy/dislike of the programme.

Nursery time

Pairing teens with toddlers

Participants are encouraged to work with one particular toddler during nursery time, and groups are assigned a selection of toddlers by the nursery staff. Interviews with nursery staff and T&T facilitators indicated that toddlers tend to be chosen because staff perceived that they would benefit from some additional one-to-one support. Reasons identified for this include that the toddlers:

- speak little English or have English as a second language;
- have broader communication difficulties;
- are new to the nursery and need support to settle in;
- have a learning difficulty;
- are experiencing problems at home;
- exhibit challenging behaviour; or
- are demanding of staff time which additional support will alleviate.

Across all settings we analysed, only nursery staff were involved in assigning toddlers and facilitators were not involved, although some general guidance was provided on the type of toddler to select (those that would benefit from one-to-one support).

Once a teenager had been allocated a toddler, the intention was that this pairing would remain in place for the duration of the programme. In some cases however, pairings were changed, either because the toddler was no longer available (e.g. they no longer attend the nursery) or the teenager dropped out of the programme.

Activities during nursery time

Most of what we observed in the nursery was the teenagers supporting toddlers in unstructured play. We did not observe a lot of nursery staff-facilitated play or structure, although some facilitators reported that this did happen, particularly in reception classes with older children.

Facilitators and nursery staff

After the formal introduction to the nursery, we did not observe much interaction between nursery staff and T&T participants during our observations of nursery time. In general, the nursery staff were happy to entrust supervision to the T&T facilitators.

We observed a lot of variance in the level of support and interaction between facilitators and participants during nursery time across the sites visited. Some facilitators were actively engaged with the young women throughout the 90 minutes whilst in other sites the level of support from facilitators was low (although participants were *never* left unsupervised).

Facilitators often described their role as one of observation, looking for examples of interaction between the teenagers and the toddlers that could be used during team time discussions.

Level of participant engagement during nursery time
During most observations, we noted that the young women worked hard in supporting their assigned toddlers as well as managing their interactions with all of the toddlers in the class. Less commonly, during some observations the young women were not as enthusiastic and did not actively engage with their toddlers much of the time.

We also observed variance in the amount of time participants spent working with their assigned toddler as opposed to interacting with any, or a group, of toddlers. The reality of supporting a toddler during unstructured play in a group setting is that young women inevitably end up working with more than one toddler at a time. However the variance also appeared to be associated with the participants' attitude to their assigned toddler.

Other variables that mediated the amount of time spent working with an individual toddler included the participants' and the toddlers' attendance.

Counselling
In all sites visited, counselling sessions started in week two of the programme and took place during nursery time. Participants attended individually, usually for around 45 minutes, allowing two participants per week to receive counselling. Counsellors are generally unpaid trainees using their experience with T&T as part of their training.

The means of selecting participants for counselling each week varied across schools. In some schools, a simple rota system was used and the girls took it in equal turns to attend. Other groups could not adopt this approach because the young women were less keen to receive counselling and needed a lot of encouragement to attend. In some groups the approach was needs-based; those young women in need of additional support would be signposted to the counsellor more frequently.

Counsellors were clear that they were there to discuss whatever issues the young people wanted, not to pick up on topics that emerged from the T&T curriculum. Counsellors identified a range of topics that had emerged during sessions, including:

- Problem relationships with parents and other family members;
- Bereavement;
- Substance misuse and addiction;
- Racism;
- Peer pressure;
- Stress of school exams;
- Relationship problems;
- Bullying.

An area of variance was the attendance of counsellors at group activities. Some preferred to leave after counselling to maintain a clear boundary between counselling and group work. Others preferred to stay and join in with group activities.

Conclusions on programme fidelity

Overall, the delivery of Teens and Toddlers was consistent with the description in the logic model. All three programme components were delivered in every site, and although there were differences across sites, we did not consider this to be beyond the variance expected when delivering a complex intervention in a wide range of school and nursery settings, and by facilitators from a range of professional backgrounds.

The main elements of variance in programme delivery were:

Variance in curriculum delivery:
- Some facilitators adapted their pedagogical approach to suit the learning styles of the group.
- Some facilitators were more flexible than others in the delivery of the curriculum, both in the amount of content delivered and the order in which it was delivered.
- Variance in participant attendance and engagement.

Variance in nursery time
- Facilitators had different approaches to encouraging teenagers to stick closely to their assigned toddlers.
- Variance in participants' engagement with their assigned toddlers.

Variance in counselling
- Different methods are used to select participants for counselling each week.
- Variance in participants' willingness to attend counselling, and actual attendance.
- Presence of counsellor during group activities.

Perceptions of the aims and impacts of Teens and Toddlers

We have analysed data from the case studies and interviews with a wider range of school stakeholders to explore their perceptions of the programme in two areas: the aims and purpose of the programme and what kinds of impacts they perceived it to have

had. It is important to note that the impacts we discuss in this report are those perceived by stakeholders and participants. The actual impacts as measured by the RCT are reported on separately.[1]

Perceived aims of the programme
Stakeholders emphasised different aims of the programme depending on their own background.

Facilitators' understanding of the aims of the intervention centred on enabling young women to recognise a broader range of choices, building their self-confidence and self-esteem and improving their interpersonal and communication skills. Facilitators were less clear about the aims of the nursery time.

School staff tended to focus more on the aim of reducing vulnerability to exclusion, becoming NEET or reducing the risk of teenage pregnancy. Those with teaching responsibilities emphasised the aim of giving the young people vocational education or training.

The participants' understandings of the aims of the intervention developed as they progressed through the programme. They often held quite conflicting views about the purpose of the intervention, seeking to distance themselves from the notion that it may be aimed at vulnerable young women likely to become pregnant. Towards the end of the programme, the participants tended to recognise this aim whilst still not necessarily applying it to themselves.

Participants understood the purpose of the interaction with the toddlers initially as a deterrent to becoming pregnant while unprepared to support a child. Later in the programme they also saw the interaction as serving the purpose of modelling their own behaviour.

We concluded that whilst all of these aims we identified may be encompassed within the logic model, the variance is quite pronounced and it may be helpful to develop clearer and more consistent messages around the aims of the intervention.

Acceptability
Acceptability is a key prerequisite for an effective intervention and overall, the intervention was perceived as acceptable to all of our respondents, both the adult stakeholders and the participants. However, it should be noted that we only interviewed

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[1] Maisey, R., Speight, S., Keogh, P., Wollny, I., Bonell, C., Sorhaindo, A., Wellings, K., and Purdon, S., (2012) Randomised controlled trial of the 'Teens and Toddlers' programme. DFE-RR211, DfE Research Report, DfE: London.

school and nursery staff who were tasked with implementing the programme in their institutions. We did not interview representatives from schools that may have refused or discontinued the intervention. Furthermore, we only interviewed participants who were near to completing the programme. We did not interview any participants who had dropped out as part of this qualitative study, but they are included as interviewees for the RCT.

Perceived impacts

Stakeholders were clear that the young people would vary in terms of their capacity to benefit from the programme. There is not only variation in the way interventions are delivered, but also in the way they are received, and the young people have a range of starting points, needs and prior experiences informing their responses.

The reported impacts varied depending on the role of the respondent. Facilitators reported greater impact while school staff noted smaller or subtler impacts. Perceived impact seemed to be influenced by expectations of the intervention. Those with the greatest or most developed understanding of the aims of the intervention (facilitators) were also those that noted the greatest impact. This is not to say that facilitators were trying to exaggerate the impact, rather that teachers expect less of the intervention and tend to place its impact within the larger context of social norms within the school and the community.

The greatest impacts reported by stakeholders and participants were improvements in self-esteem, self-confidence and interpersonal skills. These in turn were seen as having an impact on participants' capacity to recognise the choices available to them, articulate those choices, and negotiate power more generally with those around them.

Both stakeholders and participants were less certain about impacts on attitudes towards early pregnancy and motherhood. Adult stakeholders either thought that this impact would only become apparent in the longer term or believed that this intervention alone was unlikely to counter all of the influences that lead to early pregnancy.

Implications of these findings

Selection criteria

The process evaluation has identified that there was variance in the way in which schools selected girls to go on the programme. As advised by T&T, teachers used the selection tool as a guide but combined this with their own subjective judgements as to which young people would benefit most from the programme.

Predicting which girls are at greatest risk of teenage pregnancy is very challenging. Teachers also face practical constraints in making their selections having limited time and information available to them.

It is, however, important that targeted interventions are focused on those most at risk if they are to maximise the chances of achieving reductions in the population rate of teenage pregnancies. There are considerable financial and opportunity costs associated with an expensive intervention being directed at girls who are at low risk of teenage pregnancy. There is therefore scope for refining the selection tool both to improve its ability to capture the full range of relevant risk factors and to encourage wider take up of the tool among teachers.

Based on preliminary analysis of data from the 1970 birth cohort, the key risk factors for teenage parenthood include low reading and maths attainment, involvement in disciplinary problems, lone-parent family structure, dislike of school, positive attitude to parenthood, low future expectations, social housing tenure, family's receipt of benefits, low parental expectations and low parental interest in education. No one risk factor on its own can function as a practical indicator of which young women become teenage mothers. However, we did find that a composite score drawing on all our variables made a much better indicator. It would therefore be possible to develop and pilot a practical targeting measure which draws on as many as possible of the above constructs, with some scope for a more practical measure drawing on routine data available to schools.

Programme delivery

Although our conclusions are that overall programme delivery is implemented with a good degree of fidelity to the logic model, there are some areas of variance. Some of these are an inevitable consequence of different facilitators working in different settings with different young people, but some variance could be reduced by more specific guidance to facilitators and others involved in the programme on:

- The priority to be given to curriculum content as opposed to learning through group processes;
- Expectations around facilitators' accurate knowledge of sexual health issues;
- The process of pairing young people with toddlers;
- Expectations regarding facilitator's support during nursery time;
- The selection of young people for counselling and the role of the counsellor in the group.

Acceptability

Our findings are positive in that both adult stakeholders and participants involved in and completing the programme report it to be acceptable. However, there are perspectives

we have been unable to explore, including those of young women who refused to participate in the programme, dropped out or attended sporadically, the views of schools choosing not to be involved in the programme, the views of other teachers not involved in the implementation of T&T in their schools and parents who withhold their consent for their child to be involved.

Some of our interviews also highlighted that some young women were upset and resentful at the notion that school staff viewed them as at particular risk of teenage pregnancy. This has a bearing on programme acceptability and merits consideration by T&T and participating schools. Clearer guidance on how the aims of the programme and selection criteria are communicated to young people may be helpful.

Perceived aims

The variance in understanding of the aims of the programme may be of concern for its future replicability. Teens and Toddlers facilitators expressed higher expectations of the intervention than school staff, who, for example, often discussed the programme simply in terms of giving girls useful work experience. In turn, the participants themselves were rarely provided with explicit information about the aims of the programme. Where aims are not clearly communicated and shared there is a risk of failing to select the most appropriate participants and of reduced fidelity over time. There may be scope for greater clarity of communication about the aims of the programme and its underlying theory.

Perceived Impacts

The impacts discussed in this report are those perceived by stakeholders and participants, not those measured by the RCT. The impacts most commonly perceived by both adult stakeholders and young people related to confidence, self-esteem and interpersonal skills. Respondents did not report direct impacts on attitudes to early pregnancy and parenthood.

It is perhaps not surprising that respondents, particularly the participants who are relatively young and may not be thinking that far in the future, focused on the more immediate impacts of the programme, particularly those centred around attitudes and outlook. The personal and interpersonal impacts that were described may be viewed as an important interim step in an approach to reducing the risk of early pregnancy and improving education and employment outcomes. It is a reasonable theory that more confident, assertive and articulate young women are less likely to be subject to the peer and other pressures that can lead to unplanned pregnancy and there is some evidence

that higher self-esteem is associated with later sexual debut among girls (Spencer et al, 2002).[2]

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[2] Spencer, J.M, Zimet, G.D, Aalsma, M.C., and Orr, D.P, Self-esteem as a Predictor of Initiation of Coitus in Early Adolescents. PEDIATRICS, 109, 4, 2002, 581-584.

1 Background, scope and methods

1.1 Background

Teens and Toddlers (T&T) is a youth development and teenage pregnancy prevention programme and the central project of the *Children: Our Ultimate Investment* (COUI) organisation. COUI was founded in 1977 by Laura Huxley, whose aim in developing the organisation was to address what she described as "unnecessary suffering" in the world (COUI, 2009). In 1978 COUI began work with two projects in California, USA: Project Caressing and T&T.

COUI UK was founded in 2001 to "address social exclusion and high teenage pregnancy rates via the targeted youth support initiative, Teens and Toddlers" (T&T UK website). The T&T programme aims to decrease teenage pregnancy by raising the aspirations and educational attainment of 13-17 year old teenagers at most risk of leaving education early, social exclusion and becoming pregnant.

The 2011 T&T website[3] describes Teens & Toddlers as "both a teenage pregnancy prevention and sexual health programme and a youth development project… Although a preventative programme, Teens and Toddlers asserts that the best way to achieve a reduction in youth exclusion and teenage pregnancy is to give young people a new and positive experience of themselves, raise their self-esteem and aspiration, and help them develop alternative goals which re-engage them with their education."

At the start of the evaluation, the aim of the T&T programme was defined as aiming to prevent teenage pregnancies through:

- Providing practical experience of working with children and developing an appreciation of the enormous privilege, responsibility and hard work involved in having a child.
- Raising awareness of the personal and financial responsibilities implied by an unexpected pregnancy through developing an understanding of the impact of a child on family life and personal lifestyle.
- Encouraging the development of alternative goals to being pregnant, such as satisfying work and relationships.

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[3] From T&T website http://www.teensandtoddlers.org/programme/index.htm [accessed on 26/4/11]

- Educating teens about the realities of pregnancy, the importance of sexual responsibility and the effects of harmful behaviours (such as drugs and violence) and health related factors - from foetus to neonate to child.
- Providing one-to-one counselling and mentoring/coaching to young people who are emotionally challenged and need support, to enhance the outcomes of T&T.
- Providing the knowledge and skills required for successful relationships and sexual responsibility, to prevent conception and protect sexual health.

T&T targets 'hot spots' of high rates of teenage pregnancy and works with local authorities to develop programmes in secondary schools. The programme selects young people (male and female)[4] aged 13-17 considered to be at risk for teenage parenthood and works with them for three hour weekly sessions over 18-20 weeks in a nursery setting. Over the course of the programme, the young person supports a child, typically under the age of 5 and 'needing special attention', for about one and a half hours per session. The young person also spends around 90 minutes per session in a classroom working with a facilitator trained in the pedagogy and curriculum of T&T. This classroom time focuses on child development, effective parenting skills, anger management, sexuality and relationships. Participants also have access to individual time with a trained counsellor. Participation in the programme enables the young people to achieve a National Award in Interpersonal Skills, Level 1 (NCFE).

1.1.1 The overall evaluation

The T&T programme has previously conducted internal evaluations based on retrospective analysis of data from annual surveys of young people (aged under 20) who had completed the programme at least one year previously. The response rate to these surveys ranged from 47-71%. The analysis assessed pregnancy rates and attitudes to teenage pregnancy and found low rates of pregnancy under the age of 18 in follow-up populations (The Dream Mill, 2004; McDowell, 2004; McDowell, 2006; Cater and McDowell, 2007).[5]   However, the strength of these analyses is limited by the fact that those responding to the survey were self-selected and there has been no comparison group of young people not in receipt of the intervention.

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[4] Although T&T works with boys and girls, this evaluation examines an intervention with young women only.
[5] A J McDowell The Dream Mill Ltd (2007) A retrospective analysis of the efficacy of the Teens and Toddlers programme; A J McDowell (2006) Pregnancy rates, attitudes and behaviour changes among graduates of Teens and Toddlers programmes; S. Cater and A.J. McDowell (2007) Pregnancy rates, attitudes and behaviour changes among graduates of Teens and Toddlers: Annual Retrospective Study; K.L. Humphrey (2010) A Retrospective Analysis Exploring the Efficacy of the Teens and Toddlers Programme.

The overall aim of this study, therefore, was to carry out a rigorous outcome and process evaluation of the T&T programme via a randomised controlled trial (RCT) with an embedded process evaluation. The three main elements of the evaluation are:

    a) the formative evaluation (to agree a logic model and outcome measures);

    b) the RCT design to test impact on those agreed measures;

    c) the process evaluation looking at fidelity of implementation, programme acceptability and stakeholder perceptions of impact and causal pathways.

This report sets out the findings of c), the process evaluation.

1.1.2   The formative evaluation

In 2008-2009, an initial pre-RCT formative phase of evaluation was undertaken as a way of ensuring the intervention was feasible, appropriately standardised and deemed acceptable prior to the RCT outcome evaluation. It also aimed to elucidate the intervention's 'logic model' to inform selection of outcomes and pathway variables. The purpose of the formative evaluation was to:

- describe the logic model underlying the intervention and its intended components, causal pathways and outcomes;
- describe the planning, delivery and receipt of the programme for a pre-trial cohort;
- assess programme feasibility, fidelity and quality during this pre-trial delivery;
- assess the acceptability and appropriateness of the programme, pre-trial, from a range of perspectives;
- inform procedures for recruitment, consent, randomisation and data collection in the RCT.

A report on the formative phase was produced in July 2009 and finalised in February 2010.

Appendix B sets out the logic model developed from the formative evaluation.

1.1.3   The integrated process evaluation

The integrated process evaluation builds on the findings of the formative phase and has the following dual purpose:

- To test programme fidelity, that is, whether the programme is delivered as described both in the programme description and in the logic model;
- To obtain the perspectives of the key players involved in the programme (the facilitators, school and nursery staff and the young people participating in the programme) in order to:

a) explore the extent to which their understandings of the aims and purpose of the intervention tally with those described in the logic model and programme description;

b) explore their perceptions of the impacts of the programme;

c) gather some interpretative data with which to enrich or theorise on the results of the RCT when they become available.

This evaluation did not include economic analysis. However, we carried out some scoping work to inform any future economic evaluation that may be commissioned of the programme. The findings of this are included in Appendix A.

1.2 Methods

The study has used a qualitative approach to explore programme feasibility, fidelity, quality, accessibility and acceptability of the programme. The objectives were to understand, from a range of perspectives:

- programme fidelity;
- the impacts of the programme for participants and the mechanisms through which these were achieved;
- factors that influenced the delivery and impact of the programme;
- programme acceptability;
- the 'burden' of the programme on participating schools and nurseries in respect of the use of their resources.

The research design needed to meet three main challenges:

a) The need to accommodate both breadth, encompassing the range of stakeholders and the number of school settings involved in the RCT (22 schools), and depth in order to understand the complexities of T&T delivery over the 17-week programme;

b) The need to address questions about the selection of participants for the programme. The formative evaluation highlighted variance in schools' use of the criteria outlined in the T&T selection tool. The evaluation team suggested refinements to the tool prior to wave 1 of the RCT. However, it was decided not to implement these and, instead, for teachers to continue to use the selection tool as a guide only. Nevertheless, the steering group were keen to address the question of whether or not the 'right' girls were being selected for participation in the programme using relevant and appropriate criteria;

c) The research design also needed to respond to concerns expressed both by the Teens & Toddlers senior staff and the (then) Department of Children, Schools and Families that participants may not have been fully disclosing risk behaviour in their responses to the quantitative survey. The researchers therefore aimed to

design the qualitative study in a way which would develop participants' trust in its confidentiality, reduce anxiety during data collection, and thereby increase the reliability of the data collected.

The research design incorporated the following main elements:

- Case studies of four schools, following each school and associated nursery from the earliest stages of selecting participants to take part, to observing the final award ceremony at the end of the programme;
- 'Snapshot' observations of practice and interviews in a wider sample of 15 participating schools;
- A series of face to face in-depth interviews with teachers involved in the selection of pupils for participation in Teens and Toddlers in 16 of the 22 schools.

1.2.1 Case studies

Qualitative case studies were undertaken in four schools over the 17 weeks of the programme between February and July 2010. In each case study school, data were collected from young women (on both the intervention and control arms of the trial), teachers, T&T facilitators and counsellors, nursery staff, and parents (where possible), through a series of observations, focus group, paired and individual interviews.

The case study approach had several advantages. It allowed us to follow the delivery of the programme in schools from set-up stage (including the selection of pupils), through to the final award ceremony at the end of the intervention. Repeated contact with case studies also increased our ability to ground in-depth interviews in examples of practice. Most importantly, the case study approach allowed for staged data collection with programme participants, enabling the researchers to engage with the young women on several occasions and reduce concerns about participating in the study. The case studies started with 'lighter touch' data collection encounters with the young women, including observations of the nursery time and focus groups that made use of participatory techniques, allowing respondents to become familiar and more comfortable with the researchers before the final individual interviews.

Case study sampling

Case study schools were purposively sampled to obtain a range of settings using the following criteria:
- Previous experience of running Teens and Toddlers;
- Ofsted rating of both the school and the nursery.

Case study	Previous experience of running teens and Toddlers	Ofsted rating for school	Ofsted rating for nursery
1	No	Good/outstanding	Good/outstanding
2	Yes	Satisfactory/inadequate	Satisfactory/inadequate
3	Yes	Good/outstanding	Satisfactory/inadequate
4	No	Good/outstanding	Good/outstanding

We restricted the sample to London schools to make the best use of research time and resources given that the research team was London-based.

Case study data collection

An overview of planned data collection in each case study is shown in Figure 1.1 below:

Figure 1.1   Overview of case study approach
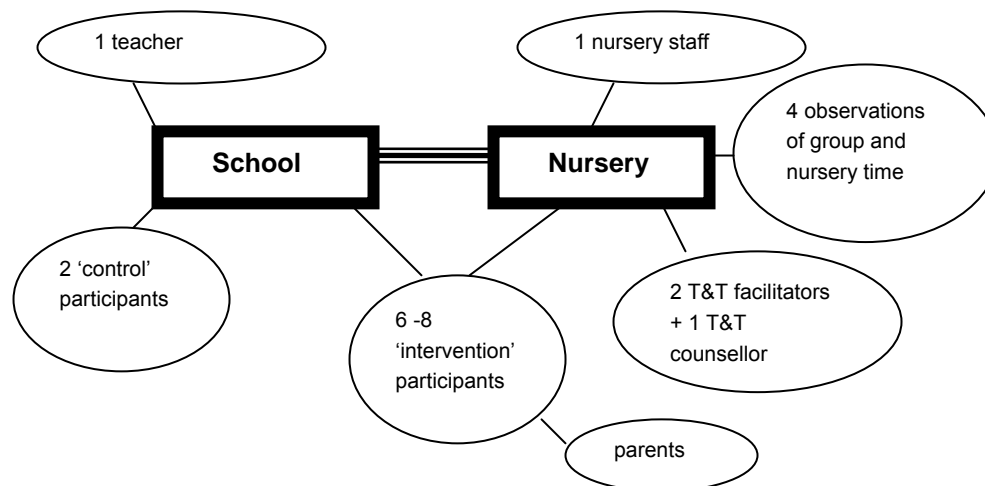
In depth interviews

Within each case study, it was intended to carry out in-depth face-to-face interviews with:

- One member of school staff involved in supporting the intervention;
- One member of the nursery staff involved in supporting the intervention;

- Two T&T staff facilitating the programme at the nursery;[6]
- The T&T counsellor supporting the programme at the school;
- Parents of programme participants;[7]
- Six to eight young women participants in the programme ('intervention' participants);[8]
- Two 'control' participants.

Interviews focused on respondents' experiences and views on recruitment, the acceptability of the programme, issues of programme fidelity, its perceived impact and possible causal pathways. Interviews with school and nursery staff also explored the potential costs and burdens to schools and nurseries associated with running the programme (without attempting to quantify these).

Interviews with control participants took place towards the end of the programme, and focused on issues around potential contamination (e.g. whether the young women in the intervention group were talking about what they learned on the programme with those in the control group) and confounding factors (e.g. whether control participants were taking part in other programmes, with similar aims).

Observations

Four observations of the intervention were undertaken in each case study; half of nursery time and half of group time. Observations were participatory; that is, during nursery time the researchers interacted with the toddlers and the young women, and, where appropriate, took part in activities in the team room. This approach was used to develop a relationship between the participants and the researchers whose involvement in the activities was guided by the Teens and Toddlers facilitators' suggestions for appropriate times to join in. A schedule was developed to guide researchers' observations and completed soon after each session. No notes or recordings were taken during the observations. Observation notes were structured under the following headings:

- Arrival and attendance of girls (note mood of group);
- Check-in exercises;
- Nursery staff & facilitators' behaviour during toddler time;
- Toddler time: Length of time spent in the nursery; activity; time spent with paired toddler;
- Description & suitability of teaching space;
- Counselling (note: how it is organised and the reaction from the girls);

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[6] The term 'nursery' is used throughout to encompass a range of settings where childcare occurred. These include children's centres, primary schools etc.

[7] As we note below, we used an opt-in approach to parents and only one parent responded to the invitation to take part in the study.

[8] As we note below, the number of participants interviewed was five in each case study school.

- Bag-o-bits exercise including facilitator's sexual health knowledge and reaction from young people;
- Curriculum activities;
- National Award work/ journaling.

Observations were spaced throughout the 17 week programme in each case study setting, from around week three to the end. Our final observation was of the award ceremony where the participants in each case study school were presented with certificates of achievement.

Focus groups and in-depth interviews with participants

We adopted a staged approach to data collection with young women participating in the programme in the case study schools as follows:

- An initial observation of at least one nursery or group session;
- An interactive focus group with all participants involved in the programme in each case study school (a maximum of eight young women[9]). This adopted a range of participatory methods to explore attitudes towards recruitment, the intervention and the trial, expectations, and anticipated impact. A secondary aim of the focus group was to develop a trusted relationship with the participants;
- An in-depth paired interview mid-way through the intervention, focusing on participants' experience of the programme to date, perceptions of its impact and anticipated outcomes, and possible causal pathways;
- A final individual in-depth interview, exploring impact, acceptability and causal pathways took place towards the end of the programme.

Topic guides for all focus groups and interviews are included in Appendix C.

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[9] There was a maximum of eight young women participating in the programme in each school. As noted in Table 1 five participants were involved in focus groups in each school.

Table 1.1 Intended and achieved data collection across four case study schools					
	Intended data collection in each case study	Case Study 1	Case Study 2	Case Study 3	Case Study 4
Observation of group time	2	2	2	2	2
Observation of nursery time	2	2	2	2	2
In-depth interview with teachers	1	1	1	1	1
In-depth interview with nursery staff	1	1	1	1	1
In-depth interview with lead T&T facilitator	1	1	1	1	1
In-depth interview with second T&T facilitator	1	1	1	1	1
In-depth interview with T&T counsellor	1	1	1	1	1
In-depth interview with parent	2	0	0	0	1
In-depth interview with control participants	2	2	2	2	2
Focus group with programme participants (No. of participants)	1 (6-8)	1 (5)	1 (5)	1 (5)	1 (5)
Paired/Triad interview with programme participants (No. of participants)	3-4 (2)	2 (2/3)	1(3)	2 (2)	3(2)
Individual interview with programme participants	6-8	5	3	3	4

Recruitment and consent

Consent to take part in the research was sought from participants and their parents at the start of the recruitment process for the Teens and Toddlers programme in each school. The consent was for participation in the RCT, including the quantitative survey.

For those schools selected as case studies, we made a further approach (by email and telephone) to the Teens and Toddlers lead contact and the T&T facilitators with information about the process evaluation, seeking agreement to take part as a case study. An information leaflet about the research outlining its purpose, the implications of participation, respondent confidentiality and data protection was provided to all stakeholders. No adult stakeholder refused to take part in in-depth interviews or observations.

Young women participants were also provided with a version of the information leaflet written in a more accessible style. Signed consent was sought prior to the first focus group, and participants were reminded of the confidential nature of the research at the start of every encounter. This included researchers offering to leave the room if any participant became uncomfortable during an observation. The voluntary nature of

participation was reiterated at the start of every research encounter. None of the young women refused to take part in any stage of the research.

1.2.2 Selection interviews

Face to face in-depth interviews with school staff undertaking the selection process were carried out in 16 of the 22 schools. In these interviews, researchers discussed with school staff the criteria used to select young people for the programme, use of guidance provided by T&T, any other selection criteria used, confidence in selection, and anticipated impact of the programme on the selected young women. The topic guide for these interviews is included in Appendix C. An initial 11 interviews were undertaken during January 2010 concurrent with the selection of girls for the second cohort of the RCT. This sample was drawn from London-based schools participating in the RCT. Staff from a further five schools outside London were interviewed about selection during June 2010 when research into programme fidelity was being undertaken (see section 1.2.3).

1.2.3 Wider programme fidelity

Assessing programme fidelity was one objective of the case studies. In addition, the fidelity of programme delivery was evaluated across a wider range of participating schools. Researchers visited 15 schools (ten in London, five outside London) and undertook:

- A semi-structured observation of programme delivery in both the nursery and the group sessions, using the observation schedule described above;
- An in-depth interview with the Teens and Toddlers facilitator;
- In the five non-London schools, staff were also interviewed about the selection process.

1.3 Data analysis

The data was analysed using Framework (Ritchie et al, 2003), a systematic approach to qualitative data management that was developed by NatCen and now widely used in social research (Pope et al, 2006). The Framework approach is now supported by new bespoke software also developed by NatCen.

Framework involves a number of stages. First, the key topics and issues which emerge from the research objectives and the data are identified through familiarisation with the transcripts. The initial analytical framework is then drawn up and a series of thematic charts or matrices are set up, each relating to a different thematic issue. The columns in each matrix represent the key sub-themes or topics while the rows represent individual participants. Data from each participant are summarised into the appropriate cell. In this way, the data are ordered in a systematic way that is grounded in participants' own

accounts, yet oriented to the research objectives. The significance of managing data in this way is that the whole of a participant's account can easily be accessed, analysed and compared with other cases as well enabling analysis of particular themes within the account.

The Framework approach and the use of Framework software meant that each transcript and each part of every transcript that was relevant to a particular theme was noted, ordered and instantly accessible while maintaining the ability to view the accounts and cases as coherent wholes.

The final stage of analysis involved working through the charted data in detail, drawing out the range of experiences and views, identifying similarities and differences, and interrogating the data to seek to explain emergent patterns and findings. The aim of the analysis was to develop categories of behaviour, experiences and explanations that were comprehensive in the sense of capturing the full range of views and experiences.

In the following sections we present the key findings of this analysis. Chapter Two focuses on fidelity of delivery, including the selection of participants and the implementation of the programme (the classroom curriculum, nursery time and counselling). Chapter Three focuses on the perceived aims and impacts of Teens and Toddlers from the perspectives of facilitators, school and nursery staff and participants. In Chapter Four we discuss our conclusions and their implications.

2 Intervention fidelity: Delivering Teens and Toddlers

2.1 Introduction

One aim of the process evaluation was to determine the *fidelity* of Teens and Toddlers delivery, both to the logic model developed during the formative evaluation, and across the settings in which the programme is delivered. Teens and Toddlers is delivered in a wide range of school and nursery settings, by facilitators from a variety of professional backgrounds, giving rise to potential variance in programme delivery.

The logic model (Appendix B) describes three components of the T&T programme: a classroom curriculum; experiential learning with toddlers in the nursery; and one-to-one counselling for those requiring it. This section of the report describes the delivery of each of these components based on observations in the four case study settings and interviews and snapshot observations in 15 further schools. It includes the perspective of adult stakeholders (facilitators, counsellors, school and nursery staff) and programme participants, and examples from our observations of practice. For each component, we outline both variance and fidelity across settings and in relation to the logic model.

2.2 The selection process

The selection of participants to take part in the programme is undertaken by the school, not by Teens and Toddler staff, although schools are provided with guidance from the organisation. Interviews with staff in schools responsible for selection focused on: who was responsible for selection; what criteria were used to select potential participants; and how pupils were recruited to the programme (including what information was provided to them).

The T&T programme provides teachers with a checklist of criteria to consider when selecting young people to participate in the programme (see **Error! Reference source not found.** for a copy of T&T's original guidance as well as a copy of the revised guidance which was designed for the trial to improve the selection of programme participants). School staff are advised by Teens and Toddlers to use the checklist as *guidance* for making selection and not necessarily as strict criteria for inclusion or exclusion. The checklist includes risk factors for teenage pregnancy and other factors that may indicate more general disengagement and vulnerability. These include:

- shyness or withdrawnness;
- negativity and lack of self-belief;
- general sadness (or depression);
- nervousness (or anxiety);
- anger (or aggressiveness);
- frequent use of alcohol and drugs;
- are not interested in thinking about the future;
- are disengaged from and uninterested in school;
- are sexually active;
- believe it is acceptable to have a child as a teenager;
- disengagement from others;
- poor attendance record;
- experienced puberty earlier than their peers;
- history of STIs;
- previous pregnancy;
- family member who was pregnant as a teen;
- history of abuse (physical, sexual or emotional);
- is or has been in care;
- has history of family instability and lacks positive role models;
- generally does not perform well in school.

2.2.1 Types of staff responsible for selection

A small number of schools advertised the T&T programme in whole school or year group assemblies or through announcements in registration. In these cases, students selected themselves to attend the T&T briefing meeting, rather than being put forward by school staff. However, in most schools, some form of staff selection occurred.

The type of school staff making the selection tended to be those responsible for pastoral care or inclusion. They included heads of years or groups, learning support mentors, counsellors, school nurses, PSHE or SRE teachers or SEN coordinators. In most schools the selection involved consultation with a wider group of staff in order to draft a list of young people with suitable characteristics to be invited to the T&T briefing. In some cases, the suitability of each selection was justified to a senior member of staff before it was approved. In other cases, the group of staff had to assess whether participation in the programme would impact upon academic performance for each student before the list was finalised. Typically, staff outside the selecting group were not informed of why particular young people were referred to the programme.

2.2.2 Use of the selection tool

Staff responsible for selection reported rarely using the T&T selection tool to formally assess individual young people. A couple of staff asked young people to complete a questionnaire or the actual T&T selection tool to determine whether they were

appropriate for the programme, but most said that, as advised by T&T, they used the checklist to focus their consideration of which young people might benefit from the programme:

> *"You can make an educated guess at who would benefit from the course, just by reading the tool."* Teacher

Some school staff felt they did not have sufficient knowledge of individual young people to answer some questions about risk on the T&T selection tool (particularly concerning sexual behaviour and substance use). Some reported that accessing this information from other sources (e.g. school health professionals) would breach the young person's confidentiality. Teachers were likely to have consistent information available to them on factors such as academic performance, attendance and engagement and but not about puberty, history of STIs and family instability. Some staff also thought that the tool did not help to identify all those at risk, for example young people who are withdrawn and those with multiple issues.

2.2.3   Criteria used for selection during the RCT

Although school staff used the written criteria provided by T&T as guidance, many had also developed their own understanding of what social and behavioural indicators identified young people at risk of teenage pregnancy and poor outcomes generally. These alternative criteria were not often formally evidence-based but informed by subjective experience.

> *"Firstly I call all those girls that are, as we said, vulnerable. That are problem kids, right? Looking at background as well. You find some of them are naive, you understand? And that's how they get into trouble. So it's those girls as well, basically."* Assistant Achievement Coordinator

Most staff also reported relying on anecdotal or circumstantial information about young people's sexual behaviour learned from discussions with other teachers and students or observations of girls' interactions with boys at school or how girls dress.

> *"...stories that you hear, things that you deal with, you know, with, with the girls. For example, I knew one of the girls had an older boyfriend who comes to school to pick her up after school. And if, if she wasn't sexually active, I'd be very, very surprised, because this boy... he was 17 and going out with a girl that's 13, and some of the other girls are causing problems 'cos he's slept with a few others, you know, and he is sexually active, and he is doing these sort of things, and... stories come forward..."* Teacher

Commonly used criteria for selection were:
- General disengagement or poor school performance/behaviour;

- In need of confidence and self-esteem building;
- Perceived to be at risk of early sexual behaviour;
- Known sexual behaviour;
- Exhibiting sexualised behaviour or interaction with boys;
- Would benefit from a programme outside of school.

Some school staff also used additional criteria to select young people, including those who were interested in careers in childcare, showed general enthusiasm for the T&T programme, were likely to commit to the 18-20 weeks, responded well to small group learning and interaction and had younger siblings.

> *"Students who show an interest and have shown that they are in need of an opportunity that would enhance their self esteem and build their confidence because it's to do with, it's such, actually it's a long program, it's not just a one off, so students who would respond to a continual input of support as well. Students who are enthusiastic to this kind of programme."*
> Learning support manager

Staff tended not to select young people at two extremes; those who were very academic and those very disengaged from school. Reasons for not selecting young people included:

- They could not afford to miss lessons without risking overall academic achievement;
- Parents would disapprove of the young person missing lessons;
- Challenging or serious behavioural issues in school that may arise during the intervention;
- Irregular school attendance; or
- They did not show any interest in working with children.

The type of criteria used by school staff was influenced by their role and their access to information on students' social and behavioural characteristics, including sexual behaviour. For example, staff with responsibility for monitoring, counselling or inclusion were more likely to have, and use, personal information about young people in addition to academic performance. The criteria used also varied according to the emphasis they placed on the main aims of the programme. Where school staff saw the main emphasis as being youth development, they focused on recruiting young people with perceived deficiencies in self-esteem or engagement. Where they believed the emphasis of the programme was more directly teenage pregnancy prevention, they tended to recommend young people who were known or perceived to be sexually active.

> *"I mean, some of the kids that I picked weren't, I don't think are sexually active; I think they, they would benefit from the course because they want to go into things, things like childminding and childcare courses after they leave school, so*

a holistic view is to, you know, get ex-young children working with young children, really." Teacher

School staff occasionally recorded the reasons in their file or records for selecting particular young people but this was not common.

In schools where the programme had been running for several years, staff had developed a more shared understanding of the type of young people appropriate for the programme and recruitment tended to take less time than in those schools new to T&T.

2.2.4 Information provided to participants

Commonly, once potential participants had been selected, a member of school staff invited those young people to a briefing meeting about the programme held by a T&T project manager. Young people were informed either by the selecting staff member directly or via their form teacher, and given permission to leave class to attend the briefing. In schools where the programme had been running for a few years, many of the students were already well informed about the programme.

In interviews, the young people described receiving little information about T&T while they were engaged in the selection process. They generally were not clear about how or why they were selected to take part in the programme, and many described the processes as happening quite quickly without very much explanation about how each of the steps (invitation, briefing meeting, questionnaire, selection etc.) were related.

> *"They didn't really give us much information. It was just like presentation bang, questionnaire and then they picked the six girls and then they went, that's it."*

When school staff did provide information to the young people about the programme, they avoided focussing on its aim of pregnancy prevention and tended to emphasize the opportunity to learn about working with small children, particularly for those interested in childcare professions. These staff felt that if the programme was described as pregnancy prevention fewer young people would volunteer to take part.

> *"I don't usually use the thing about we're trying to stop you from having a baby when you're still at school approach, I think it's more that it would increase their understanding of young children because some of them are interested in going in to childcare professions and health and social care professions so in a sense it's promoted as an opportunity to prepare themselves for such courses."*
> Learning support manager

The majority of staff interviewed who were responsible for selection did not inform the young people why they were selected for the T&T programme. Apart from a few who, if the young people asked, would tell them that the programme was partly about teenage

pregnancy prevention, on the whole, school staff emphasised the opportunity the programme offered for a unique experience, accreditation and potential career development. Many school staff found this difficult, as they did not want to be disingenuous with the young people but they also did not want the young people selected to feel stigmatised.

> *"I think in my previous programme, one of the girls had said something like 'oh, this is for sluts, the programme', 'I heard that this is for girls that had sex and girls that get pregnant'. So it can be tainted with a negative name."* Lead Facilitator

From the perspective of many of the school staff, the T&T programme was popular in their school and young people who participated were not stigmatised. Others reported that despite attempts to 'down play' the teenage pregnancy prevention aspects of the programme, most young people eventually deduced the selection process and criteria.

> *"I'm just going to have to say it how it was: one of the girls come up and said, 'Sir, did you pick me cos you think I'm a slag?'"* Teacher

T&T participants described a range of responses to being selected. Some suspected that the programme was related to sex and risk of teenage pregnancy because of discussions with classmates and rumours circulating the school. The characteristics of the girls who were in the briefing meeting with them fuelled suspicions that the programme at least targeted "naughty" girls and, at worst, targeted girls who were thought to be at risk of teenage pregnancy. In one school, the girls that were called to the briefing meeting were described by other students as part of a group of girls who were "loud". These were described as mostly black and ethnic minority girls. For others, their suspicions were confirmed when they completed the questionnaire for the RCT which included several questions about sexual behaviour. One participant explained that she felt upset that they would be labelled as being at risk of becoming pregnant and several young people felt upset and resentful that their teachers would think that they could be at risk of teenage pregnancy and did not believe that teachers had enough information about their personal life to make that assumption.

> *"I didn't really like it, for teachers to think that like, 'You're going to get pregnant'. They don't really know me outside of school, so I don't think like they have the right to actually say to me 'You're going to get pregnant, you have to go to this programme, you have to work with kids. So, for when you're like, what 16 and you have your children, you have to know how to, how to look after them'. So it's a bit like sad to hear that teachers think something like that about you. It's scary actually. You know?"*

Other young people reported ignoring allegations from classmates that they were selected for the programme because they were thought to be at risk of teenage

pregnancy, and focused on the aspects of the programme regarding working with small children, developing interpersonal skills and earning a qualification.

> *"And like, like some of my friends were like, 'Oh, they're trying to say that you're going to have a child at a young age,' you know. And then, like, I didn't get on the course the first time I had to do the research and then the second time I got onto it, cos people were saying it was good to go there, and plus you get, like, a qualification."*

Some young people reported that they did not know why they were selected for the programme or suggested other possible reasons, such as being considered responsible and good with children or having expressed a desire to go into a career involving child care. Ultimately, none of the young people understood exactly why and how they were selected for T&T, and many of those who managed to take part in the programme were pleased and excited that they had been given the opportunity.

A few of the school staff interviewed pointed out the T&T briefing made it clear that the programme partly focussed on teenage pregnancy prevention and the young people should have been aware of this. Others felt that in the briefing meeting the young people only focussed on the aspects of the programme regarding work with small children and did not pay attention to the description of the programme as teenage pregnancy prevention. When young people discussed what they understood about the programme when they first learned about it and why they believed they were selected, none mentioned the pregnancy prevention aspects of the programme or being selected because they were thought to be at risk. However, all were clear that they would be working with small children and working towards an accreditation.

All of the young people who were participating in the programme said that their parents were happy that they had been selected and thought it was a "good thing" that they were taking part. Only one participant mentioned that her mother thought that they were too young to learn about relationships, sex and contraception. A couple of participants explained that their parents were slightly concerned that they were missing lessons every week so close to their GCSEs.

2.2.5   Characteristics of the young people selected

Teens and Toddlers facilitators were asked whether they believed that the 'right' young people were put forward for the programme. The young people put forward by the schools to participate in the T&T programme were mostly viewed as suitable by facilitators. This was partly because most facilitators believed that a wide range of young people could benefit from the programme.

"I think every young person is at risk in some way, so I would say yes but it depends I guess how you see, how you see what 'at risk' is I suppose."
Facilitator

Mostly, facilitators identified behaviours, beliefs and other characteristics that suggested that the young people were at least at 'moderate risk' of teenage pregnancy during early interactions with the participants.

Based on the suggested criteria in the T&T selection tool, one facilitator described expecting to see "hardcore, really loud, really unhappy, angry, disturbed girls". However, she described the young people she usually worked with on the programme as "nice" and "happy to be here". The facilitator explained that although the young people did 'act out', such behaviour was normal for teenagers. In the view of one T&T facilitator, the most important aspect of selection and recruitment was that young people put forward for the programme were interested in participating and actually wanted to be involved.

2.2.6   Challenges and suggested improvements to the recruitment process

In some schools, the early stages of recruitment were especially challenging. Reasons for this included disagreement between school staff about:

- young people's suitability for the programme;
- the implications for selected young people of missing school for an afternoon every week;
- obtaining permission to pull students out of core lessons to attend the briefing meeting.

As noted above, some school staff did not have all the information they believed they needed to select young people. In most cases, this was because the teacher responsible for selection was not privy to information other than students' academic performance and classroom behaviour. Staff with responsibility for counselling, pastoral care or health were more likely to know personal information about students. Some staff, particularly those responsible for inclusion, explained that the students typically brought to their attention are those who exhibit externalising behaviour in the classroom. As such, they were not as familiar with the young people who were quiet or withdrawn and were therefore less likely to recommend such young people for the programme.

Some school staff suggested other ways that young people might be recruited for the programme. One teacher thought that young people could have a 'mini interview' with T&T facilitators to assess whether they were appropriate for the programme prior to final selection. Some thought that, ideally, the programme would be open to all students and young people would self-select into the programme, to avoid difficult conversations

about reasons for selection, potential stigma, and to ensure those who take part in the programme are motivated.

The use of random assignment for the RCT meant that whilst schools were able to choose young women to put forward for the briefing meeting, they did not have the final say over which individuals actually took part in the programme. Some staff interviewed during the RCT indicated that they would have preferred to have been able to target specific young women for participation in the programme. These agreed that all the young people who were put forward could have benefited from the programme, but they would have liked to prioritise girls they felt were at *most* risk, e.g. sexually active. Additionally, the RCT required some schools to select two groups of young people to potentially take part in the programme and/or be part of the research (one for each cohort in the RCT). Some schools found it difficult to identify 30-40 young people in one or two year groups that met the T&T criteria and, in some cases, teachers broadened the selection to include young women who did not closely meet the criteria.

2.3 The classroom curriculum

The T&T curriculum is comprised of the following elements:

- Ongoing journaling activity where participants are encouraged to explore their thoughts and feelings about events occurring in their lives and record their experiences working with the children in the nursery.
- Education in each session on an aspect of interpersonal skills, such as communication, listening, constructive conversation, receiving criticism, and giving and receiving negative feedback.
- Education on human development, particularly of toddlers and children.
- Education about healthy parenting skills including the importance and role of fathers in children's development.
- Discussions about teenage sex and the consequences of unplanned pregnancy.
- Information on sources of support for mental and physical health, including sexual health.

The curriculum is designed to address the determinants of teenage pregnancy via improving:

- Emotional literacy and social skills (self-reflection, self-management, awareness of others);
- Awareness of options for future education/employment;
- Sense of self-, self-worth and self-esteem;
- Knowledge and awareness of contraception;
- Future aspirations and ability to set goals and markers of success;
- Sense of control over their life;
- Understanding and appreciating the responsibility and work involved in parenting.

2.3.1 'Check-in'

T&T participants are usually collected from their school at lunch time by the facilitators and accompanied to the room in the nursery setting where the curriculum is delivered ('team room'). The journey from the school to the nursery can involve a walk and/or a bus journey. The sessions are weekly, though gaps between sessions can be longer due to participant absence, school holidays etc. One element of T&T observed in all four case studies (and all our wider observations) was a 'check-in' activity that took place on arrival in the team room. This involved everyone present (including the observers) telling the group how they were feeling that week, facilitated using a variety of methods. These included:

- The facilitator beginning by describing what she was thinking about, how she felt physically, and what her main emotions were before asking participants to do the same;
- Describing one good and one bad thing that had happened during the week and how they feel about it;
- Describing feelings by comparing them to an animal or object, e.g. "*I feel like a tiger because I am ready for anything today*"

Other common elements of the check-in activity included a re-cap of what had been covered during the previous week's group time; reading an inspirational quote and discussing its meaning and relevance for the group, and doing a round of the 'bag of bits' game (cards with statements/questions about sexual health are pulled out of a bag and participants have to discuss the 'right' answer e.g. 'is it possible to catch a sexually transmitted disease from a toilet seat?').

Facilitators outlined several purposes of the check-in activity. These included acting as an ice-breaker at the start of each session and providing a consistent element of the session participants get used to over the weeks. Check-in could also be used to introduce the theme of the afternoon's session. The over-arching purpose of check-in for many facilitators was to identify any problems or issues the girls were facing that week that could affect their behaviour during the afternoon and/or could be addressed during the group time or counselling session.

> "First check-in is very much quickly how they feel, so for example how they're feeling before they go in to the nursery 'cos if they sort of come out with something like angry or fed up or I've just had a row with a teacher then we're more cautious of whether we let them go in with the nursery, with the toddlers, or whether we're gonna be watching them, you know."
> Lead facilitator

As an example, during one check-in we observed during the snapshot observations, a participant of Somali origin reported witnessing a violent attack on a pregnant Somali woman in her neighbourhood earlier that week. She described feeling fearful because she had heard of other similar incidents which she believed to be racially-motivated and was concerned for the safety of her pregnant mother. The length of time allocated to check in (usually 15 minutes) was extended to 30 minutes while the facilitators discussed the incident and her reaction to it with the group. The participant was also selected for the first session with the group counsellor that afternoon for further support.

During our observations most participants appeared to join in the check-in exercise, although they sometimes needed encouragement from the facilitators to explain their current mood in detail. This may have been because some of the check-in activities and questions did not suit all participants:

> F1: *I feel a bit of an idiot as well when we have to say what colour we*
> *are today.*
> F2: *Yeah, what colour are you feeling?*
> F1: *I feel a bit like, like a toddler.* Focus group

A second check-in activity took place at the start of the group session after the nursery time. In many observed groups this was used as an opportunity to encourage participants to reflect on their experience in the nursery, and for facilitators to provide positive feedback on the girls' behaviour during nursery time.

2.3.2 Interpersonal and social skills development

The Teens and Toddlers programme is influenced by principles of youth development, that is, the process through which young people acquire the cognitive, social and emotional skills and abilities that support a positive transition to adulthood. This is reflected in the inclusion of interpersonal and social skills in the T&T programme curriculum and facilitators' efforts to model positive behaviour through their relationship with participants and management of the group dynamic.

For many facilitators, the development of effective interpersonal and social skills was one of the main aims (and, in some cases, the most important aim) of the programme (see section 3). The emphasis on this area was high across each of the four case studies and emerged in many of the interviews with adult stakeholders. Key outcomes identified by facilitators included improving the young women's communication skills, and raising their confidence and self-esteem.

"Well, initially I thought [the main aim of Teens and Toddlers] *was to curb teenage pregnancy, which I think is probably part and parcel of it, to educate them about such things so that they have a better understanding, but what I've come to realise is that a great chunk of it is actually about developing their interpersonal skills so that they can become more adequate listeners and communicators."* Facilitator

During fieldwork we observed aspects of the curriculum being delivered to build interpersonal and social skills. These included topics, such as: verbal and non-verbal communication, including active listening; setting appropriate boundaries in relationships with others; understanding the consequences of behaviour; understanding 'blind spots' i.e. aspects of behaviour not recognised by those displaying it; and giving constructive feedback. These were sometimes delivered using different methods including group discussion, role plays and card games etc.

Facilitators varied in their emphasis on either modelling interpersonal and social skills through their own behaviour and management of the group, or focusing more directly on the curriculum content. There was a commitment to ensure that group time was '*not like school'*, to avoid a didactic approach to delivering the curriculum and to create a relaxed, safe environment in which to develop interpersonal skills. Nevertheless, some facilitators focused on delivering the curriculum content in a more structured way than others. This was indicated in the use of pre-prepared flip-charts with the day's objectives visible in the team room and a greater use of activities such as role plays, games (the 'bag-of-bits'), worksheets etc. For example, during one observation of group time, the observer noted that the session plan was written on flip chart paper and shared with the group at the start of the afternoon. The facilitator had also pre-prepared a number of flip charts with notes on the main stages of child development, and stood by the charts as he presented the information. Other facilitators adopted a more informal approach:

"And I think as I've done seven [T&T programmes]*, you know, when I first started I was much more flip chart-based but I've become much more about discussion and talking …I find when you start doing gimmicks, it becomes too 'teaching'?*
…I mean, okay, we do it [use flip charts] *occasionally, we will do, but then it's like spelling. And, and we're worrying about spelling rather than actually the process."* Facilitator

A number of facilitators reported finding the curriculum overloaded, both in terms of the amount to get through in a single session, and the content across the whole programme.

"I'd like it if the programme was longer. I think everything in the curriculum is really valuable but what happens sometimes is you're trying to jam it in, and so for example like last week we did referrals and that session would have been a really valuable session to give them a lot of

time to just look at leaflets and have a chat but we had to do a bit of assessing." Facilitator, non-case study

Other facilitators took the view that not all of the activities in the Teens and Toddlers curriculum needed to be covered in every session. Instead of feeling they had to rush through a packed session, they would choose those activities they felt would have most appeal to the group:

> *"and then you learn as more the more experience you go, the two units that set the boundaries and set the tone of the group is Unit One and Unit Two. After that you pick and choose out of every unit what you think would be relevant, because by the time you finished Unit Two, you've had them for four weeks, for four sessions, you've got a little bit of a flavour what the group's like...and so you can pick and choose what bits of it you think the young people, what will engage them, what will interest them […] So, when you first start you don't think you've got much flexibility, but actually you do have a lot of flexibility.* Lead Facilitator, Case Study

Some were also keen to emphasize the flexible approach they took to the order in which the curriculum topics were delivered. They did not plan sessions around the curriculum, but rather, fitted the curriculum around whatever issues emerged from the participants that afternoon. This was a more common approach amongst facilitators who were more familiar with the curriculum because they had delivered it several times before.

Lead facilitators can play a role in supporting second (often less-experienced) facilitators in emphasising the *process* of programme delivery as much, if not more than, curriculum content.

> *F2: "So I guess from my, where I'm at is I'm still getting to know the curriculum though I kind of know it but I've definitely seen how I'm much more relaxed with it now and able to kind of go 'ok this is what's come up in nursery, this is what the group is bringing' and try and make the links that way rather than saying 'well here's the curriculum and…', and stuff from there. So that's really important as a facilitator to get better at doing [laughing].* Facilitators

As well as using the content of the curriculum to develop interpersonal and social skills, facilitators were also keen to model these through their own behaviour and management of the group dynamic. Themes such as showing respect, active listening, showing empathy, valuing oneself etc were experienced within the team room as well as taught through the curriculum. Indeed many facilitators viewed effective management of the group and the creation of a '*safe, relaxed space'* as essential for all other aspects of the programme and curriculum to have an impact.

> *"My aim is to be here every week for them, role model how in life, if you say you'll be somewhere, you will be there. You will be there on time,*

you have integrity, you're as good as your word, and to hopefully display a level of respect to them which will in turn empower them to feel good, to raise their self-esteem and to feel that they can talk about anything and be as open as they need to be, and to try and encourage them to use their interpersonal skills, use what we've taught them here about support networks." Lead Facilitator

For some facilitators, creating an effective group dynamic and allowing the young people to experience and learn how to communicate and work effectively as a group, and experience positive relationships with others was a key learning outcome of the Teens and Toddlers programme. This may be because poor relationships with family and peers were seen as a reason the girls were selected to participate in the programme.

*"I was going to say that at the beginning, but it's a really part of what they're learning is how to work in a group and that's a really important thing in terms of family dynamic as well because quite often, you know, I think a lot of that group stuff, how you are in a group is, is, is what's going on in your family and a lot of the kids that we work with that's part of, could be part of the risk, part of their issue would be the family dynamic may not be great. They get in a group at this time, mentally for them in terms of history but also as adolescents and that's a really good, that's a really important developmental outcome, that's a really important thing for them to work on. "*Lead facilitator

Creating the right group dynamic was also seen as important in engaging participants in learning.

"I think that they, because with some of the, with some of the delivery of the information, you know, this is something that I've just never kind of had with any of the other groups, they seem like, it, it feels like a fight ...it's a chore..."So, why are you telling us? Well, we know that already?"… I think they're in that school mode. To, to me when I have a group and they'll behave like that I feel like that, I, I've failed to make them believe there's somewhere they can be themselves. You know, because they just bring, they show you that school stuff...they're not really there." Lead facilitator

The Teens and Toddlers programme is informed by the psychological approach of psychosynthesis and confluent education. This is discussed more fully in the formative evaluation report but, in brief, the relationship between the young people and the toddlers in the T&T programme is intended to create an opportunity for the young people to develop interpersonal skills by working through the challenging experience of caring for a young child. Facilitators discussed encouraging the participants to use what they had learned in the team room to observe and reflect on the toddlers' behaviour. During our interviews with programme participants, many were focused on interpersonal skills as they related to working with toddlers, describing them as ways of working with

children. Other participants did demonstrate that they had been encouraged to go further than this and also reflect on their own behaviour:

> *F1: Role plays, like in classroom time we did a role, role plays and, yeah, and then we had to look out, for the toddler we had to look out for, what is it? Blind spots.*
> *I: OH WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?*
> *F1: It's like what they don't, what they don't?*
> *F3: Realise they're doing.*
> *F1: Realise that they're doing.*
> *F1: It's like not, certain habits you have but they're totally anonymous to you.*
> *I: OK, I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND THAT THOUGH, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?*
> *F1: Like if your toddlers like always aggressive but they don't realise.*
> *F3: Because you know sometimes when you're walking and just like have, have like an angry face without realising and it's like all the people realise you have it but it comes along as your blind spot.*
> *I: OK, ALL RIGHT, SO THEY, YOU WERE TAUGHT THAT IN, TO THINK ABOUT THAT WITH YOUR TODDLERS?*
> *F3: Yeah to see, to look out if they do it.*
> *I: DO YOU THEY MAKE YOU THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE?*
> *F1: Yeah they, in classroom time we did have to think about ourselves and our own blind spots, our parents blind spots and stuff like that. Blind spots are normally things that you can improve.* Focus group

2.3.3 Self-assertion and potential

Facilitators aimed to raise participants' self-esteem through recognising their own potential. Through this approach, it was hoped that young people would have the confidence to make their own decisions rather than be influenced by their peers, and to raise their aspirations for adult life. For some facilitators this was explicitly linked to teenage pregnancy prevention: to move young women away from the idea that becoming a mother would 'make life better' and to see alternative options.

> *"I would say making them aware of so much, the potential they have, making them feel valued because some of them do come across like they don't really look up to themselves, they put themselves down …[]…it's not all about following people, being your own individual and basically yeah being them, progress to their full potential before following peers and thinking 'ok yeah a baby will make me feel better' because it wouldn't…[]… for them to respect themselves, no pressure from people, make them feel confident in everything that they do and make them aware of their values, I think that's excellent…showing them that there's so much out there instead of being a teenage mother or parent."*
> Lead facilitator

Activities aimed at building self-esteem, developing self-assertion and encouraging participants to think about their potential were evident in all the groups observed during the evaluation. Facilitators addressed this in three ways. First, facilitators used a lot of praise and positive feedback with participants. They were praised on return from the nursery about something they had done during the time with their toddler that afternoon. This was often a key aspect of the second check-in after nursery time. Praise was also extensively used throughout the team time, after activities such as role plays and as written feedback in their journal. Many of our observations towards the end of the programme involved a final session where facilitators and other group members provided extensive feedback to each participant on her strengths and qualities.

Second, the creation of a positive group dynamic, where participants feel they can trust the facilitators and others in the group, was seen by facilitators as a key means of building confidence:

> *"I think one of the recurring themes with my groups is saying 'I don't know' to everything. When you ask them anything, the first thing whether they know or not it doesn't matter, the first thing they'll say is 'I don't know'…[]…for me it's about saying 'but you do know' and it doesn't matter whether you are right or wrong because you are expressing an opinion…[]…if you've got low self-esteem then you're frightened of saying the wrong thing…or you think that you are not intelligent enough to have an opinion, so one of the things is just getting people past the stage of the 'I don't knows'.* Facilitator

A third mechanism was the use of the work with toddlers to model the concept of potential. One of the activities observed involved asking participants to consider the potential in their toddlers. For example, in one group, the participants were tasked with identifying their toddler's qualities from a list pinned on the team room wall. The participants then considered the list of qualities and discussed what that meant for the toddler in terms of what they might become later in life (a caring, patient toddler might grow up to be a nurse, for example). Finally, the participants were asked to consider what support the toddlers would need to reach their full potential. After this exercise, they were encouraged to do the same thing for themselves – consider their qualities, and potential. Although delivered in different ways, a version of this task was observed on several occasions.

2.3.4 Sexual health and pregnancy

A key element of the Teens and Toddlers curriculum is discussions about sex, the consequences of unplanned pregnancy and unprotected sex, and exploration of the

characteristics of a sexually healthy adolescent. Coverage of these topics was evident in every school visited.

Variance existed in the emphasis between content and process, that is, the emphasis placed on providing information about sexual health and teenage pregnancy, and on creating a 'safe space' in which to discuss it. Many facilitators saw their role as explicitly *"not teaching but facilitating – asking the questions and getting young people to think"*. Being overly prescriptive and authoritative about sexual health was seen as potentially damaging:

> *"The worst thing you can do is tell a teenager not to have sex, don't have a baby – they will do it anyway."* Facilitator

Some facilitators felt that they had no new information to provide to the girls that they would not already know, but they could provide an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the issues facing them, and to learn how to communicate effectively about sexual health.

> *"…really what it boils down to is the connection that you have with the teenagers. I maintain that it is that connection that is more important than talking about sexual health because the connection gives them the opportunity to voice their opinions as well as listen to others […] I don't think that we've got any sexual, sexually related information that we can pass on to them that they haven't been exposed to already. What we can provide to them is the, the environment where they can talk about it and trust that it's, it's safe for them to do that."* Facilitator

During our observations we saw group discussions around sensitive issues e.g. symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases, types of contraception method etc. These discussions were largely open, comfortable and lengthy with little suggestion of embarrassment. During one observation it was a participant who took charge of stopping other girls giggling to make sure they could all concentrate on the discussion. During interviews, participants were mainly positive about the way sexual health was discussed in the group:

> *I: DO YOU HAVE ANYBODY ELSE THAT YOU CAN TALK TO, THINGS LIKE THAT ABOUT??*
> *F: Yeah my mum but I don't really talk to her about stuff like that, 'cause like I wouldn't be interested in stuff like that. But it was good for Teens and Toddlers 'cause Teens and Toddlers like you're, everybody's comfortable, like everybody's learning something new, so we're all talking about it, so it's not like anybody's uncomfortable. We're all learning new things, so it's good.* Participant interview

We observed similar delivery of Teens and Toddlers curriculum content on sexual health and teenage pregnancy across sites. In particular, groups often discussed the potential

consequences of teenage pregnancy and the importance of healthy behaviours during pregnancy. Most sites used DVDs supplied by Teens and Toddlers: one showing a teenage mum struggling to cope on her own with her baby; another discussing the effects of drug use during pregnancy. Role plays used to develop and practice communication skills often had a pregnancy theme (for example, telling a school counsellor about a pregnancy). Participants were also encouraged to find out about the availability of local sexual health clinics and other sources of support. A commonly used tool was the 'bag of bits', an activity where cards with statements and questions about sexual health were pulled out at random by participants and discussed by the group. Many facilitators used this tool regularly after the first few weeks of the programme – the early weeks were used to develop trust within the group, and the sense that the group was a safe space.

> *You need to do it after you have developed a really strong relationship with the girls so you can really put it all out there and discuss it.* Facilitator

During our observations we noted variance in facilitators' knowledge of the answers to the questions about sexual health posed by the 'bag of bits'. In some cases, facilitators were confident in providing facts about sexual health, and where necessary referred to an answer sheet provided by Teens and Toddlers. We did observe facilitators unable to answer questions on occasion, for example, during one observation neither facilitator was clear about whether Chlamydia could cause infertility in women. Although Teens and Toddlers provide an answer sheet for the 'bag of bits' game, not all facilitators had this to hand. On one occasion a facilitator reported that not knowing all the answers was part of the process:

> *There was one thing that we weren't 100% sure about. I think it was gonorrhea, we weren't quite sure if you could die from it or something like that. And* [the other facilitator] *went off and found out. We have a list of, of, yes, I think we have a list of answers to questions that are in the bag of bits if there's anything you weren't sure about, but it's, you know, we're human beings and we will say to the girls "I'm not quite sure about that; can I come back to you?" And they're cool about that. I think it's also again good role modeling to say to somebody 'I don't know, I'm, I'm not sure?"* Facilitator

On some occasions when we observed the 'bag of bits' game, uncertainty was cleared up by facilitators immediately after allowing the participants to discuss and consider the question. Facilitators reported that when they did not have information about a particular aspect of sexual health they sought the correct answer by the following week's session and passed this onto participants (we were unable to verify this). However, some admitted that they felt ill-equipped to deal with sexual health issues at times:

F: I do feel like I would like to do some kind of sexual health training as well, you know, be updated 'cos one of the girls came up with something last week and it made me think I need to go back and think about that one.
It was something about can you catch an STI off a toilet seat? And I've always thought no and one of the girls went actually at school they reckon that you could catch, and it was like a
I: A TEACHER SAID THIS AT SCHOOL?
F: Yes and it was like a 0.0001% or something but there's still one .001%, d'you know what I mean? It's like, but I had to go home and find it out on the internet. You know like to just have an update on all that information now. Facilitator

2.3.5 Child development and parenting skills

The logic model identified education on human development, including the stages of child development, and education about healthy parenting skills, including the role of fathers in children's development, as a core aspect of the curriculum. During interviews with facilitators about the key aspects of the curriculum, this topic was not often picked out, although we did observe it during our observations both in case study schools and other sites.

Discussions about child development and parenting skills were commonly anchored in the girls' experiences during nursery time. For example, during one observation, the group discussed a toddler who had been refusing to share toys with others. This discussion led into a session conducted by the facilitator on the stages of child development. Skills around communication, boundary-setting, providing constructive feedback etc. taught during team time were usually picked up on during the post-nursery check-in, with facilitators praising the girls on their use of these skills and reflecting back again on how they influenced toddlers' behaviour.

The session starts with some feedback for the girls about the nursery session. Both are praised, one for managing the toddlers queuing for the slide. She had to manage a toddler attempting to 'push in' and did so by telling her why it was wrong and suggesting she did something else instead. The second facilitator says this is a good example of 'redirection', because as well as pointing out what the toddler can't do, they suggest an alternative. The facilitators say these are good examples of setting boundaries. On the flipchart there is a sheet with text about saying no to toddlers, and boundary setting, and the facilitators say both girls have shown examples of this in the nursery today. Observation notes.

Discussions about toddlers' potential, and the support they would need to fulfil it, were sometimes linked to the role of the parent in supporting the child. Facilitators also made use of role plays and, on several occasions, we observed participants role-playing a

toddler being ignored by her parents, followed by a discussion on how this would make the toddler feel and how the parents might have handled things better. We also observed group discussions such as how to deal with toddlers behaving inappropriately or dangerously, for example, what to do when you see a toddler sticking their fingers into an electrical socket.

Facilitators varied in the emphasis they gave to parenting skills. Some felt that it was not a core element of the programme:

> *I think it gives them an insight into not so much parenting as, as how much work is involved, just keeping kids entertained… I don't know how much it teaches them about parenting as such. I think it may act as a trigger you know that they see all these young toddlers running around, it might as a trigger to remember their own experiences and what it was like being parented, but it's more about the err, oh gosh there is a lot of work involved in looking after a toddler, rather than parenting.* Lead facilitator

We did not observe any discussion about the role of fathers during our observations, nor did it emerge in interviews. Where fathers were mentioned, this was usually in relation to their absence, for example, the DVD about a teenage mum bringing up her baby on her own. During one observation a role play designed to develop communication skills centred around a man seeking advice on how to finish a relationship now his girlfriend had become pregnant. The absence of discussion about fathers' role may be due, in part, to the fact that the RCT is being conducted with girls only, but we cannot verify this.

2.3.6 Support for mental, physical and sexual health

Sexual health is a strong element of the T&T curriculum and we have discussed in section 2.3.4 the delivery of sexual health information, which includes signposting young people to local sources of support. We did not observe any examples of support for other aspects of physical health during our observations and it did not emerge as a theme in our in-depth interviews – although it does feature as an objective in the logic model. However, it is clear that the emotional well-being aspects of mental health are addressed throughout the programme.

2.3.7 Journals and National Award

In all of the schools visited, participants were working towards the National Award. Participants are required to submit a set amount of evidence in a portfolio to receive the Award and, in practice, this meant that the last 15-30 minutes of team time was usually dedicated to some form of paperwork; either completing worksheets on the topic

discussed that afternoon and/or completing a journal about the session. There was very little variance across groups in completing evidence for the National Award.

Facilitators did vary in the emphasis placed on the importance of the award. Some were keen to present it as '*not much work'* and limited the time devoted to it. Others saw the award as another tool to raise the self-esteem of participants

> *"… it was explained to them that it's a qualification that they can put on your CV and that, you know, it'll make them stand apart from everyone else. So they do, they do see it as a qualification, just as important as a qualification from school."* Facilitator

2.3.8   Participant engagement

A key area of variance was the behaviour of the girls during group time. This is important as the impact of Teens and Toddlers on the participants will be linked to the level of their engagement with the programme and receptiveness to the core messages being delivered. We describe the variance in participant engagement by focusing on three indicators: comprehension, mood, and attendance.

During our observations of group time, we saw examples where participants seemed to be struggling to comprehend the topic being discussed, and during our interviews, participants occasionally struggled to remember what they had learned:

> *I: DID YOU LEARN STUFF THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE?*
> *F: Yeah.*
> *I: CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE?*
> *F: About this disease? I can't remember what it's called, but like, you, if you have it and then you like have a baby, the baby can get green stuff round its eye, and it can get like infected and everything.*
> *I: OK.*
> *F: But I actually can't remember what the disease was called.*
> *I: ALL RIGHT. AND DID YOU LEARN HOW TO AVOID GETTING IT?*
> *F: I think so. I can't remember. We did, but I just don't remember what it was.* Participant

The following account is of a particularly disjointed session, with the facilitators working hard to explain the concept of blind spots with little success. The participants seemed to become frustrated at their lack of understanding and wanted to leave early:

> *The lead facilitator stands and goes to the flip chart where there are pre-prepared notes on 'blind spots'. It's clear that this was something covered in the previous week and the girls are reminded what a blind spot is a behaviour or way of being that you're not aware you have. The girls are asked to think about examples of blind spots. They struggle with*

this….[]…During [the facilitator's explanation], two girls completely lose concentration, one looking out of the window, the other starting on her journal and pages in her workbook that need to be completed that week. Other girls have taken up the cue and also start filling in the workbooks. The incentive seems to be to get the paperwork done quickly so they can leave. Case study observation notes

The researcher was able to pick up on this with participants the next day during a focus group, and it became apparent that some participants fully understood the 'blind spots' concept but had not spoken out during the session. They reported finding the group time 'boring' and refused to engage properly:

F1: Yeah, most of the time I feel like sleeping. I just...
F2: The period of time that they talk for is long.
F1: It's too long.
F3: I understand it at the beginning, 'cos at the beginning we talk, and then we go to, we go to the nursery. And at the end I think we should just talk about how it was, what we learned from it, do our journals and then go.
I: ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU DO? WHAT ELSE DO YOU DO?
F3: No. We come back, say what we did, do our journals, and then talk about what we did and how we can do better and duh-duh-duh-dud-duh.
F1: [speaks slowly)... Another……..conversation with [the facilitator], like say one -- -- sentence ……goes...
I: ... WHY DO YOU THINK THEY DO IT? WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'RE TRYING TO DO?
F3: Just talk.
F2: Annoy us. [Laughter.]
I: I'M SURE THEY'RE NOT TRYING TO ANNOY YOU.
F2: I think trying to buy time until 3.45.
F1: Yeah, trying to keep the time, because basically when we go down to the nursery, right, say we have an hour and, hour and 45 down, down, something like that, in the nursery. And then we go upstairs at about, say, quarter to 2, and then we'll just be talking, just constantly talking...
F2: Only get three minutes, like three or two minutes to discuss what, what, how much fun we had or ... or the challenges we went through when we were down there. So we don't get that much time to talk about it... It moves on to another type of rule that we need to learn that they've already talked about, interpersonal skills, again. Focus group

This group also reported a poor relationship with the lead facilitator and participants were clearly very angry at the time the focus group was carried out. It was not always easy to tell whether participants were failing to understand, or refusing to engage (which could be explained by a range of reasons such as boredom, embarrassment etc). In this example, all the girls in the room were rebelling collectively against the facilitators. Conversely, the next example illustrates the range of personalities acting independently within a single group:

The personalities of the girls became clearer as they spoke about working with their child. The first girl to speak seemed quiet or lacked some confidence in how smart she was […] Sitting next to this girl was a friend who appeared quite confident and smart. She answered the questions appropriately and clearly. She understood the point of the questions. This was not always clear from the other girls. Another girl also seemed to struggle with the ideas offered […]. The next girl seemed to be a bit shy, but managed to answer the question. The final girl seemed to really lack confidence and just smiled and was very reluctant to take part in the activities, but she eventually did. Observation notes

However, we more commonly observed groups where the participants seemed attentive and demonstrating full comprehension of the day's topic.

"I think they're really engaged. I mean I think this lot are. I think, I think [short pause] my experience is that they're always really engaged around it, it's a, you have to work to find your way in and be very creative as an educator because they're kids that aren't, don't find, quite often they're kids that are very kind of aesthetic and very visual, they're not very good at auditory learning and their learning styles you need to be very imaginative about that". Facilitator

It was also more common to witness participants in a relaxed, friendly mood during group time. Much of our observation notes refer to *'warm atmosphere'; 'really friendly', 'good rapport',* reflecting facilitators' emphasis on creating an effective group dynamic. It was very unusual to experience any form of tension in the room (although we did witness this, particularly during the case studies). In many examples, it was clear that the girls were enjoying the session, often reluctant to leave at the end of the afternoon.

What's typical is that for them is that it doesn't matter about whether it's the shag bag or anything once they get a conversation going and there's a rapport going in the group they want to continue that and, so I've noticed quite often in the past, we need to get a move on here, we need to go to toddler time for instance, but no, they want to keep yabbering because they, they could have talked all afternoon, and we virtually had to kick [one participant] *out today and it's, which was relatively easy because she was on her own, but when the three of them are together you know you have to shoo them to get out of here, because they, they want to hang around so much.* Facilitator

Attendance is the third indicator of engagement for which we noted variance. Figures obtained from Teens and Toddlers for participants involved in both cohorts of the study in all schools indicate that 26% of participants attended less than half of the programme. Some do not disengage entirely, but their attendance was sporadic, frequently missing weeks.

Facilitators and teachers outlined a range of reasons for poor attendance and drop-out. These included:

- Disorganisation/poor memory: the young women simply *forget* to attend. Linked to this, we did notice variance between schools in fulfilling a role in ensuring participants were ready to attend each week. In some schools a teacher or peer tutor would '*round the girls up'* ready for collection; in others the young women were responsible for getting themselves to the meeting point with the T&T facilitator;
- School-led reasons: for example, some participants may have been given detention on Teens & Toddlers day, or school trips/exam preparation etc may interfere with attendance. Some were excluded from school, or changed schools;
- Participant apathy/dislike of the programme: a number of facilitators and teachers noted that non or poor attendance was 'normal' for this group of young women, who rarely demonstrated enthusiasm or commitment to tasks. Some reported simply not liking the programme. One teacher describes the difficulty in persuading pupils to attend when there is no clear and specific reason for their reluctance beyond apathy:

"Just like a generation thing or what but it's a, there's a very 'I can't be bothered' attitude do you know, oh no I can't be bothered. Have you got a real reason for that? No I just can't be bothered this week. I think for us that's difficult to encourage them when, when they have no reason other than they can't be bothered." Teacher

2.4 Nursery time

Each week of the programme, participants spend up to 90 minutes in a nursery interacting with a child aged between 3 and 5 years old, under the supervision of the nursery staff and the T&T facilitator. Our formative research suggested that this work is intended to address the following factors influencing the likelihood of teenage pregnancy:

- Self-awareness and confidence;
- Developing an understanding and appreciation of the responsibility and work involved in parenting.

We observed nursery time on at least two occasions within each of the four case studies, and during our study of wider programme fidelity in 15 schools. We describe programme implementation under the following areas: the characteristics of toddlers and methods of pairing toddlers with young people; the activities undertaken during nursery time; the role of T&T facilitators and nursery staff during nursery time; and the girls' attitudes and level of engagement during nursery time.

2.4.1 Pairing teens with toddlers

Participants are encouraged to work with one particular toddler during nursery time, and groups are assigned a selection of toddlers by the nursery staff. Interviews with nursery staff and T&T facilitators indicated that toddlers tend to be chosen because staff perceived that they would benefit from some additional one-to-one support. Reasons identified for this include that the toddlers:

- speak little English or have English as a second language;
- have broader communication difficulties;
- are new to the nursery and need support to settle in;
- have a learning difficulty;
- are experiencing problems at home;
- exhibit challenging behaviour; or
- are demanding of staff time which additional support will alleviate.

> *"The toddlers on this programme have all been chosen by the* [nursery] *because they have their own issues going on, whether it be English is their second language and they're new to the country and they need some support and extra one-on-one for the speaking and listening. It could be the fact that their father has recently left and they're feeling slightly abandoned and they need a little bit of extra support there. It could be that they, they're very, quite insecure and they fight a lot and seek attention so there's always, the, the, the regular run-of-the-mill kids that haven't got anything going on, we tend not to be given those children; we get children that, that actually need some support."*
> Facilitator

While nurseries informed parents that the T&T programme was taking place at the setting, most did not seek signed consent from the parents or guardians of individual toddlers selected to work with the teenage participants. However, in at least one nursery, this was the practice and a criterion used to assign a toddler to a T&T participant was that their parents had consented. Across all settings, only nursery staff were involved in assigning toddlers. Facilitators were not involved, although some general guidance was provided on the type of toddler to select (those that would benefit from 1:1 support). Nursery staff had little or no information about the young people coming to the nursery, and did not match toddlers to specific girls. The first week of the T&T programme did not involve a full 90-minute nursery session but, instead, the girls were introduced to the nursery staff and toddlers and invited to spend a shorter amount of time in the nursery. At this point staff would have some opportunity to observe the girls before allocating toddlers. Facilitators often also observed participants' reaction to the toddlers during the first visit to inform the final pairings. Most nurseries would not allocate toddlers to individuals on this occasion, although in some the first visit would be used to gauge the girls' reaction to the toddlers to inform teenager/nursery pairings:

> *"There isn't an awful lot of time to do that* [allocate toddlers to specific teenagers]*, I don't think, but, because we only meet them very briefly before we've allocated the, the children to the girls so we've sort of like made a very sort of bald sort of judgment about them on their very first visit already… We've, we've sort of made a very quick sort of, you know, she seems that she will work well with this child and…Some of them, because they were just wandering around the room you sort of pick up on* [which toddler] *they went to and who they were spending time with."*
> Nursery manager

In some schools, participants were allocated toddlers without any involvement in the pairing; other facilitators were keen that the allocation was handled transparently and fairly, with the participants given some control over where they worked and which toddler they worked with:

> *"It would be horrible, I think, 'cause we talk about free choice and having the freedom of choice, and if the first thing we did was say 'right, you're with her and you're with them'….Even here, because we had a problem 'cause only one* [participant] *was in one room and two in the other. We had names out the hat, that's what they decided. The nursery will choose the toddlers…[]…They might choose toddlers who either are quite shy and need to be brought out. They might choose toddlers that need a focus 'cause they're a little bit wild. When the girls come in the first, the first week we get a tour, the second week they spend an hour in everywhere just seeing how it is, and then we have a talk about if they have a, if they could choose, where would they prefer to work with, and so we try and fit with what they've asked for. Which I think is a, a good thing as well, and if we can't, then I would be very reluctant to say 'well, you must'."* Facilitator

Matching toddlers to participants was often further complicated by the fact that many of the nurseries visited had separate spaces for children in nursery (younger children) and reception classes. In practice, this often meant that the group of teenagers would be split across two classrooms during nursery time. (Teenagers were not split across more than two classes because each sub-group needed to be accompanied by one of the two available T&T facilitators). Occasionally, this might mean a teenager working on her own without any fellow T&T group member in the same classroom.

Once a teenager had been allocated a toddler, the intention was that this pairing would remain in place for the duration of the programme. In some cases however, pairings were changed, either because the toddler was no longer available (e.g. they no longer attend the nursery) or the teenager dropped out and was replaced by one of the reserve participants.

2.4.2 Activities during nursery time

Most of what we observed in the nursery was the teenagers supporting toddlers in unstructured play. As many of our observations were carried out during the summer, this often took place outside. Typical activities recorded in our notes are those you would expect in a nursery; playing on slides, sandpits, football, with dolls and building blocks, reading, computer-based tasks etc. We did not observe a lot of nursery staff-facilitated play or structure, although some facilitators reported that this did happen, particularly in reception classes with older children.

> *"In the nursery, there's a lot more running around, there's a lot of playing games like 'duck, duck, goose', 'what's the time Mr. Wolf?' There's also reading time where the teens will sit and read to the toddler because it's their reading session. They go inside the class and they have this activity called Right Dance where the teacher sings and does lots of motor skills, fine motor skills, and then they go, the toddler goes back to the table and has to practice this in sand or with pens or with paper or whatever the, the, whatever the project is that day and the teen will stand and support and encourage using big facial expressions, things we will have spoken to them much earlier on in the programme, about using non-verbal communication so that's one of the activities that the girls really seem to like.*
> *They, they will paint with them, make things. In the Reception class it's much more structured and they'll have, certain desks will be doing certain projects."* Facilitator

Overall we did not observe much variance between nurseries in the activities young people supported their toddlers with. We did note variance in the role played by adults in the nursery (T&T facilitators and nursery staff) and the level of participants' engagement with their assigned toddlers.

2.4.3 Facilitators and nursery staff

Participants were supervised at all times in the nursery by both T&T facilitators and the nursery staff. In the first week of the programme, the participants were given a short tour of the nursery as an introduction and guidance on the 'do's and don'ts' in the nursery. This was provided by both nursery staff and facilitators.

> *I: DO YOU DO ANYTHING PARTICULAR TO INTRODUCE THEM TO THE NURSERY?*
> *F: No, not really; just a general show around, Show them where the stuff is, normally just give them a briefing about not to leave themselves open to accusations, so don't go into the toilets, you know? Just a general, I suppose it's a bit of a common sense talk but that's, yeah, I mean [the facilitator] takes a lot of that on.* Nursery teacher

Well normally, the first session they only go in the kind of, a quick browse so we always go into the nursery beforehand and say, okay, we're going to pick up the girls today and then we're going to bring them in for a bit. I normally get, if I can get the Head Teacher from the primary school to come in and talk to them just to kind of welcome them into school, maybe set down their guidelines of their expectations of their behaviour, and obviously we do our own group guidelines and things like that anyway.
Facilitator

After the formal introduction to the nursery, we did not observe much interaction between nursery staff and T&T participants during our observations of nursery time. Few nursery staff perceived themselves as having a role in supporting the young women, though some were happy to give guidance on the support the toddlers needed from the young women. In general, nursery staff were happy to entrust supervision to the T&T facilitators and were clear that it was the facilitator's role to support T&T participants. This helped to reduce the perceived burden on nursery staff in hosting the T&T programme; most reported that having the teenagers there did not mean extra work and in some cases, their presence was helpful, as an 'extra pair of hands'.

No, I haven't had to support them at all, but then that's where [the facilitator] comes in. If there's been, you know, one or two concerns then I've just said to [the facilitator] can you just have a word with them??
Nursery staff

I would, I would say they're really supportive really. I mean the teacher definitely uses us very much as like, she says it, it's like an extra pair of hands and it's really nice because one of their toddlers weren't here last week so I'm now going into reception class, they're split between reception and nursery, this term I'm reception class and her toddler weren't here this week and she said that's ok because we're practicing our sports day and you can help us get the equipment out and support the children getting ready for PE and so take their shoes and socks off. You know they really do include us as an extra pair of hands. Facilitator

We observed a lot of variance across sites in the level of support and interaction between facilitators and participants during nursery time. Some facilitators were actively engaged with the young women throughout the 90 minutes; staying close, providing advice and guidance, encouraging them to stick with their toddler, joining in games and activities etc. The participants in these nurseries were closely supervised and supported. In other sites, facilitators were much less engaged with the young women. Our notes of nursery time observations reveal the range of facilitator support:

- *Didn't see the facilitators interact with the teens and toddlers*
- *No instructions or support provided by facilitators*
- *Facilitator does intervene on occasion but not often*

- *Intervenes to help the teenager comfort her toddler who is upset after being reprimanded by nursery staff*
- *Facilitator helped when the teenagers looked self-conscious or were struggling to find something to do*
- *Facilitator is constantly engaging with the girls, supporting the girls and praising them all afternoon*

Extracts from observation notes of nursery time

The level of support from facilitators was often lower than we anticipated (although participants were *never* left unsupervised). This may be because many of our observations took place after the young women had been working in the nursery for several weeks and were more confident about interacting with the toddlers with less support. Indeed, some facilitators were clear during interviews that they purposely changed from playing an actively supportive role at the start of the programme, to modelling adult-toddler interactions:

> *If we find it's a team that find it, not towards the end but very much at the beginning and need that extra little bit of support and is not following their agenda we're sort of there to support them … to work with them with their toddler and then towards the end really we're very much in that room just being a role model so they can see us getting on with other children.*
> Facilitator

Facilitators often described their role as one of observation, looking for examples of interaction between the teenagers and the toddlers that could be used during team time discussions. We did see a number of examples of nursery incidents used in the team room (see previous section). We also observed, in almost every case, the facilitators praising the young women during the post-nursery check-in exercise on some element of their interaction with the toddlers that day.

> *I'm looking to see how they are supporting the toddler, if they are giving a positive energy, if they are, I want to see if they're disconnected, I want to see if they're engaged, I want to see if they're enjoying themselves. I want to see if they're learning or if they're going through a learning process with their toddler. I want to see how the toddler responds to the teen, and all of this I will feed back to the teenager during check in. If I see something wonderful at that given moment, I'll go over to the teenager and comment on how beautiful that particular moment or activity was with the toddler, and that I find really encourages the teenager to continue to do well. They, I feel that that, that really works for them.*
> Facilitator

2.4.4 Level of participant engagement during nursery time

Achieving the anticipated outcomes described in the Teens and Toddlers logic model depends to a large extent on the girls developing a relationship with their toddler,

reflecting on their interactions with the toddler and the impact of their own actions on the toddler's behaviour. We were therefore keen to observe the level of the girls' engagement with their assigned toddlers during toddler time. In particular, we were looking out for the amount of time spent working with their toddler (as opposed to playing with other toddlers or none at all) and the young women's level of energy and interest during that time.

During most observations, we noted how much effort and energy participants put into working with the toddlers. We often gained a positive impression of the young women getting on with the task of supporting their assigned toddlers, managing their interactions with all of the toddlers in the class, and their enjoyment of being there. The following extracts from our observation notes taken during nursery time are typical:

> *Just as was the case at my other visit, the girls seemed to know exactly what they were doing and nobody seemed in any way lost. They got straight into playing with the toddlers.*

> *On entering the nursery the girls dispersed straight away to find 'their' toddlers. There was a sense of anticipation and joy at seeing the toddler (and the toddlers seemed happy on seeing 'their' teen).*

> *The girls are very, very proactive and work hard. They don't interact much with the nursery staff but get involved in playing with their toddler.*

Less commonly, during some observations, the young women were not as enthusiastic and did not actively engage with their toddlers much of the time. During some observations the young women were keener to talk to one another and often disappeared to a corner of the playground or classroom to chat amongst themselves. Some participants admitted not really engaging with their toddler very much because they didn't enjoy spending time with them. Most participants reported looking forward to spending time with their toddler but some girls did report simply not liking their toddler and this affected the amount of time they wanted to spend with them.

> *F1: the time that you're actually just like, I think it's an hour and half you spend in there innit? Sometimes it's a bit too long.*
> *F2: Sixty minutes would be fine but it's like ninety's just a bit too long.*
> *F2: My toddler's quite quiet so sometimes it gets like, not annoying, but like I ask him something and he just sits there and doesn't do anything, he doesn't go outside, doesn't interact with people. Like I would have to tell the kids to come and play with him but he just like, he doesn't put the effort in.* Focus group

The facilitators varied in their response to this – some would encourage the young women to seek out their assigned toddlers:

The most challenging part for me will be when you have a teenager that hasn't really connected that day, for one reason or another. It could, in check in they might've said, for example last week we had one girl that said 'I'm really tired, I went to a party at the weekend, I haven't caught up with my sleep and I'm just not feeling it'. And we got into the nursery and the whole session, she was very disconnected, quite isolated, wanted to just sit and doodle by herself and I had to try and support her and encourage her to spend some time with her toddler and maybe do some drawings with her toddler'. Facilitator

Others left the young women alone.

Towards the end of the session all three girls are sitting at the table drawing and not involved with their toddlers at all. They sit at the table for quite a long while. The facilitators don't seem to mind this and don't prompt them to get back to the toddlers.
Observation notes

In at least one school, a participant's failure to engage with her toddler was resolved by giving her an 'easier' toddler to work with.

I got a new toddler and he was a good boy and I think he's the more easy to handle because he like doesn't always want his own way and everything and he just like goes with it and you like he gets on with other little kids as well so it's easier. I didn't like looking after [the first toddler] because she kept throwing tantrums. Participant paired interview

We also observed variance in the amount of time the teenagers spent working with their assigned toddler as opposed to interacting with any, or a group, of toddlers. In supporting a toddler during unstructured play in a group setting, it is inevitable that participants would end up working with more than one toddler at a time. The facilitators themselves identified the variance in the amount of time spent interacting with the assigned toddler.

It varies a lot from well it varies a lot because depending on the activity that's taking place in the classroom, it also depends on the rapport that's between the teenager and the toddler. I would say, I would say that if we were in, if I had to come up with a number it would be about 20% to 40% of the time. …[]…, I think the reality is it's a bit too much to, for one teenager to spend all the time with a toddler. Facilitator

The participants also acknowledged that it was not possible to work with a single toddler for the entire session, because the toddler would want to play with his or her friends, too. Other variables that mediated the amount of time spent working with an individual toddler throughout the duration of the T&T programme included the participants' attendance (some missed weeks, started late, or dropped out early) and the toddlers'

attendance (some toddlers would be off ill, there may be a nursery-organised trip and none of the toddlers would be present that week, or the toddlers no longer attended the nursery and participants would be assigned a new toddler).

2.5 Counselling

The third component of the Teens and Toddlers curriculum is one to one counselling. Counsellors are unpaid and are usually trainees using their experience on the programme to fulfil the required number of hours for a counselling qualification.

The counselling was the most challenging component of the programme to research because of the confidential nature of the relationship between participants and the counsellor, and the topics discussed during counselling sessions. We did not ask to observe any counselling session. We discussed counselling with participants, facilitators and counsellors themselves but restricted our enquiry to practical aspects (timings, frequency etc.) and a generic account of the perceived purpose and impact. We did not ask respondents to discuss specific cases.

Nevertheless, it was to some extent possible to explore the fidelity of the counselling component to the logic model, and across the range of schools involved in the RCT. We describe this in terms of:

- Timing and frequency of counselling sessions, and the selection of participants for counseling;
- A generic overview of topics covered; and
- The relationship between counsellors and the group.

2.5.1 Timing, frequency and selection of participants for counselling

In all sites visited, counselling sessions started in week two of the programme and took place during nursery time. Participants attended individually, usually for around 45 minutes, allowing two participants per week to receive counselling. This meant that those participants would miss half of nursery time. Counselling sessions took place in the team room while the rest of the group were in the nursery. In some sites, additional effort was made to ensure complete privacy: notices were put on the door to stop nursery staff entering, and, at the end of the nursery session, facilitators would ensure the group waited outside the team room until the counsellor indicated that the session had ended.

The means of selecting participants for counselling each week varied across schools. In some schools, a simple rota system was used and the girls took it in equal turns to attend. This approach was associated with groups of participants who seemed to enjoy

the counselling sessions and liked their counsellor. When asked by the facilitator '*who's turn is it this week?*' participants' hands would shoot up in the air.

Other groups could not adopt this approach because the girls were not as keen to receive counselling and needed a lot of encouragement to attend. The response to the counselling enquiry would be folded arms and silence. We observed girls 'missing their turn' because they refused to go and neither the facilitator nor the counsellor wanted to make counselling compulsory.

> *The first discussion was immediately about counselling and who's turn it was - none of the girls were enthusiastic about being the one to go for counselling. It appeared that two in the group had not done it before, or at least, it was their turn. One girl in particular was very reluctant and sulky. It was eventually resolved by the other girl agreeing to go – the reluctant girl is left alone for this week.* Observation notes

> *We remind them that they signed up to it when they started the project. So, even before they brought back the parental consent form it's in the 'choosing to participate' form and we say to them 'You know what, if you don't want to have counselling that's absolutely fine, but we're not telling the counsellor, you have to go in and tell the counsellor yourself one to one.* Facilitator

The third approach to selecting girls for counselling each week was needs-led. We have previously described how check-in was used in some schools to identify girls in need of additional support who would be signposted to the counsellor that week. It was not always a response to issues raised during check-in; some groups had girls who both the facilitator and counsellor had identified as in greater need of counselling and who would attend more regularly.

> *I can give you a really good example of a girl in the last group who was, to me, it was the first person I'd ever counselled in my life. She brought something just like, it was like a bomb. A bomb had hit her because she told me that* [a family member] *died in the summer holidays … she really needed counselling and it wasn't difficult for, for us to work together.* Counsellor

2.5.2 Topics covered during counselling

Facilitators were clear that counselling was confidential and they usually did not know what was discussed during sessions. Our interviews with counsellors in each of the four case studies purposely did not discuss specific individuals but the types of topics covered in general. Counsellors were clear that they were there to discuss whatever issues the young people wanted to, not pick up on topics that emerged from the T&T curriculum. Some reported that finding out what issues the participants would find useful

to discuss could be quite difficult because of the way they had been signposted towards counselling:

> *The kids are not actually coming to you with a presenting problem, they're just thrown into the programme and this comes along with it and it might be difficult to work with them because of that.* Counsellor

Counsellors identified a range of topics that had emerged during sessions, including:

- Problem relationships with parents and other family members;
- Bereavement;
- Substance misuse and addiction;
- Racism;
- Peer pressure;
- Stress of school exams;
- Relationship problems;
- Bullying.

> *I think you cover a myriad of things, really. We sometimes talk about loss in, in all senses, like not just bereavement; different types of losses. Issues that come up from school, teenage-y issues and I kind of don't mean to say it quite like that but, you know, issues that you kind of would deal with through school with pressure from exams and all those kind of things, and just anything, really, that's bothering them. Or bullying, racism, loads of different things, so. It's quite broad, really.* Counsellor

2.5.3 Relationship between counsellors and the group

A recurring theme that emerged during our interviews with both facilitators and counsellors, was the importance of the relationship between them. This was very much associated with whether or not counsellors took part in team activities, or remained separate to the group and kept to a strict counselling role.

Some counsellors would stay after nursery time (when they had been counselling individuals) and remain with the group for the rest of the afternoon, joining in activities and discussions. Most facilitators seemed to prefer this arrangement, finding it helpful in both facilitating the group, and also useful in encouraging participants to attend counselling.

> *I personally think it gives them a better bond [if they stay]. Because they become part of the team. So I actually believe it adds to the counselling because there's more commitment from, I don't know what I'm trying to say, actually. It does work better.* Facilitator

Facilitators had little control over whether the counsellors stayed for group time or not. Counsellors in the T&T programme are unpaid and are usually trainees using their experience on the programme to fulfill the required number of hours for a counselling qualification.

> *My preferred is that they stay because it makes them look more like, I mean and there's nobody's normal, but it makes them look like a, more like a normal human being. It's down to the Counsellors, because remember the Counsellors are Trainee Counsellors, they're doing this in their own time.* Facilitators

Those counsellors who chose not to join in the group time explained this decision as an attempt to keep strict boundaries in their relationship with participants. Where counsellors did stay for group time, facilitators recognised this difficulty and we observed group sessions where the counsellor opted out of group discussions or activities because they felt it inappropriate to take part. For example, during one session when the facilitators were discussing each of the participant's future potential and providing them with lots of positive feedback about their time spent at Teens and Toddlers, the counsellor present opted out of the discussion. Facilitators seemed to understand the counsellors' dilemma and were able to manage it during team time.

> *It's quite a difficult one for the counsellor because her role is, is very much in a counselling role, and I believe as a counsellor she's not really to give too much of herself away. So it's quite difficult for her to participate and share as openly as I might be able to share, 'cause I'll share quite openly to give them examples of how I am with my children which encourages them to speak. I don't think she can do that on a professional level but she's brilliant insofar as when we're having, we have a thing called bag of bits Where we'll ask questions, you know: can you get pregnant from sitting on a toilet seat, things like that, [the counselor] really will participate and we'll have a bit of a joke with that one and really lighten the mood up.* Facilitator

2.6 Conclusions

A key purpose of this evaluation was to assess the fidelity of Teens and Toddlers delivery to the logic model developed during the formative process evaluation, and across the range of schools in which it was being delivered during the RCT. This section has described delivery as observed and reported during fieldwork carried out between January and July 2010, highlighting areas of implementation that are common across schools and those where variance exists.

2.6.1 Selection and recruitment

The formative evaluation highlighted variance in the process of selecting participants for the T&T programme. This process evaluation has found similar variance. Those responsible for selection vary in their roles and consequent knowledge about individual young people, particularly in respect of risk factors such as sexual behaviour and family-based issues. The selection tool provided by T&T is not generally used to assess individual young people, though is used to inform school staff's consideration of which young people may be suitable for the programme. Staff tend to apply their own subjective criteria when selecting young people and the reasons for selecting individuals are rarely recorded.

School staff do not generally inform young people about why they have been selected for the programme and are particularly reluctant to make explicit to young people that they are considered to be at risk of early pregnancy. They are more likely to emphasise the opportunities presented by the programme to gain work experience with young children and obtain accreditation.

Young people themselves are often unaware of the reasons for their selection. Although information about the purposes of the programme, including teenage pregnancy prevention, are given during the briefing session, young people are more likely to focus on the work experience and accreditation aspects of the programme. Nevertheless, our interviews indicate that participants do gradually acquire an awareness of the programme's pregnancy prevention objectives, and sometimes resent the implication that they themselves are at risk.

2.6.2 Fidelity of programme delivery

Our conclusions are that, overall, the delivery of Teens and Toddlers is consistent with the principles outlined in the logic model. All three programme components are delivered in every site, and although we have highlighted differences across sites, we did not consider this to be beyond the variance expected when delivering a complex intervention in a wide range of school and nursery settings, and by facilitators from a range of professional backgrounds.

We summarise below the main elements of variance in programme delivery.

Variance in curriculum delivery:
- Some facilitators adapted their pedagogical approach to suit the learning styles of the group.
- Some facilitators were more flexible than others in the delivery of the curriculum, both in the amount of content delivered and the order in which it was delivered.

- There was some variance in the level of confidence demonstrated by facilitators in their knowledge of sexual health issues.
- Variance in participant attendance, and engagement.

Variance in nursery time
- Facilitators had different approaches to encouraging teenagers to stick closely to their assigned toddlers.
- There was some variance in the degree of hands on support given to young people by facilitators.
- Variance in participants' engagement with their assigned toddlers.

Variance in counselling
- Different methods are used to select participants for counselling each week.
- Variance in participants' willingness to attend counselling, and actual attendance.
- Presence of counsellor during group activities.

3 Perceptions of Teens and Toddlers: aims and impacts

3.1 Introduction

The logic model developed during the formative evaluation drew out some key aims of the Teens and Toddler programme. The programme components of curriculum, toddler time and counselling were designed to address the determinants of teenage pregnancy via improving:

- emotional literacy and social skills (self-reflection, self-management, awareness of others);
- awareness of options for future education/employment;
- sense of self-, self-worth and self-esteem;
- knowledge and awareness of contraception;
- future aspirations and ability to set goals and markers of success;
- sense of control over their life; and
- understanding and appreciating the responsibility and work involved in parenting.

In this section, we present data from both the case studies and interviews with a wider range of school stakeholders on their perceptions of the programme in two areas: the aims and purpose of the programme and what kinds of impacts they perceived it to have had. It is important to note that the impacts we discuss in this report are those perceived by stakeholders and participants, not those measured via the RCT.

3.2 Perceived aims and purpose

Although educational or social interventions may have defined aims underpinned by a logic or theory, generally stakeholders involved with, or affected by, the intervention invest it with their own aims or priorities, or choose to focus on aspects of the programme that are of primary interest to them. Analysing stakeholder understandings of the aims and objectives of a programme can be useful (a) to determine the extent to which understandings are shared and (b) to explore the assumptions that underlie them. This matters because interventions are more likely to be implemented consistently if those involved have a common understanding of the aims and core components of a programme.

In this section, therefore, we explore and compare the understandings of those who deliver the programme (facilitators) with those involved in its administration in schools

(teachers and others) and those receiving it (the young people in the intervention and the control arms).

3.2.1 Facilitators

Facilitators had the most detailed understanding of the aims of the programme and the ways in which these aims were to be brought about. At interview, although all acknowledged that Teens and Toddlers was an intervention with the ultimate aim of reducing teenage pregnancy amongst the girls participating, their focus was mainly on the ways in which girls are enabled to avoid an unwanted teenage pregnancy. When facilitators discussed the aims of the intervention, they tended to concentrate primarily on young people's choices. Overall, they saw the programme as showing the young people that there was a range of life choices and opportunities available to them, raising the girls' aspirations for their future to make these choices with confidence and self-belief. They also focused on the objective of improving the young people's interpersonal and communication skills so that they could both articulate their own choices and resist pressure from peers and others that might limit their options or pressure them into decisions. Obviously, the primary choices they were focusing on related to sexual behaviour. However, facilitators were often at pains to point out that this had to be put into the context of making choices more generally.

> …for me it's not like 'this is a sexual health programme and that's all we do'. This is a programme about helping young people make better decisions for themselves and a very important one is'[…] when to have children, and sex and drugs and […] violence. Anger is another one. There's lots of things that affect young people.

Facilitators often felt that girls did not recognise the range of life choices available to them and that they tended to set their aspirations too low. An important aim, therefore, was to present the young women with choices and support them to develop the skills to balance competing choices and opportunities.

> I'd say [the aim is] to empower them really to an understanding that, you know, there is more out there than just sort of settling for what's ok. There's more out there, there's an aim out there and there are people there to support them as well.

> There's a lots of schemes [aimed at] reducing teenage pregnancies. For me what's important [about T&T] is the self-development kind of aspect and that the ideas that the teams kind of come to the learning for themselves on when is a good time for them and, and the ability to kind of make choices which give them more of the kind of outcomes that they want. So, you know, we never say to them 'you shouldn't be doing whatever' but it's about understanding more about themselves and what they want and how to get what they want.

Raising participants' aspirations and self-esteem was seen as key to increasing their perception of choices as well as providing the space for the young people to increase their capacity to communicate their wishes to others.

> *My view is [T&T] is a mechanism for helping the teenagers put together the skills that they have, their interpersonal skills, and for them to see how, how it works in a safe environment you know where they can be themselves and so they, they learn about their own, sense of importance as well as other people's importance. So whether it's working with the toddlers where they're responsible for them or in the interactions in the group they err, because they have a lot of, they've got stacks of interpersonal skills themselves it's just that they're, my view is that they are so busy protecting themselves from the aggravation that they get at school and in the street they err, they're using it for defending and counter attacking rather than just being as open as they could be.*

Therefore, for many facilitators, the intervention was not just about telling girls that they had the right to say no and resist peer pressure in respect of sex or unprotected sex, but about enabling them to negotiate power with others from a position of strength and self-confidence. Moreover, this applied to the myriad of important choices they would find themselves making in the future.

> *They have the rights to say no. Whether it's talking about sexual intercourse or whether you're actually talkin' about any jobs or anything, whatever they wanna do they've got the right [to do it].*

Increasing self-efficacy and the capacity to make choices was connected to improving the young women's ability to communicate with others around the choices they wanted to make.

> *I believe that it's, the whole programme is about giving the teens and the young people a sense of empowerment, a voice, but in that we try to encourage them to use their voice in a skilled and well-mannered way i.e. teaching them all about interpersonal skills for everyday life.*

The aim of the nursery interactions was rarely raised or discussed by facilitators during interviews. When it was, facilitators were generally keen to point out that it was not about deterring the girls from becoming pregnant by showing how hard caring for a toddler can be.

> *Well first and foremost I mean it's a pregnancy prevention program, so the idea is it's gonna get young women to really think about that and think about the implications of that. So the idea is they work in the nursery and they, it's not, [sighs] I don't think it's about that that puts them off but what happens over the course of the program is they have a really big sense of the impact they would have on a child and they start to really look at the role of the parent as being a really big role that they would want to prepare for.*

3.2.2 School staff

Most of the respondents involved in the implementation of the T&T programme within schools were staff with pastoral responsibilities such as learning mentors, health mentors, inclusion managers or pastoral liaison workers. As such, they would be expected to have a more personal knowledge of the girls selected for the intervention than those with solely teaching responsibilities (although some of these also had teaching responsibilities). We noted that their responses differed to those of the small number of teachers included in the sample so we present the perceptions of these two groups separately, starting with the pastoral staff.

Pastoral staff interviews had a strong emphasis on themes of risk and vulnerability. For them, the aim of T&T was to mitigate three kinds of risk: risk of teenage pregnancy, risk of school exclusion and risk of becoming NEET.

> *[T&T aims to] build the self-esteem of the more vulnerable potentially NEET, to use that educational acronym. The students who are not coping as well as we would like, children who are at risk of early pregnancy, children who are at risk of sort of not finishing their eleven to sixteen education successfully.*

Like the facilitators, respondents in this category tended to focus on raising the aspirations and self-esteem of the young women in the intervention:

> *To work with, to work with the vulnerable teenagers who are […] at risk of being teenage parents. I think that's probably the main, the main aim, but it's raising aspirations, raising self-esteem...*

Others mentioned the aim of challenging perceived social norms of teenage pregnancy within the school. The programme was seen not only as aiming to raise self-esteem amongst participants and to challenge their expectations around teenage pregnancy, but also to raise awareness of the problem of teenage pregnancy within the school itself and in the wider community.

> *Well the programme aims to do, well it's two-fold actually, it's raising awareness first of all for young students, erm about caring for young children. As you know we have a large proportion of single parents here, very young single parents as well, and it's just raising awareness of, about having a child at a young age, how to look after a child, what their needs are and also to actually give them a sense of worth as well, so they get a qualification out of it as well, which they could use nationally, which gives them far greater options but also raising awareness for what, you know, what is needed in the borough itself.*

The emphasis of teachers was somewhat different. For them, the main aim of T&T was to provide the young people with vocational training and work experience.

The programme, I hope, aims to give young people the chance to work with younger kids, gain some experience working with people, developing communication skills, helping them understand what parenting is about and what caring for children is about, and my understanding of it when I was first given the, the pack was, it is a teenage pregnancy prevention programme, but it's disguised in, in ways, and basically it benefits pupils not just for that factor.

The aim of building a sense of personal responsibility was also stressed:

[The aim is] to make them more aware of the responsibilities of their actions. For example if they're sexually aware, what the consequences will be; can they handle it?

These two different perceptions of the programme are illustrated in the following interview, where the school was described as moving from one understanding of the programme to another.

…it was the Head of Childcare that was originally managing the project because at the time, it was perceived as a project that was more focused upon young girls that were interested in Childcare.
I: RIGHT, LIKE WORK EXPERIENCE'
F: Work experience, but actually when we sort of deciphered through the programme brief, it was actually more about personal development and identifying young people who were deemed at risk of either becoming socially excluded or at risk of teenage pregnancy or sexual activity, so it was deemed more appropriate for the person taking on the role of Inclusion Lead to take over that project.

3.2.3 Participants

At various stages throughout the fieldwork, young women were asked what they thought the aims of T&T were and who the programme was aimed at. We report on participants' responses gathered from the different types of encounter: focus group, paired interviews and individual interviews before contrasting these with the perceptions of young women in the comparison group.

Focus groups

Participants' understandings of the aims and purpose of T&T became more definite as they progressed through the programme. During the first research encounter (the focus group exercises), participants tended to focus on the vocational aspects of the programme i.e. the skills and qualifications for employment in childcare.

We wrote… like it you were given a booster like and like getting a qualification out of it.

Vignettes were used in the focus groups to prompt discussion of the types of girls the intervention was aimed at. In one group, the fact that the participants felt the intervention

was for serious or committed young people led them to question whether the programme would be suitable for a girl who spends a lot of time with her brothers' older friends and does not tell her parents where she is:

F1: […]if she comes to Teens and Toddlers and like […] she might like get in trouble and stuff […] might find it more difficult to work with young children.
I: RIGHT. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT'
F1: Because if she's always with her older brothers, they're like doing whatever [and] she doesn't tell her mum what she's doing, then it might be a bit harder because she won't tell her mum that what she does here and like it might just be difficult, she might just find it a bit hard to work with, like to respond with the children.

Whereas the programme was seen as suitable for the more serious girl because she could benefit from the qualification gained at T&T as a back-up:

And she wants to be a lawyer […] then she could come here, would be good for her in a way cos […] She'd get a qualification for it, so if she didn't go through to [be a] lawyer, then she's got a chance of working in a nursery or getting a qualification

Finally, in the vignette about the girl who did not like school but wanted to work in childcare, the programme was considered too difficult for someone so easily distracted.

F1: If she gets distracted in school, then she could get distracted working with children. [If] she comes here, yes, and gets a child that is behav[ing] but not, or really quiet, not well behaved, she might get really…
F2: Agitated.
F1: Yes, agitated...
F2: cos she's so young, [she might think] 'that's it, I'm not having children, I don't want to be a nanny'.

However, not all groups expressed an understanding of the programme as being aimed at serious and responsible young women who had childcare careers in mind. In more than one group, the participants expressed some understanding of the types of young women for whom the programme was designed, but also sought to distance themselves from this definition. For example, in one group the participants were divided into small groups and asked to consider who they thought T&T would benefit. They report back:

"Well, we never quite got that question, to be quite honest [some laughter], and at first we wrote…what's it…'Girls that are vulnerable and gullible to get pregnant at a young age' That's…that's what we [wrote] - but then we realised that were in the programme so this was talking about ourselves, and I'm not vulnerable! [laughter.] So then we changed it to 'girls that are mature enough to know when it's right to have children'.

When they discussed this further, they showed an understanding of the programme as aiming to make them think critically about the option of having a child at a young age. However, they now refer, not to themselves, but to most girls.

F1: ... Yeah, cos like you have to put girls through the stage where you know that looking after children is not easy, so gullible girls that say yes to anything or whatever, like, they're more vulnerable to get pregnant at a young age, in my opinion, so you have to put them through that stage where you have to teach them that its not easy to look after a child.
I: SO YOU THINK IT WOULD WORK FOR THAT GROUP, THEN'
F1 Yeah.
I: BUT THEN, BECAUSE YOU ARE ON TEENS & TODDLERS, YOU CHANGED IT TO...'
F1 ... Yes, I did, cos I'm not vulnerable. I do make my own decisions [looks at other participants who are beginning to laugh] Don't even start!
F2: Sometimes the wrong ones, but yeah! [laughter.]
I WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING' WHY ARE YOU GUYS LAUGHING' WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT SHE SAID'
F2: No, its her saying that she's not vulnerable and she makes the right decisions. Yeah, right, Bev.
F1:I do make the right decisions. It makes me - I will learn from my mistakes, but I do make, to me I make the right decisions. [to others] Shush, stop! Cos you're acting like you don't do it either […] I'm not vulnerable, though. I'm not vulnerable. And I'm not - I, I guarantee that I will not be a teenager, yeah, that'll get pregnant [laughs] by, before the age of 16.

These early focus group interviews suggest that two conflicting views of the programme were simultaneously held by participants. In the first, the programme is aimed at young women who are serious and committed to a career. In the second, the programme is aimed at vulnerable young women who are at risk of early pregnancy. Participants themselves profess to identify with the former view whilst still discussing the latter in detail.

Paired interviews

In the paired interviews, the programme was seen in terms of preparation for the future, either for a job or career in childcare, or to be prepared for their own children sometime later in life. For example, respondents talked about the aim of the programme, and certainly their own aim, as being to get a national award. But the preparation was seen as being more than job preparation.

To, to, like, for us to teach them new things and then, like, in the future, like, if we have toddlers and stuff we know what to do with them.

Others spoke of the programme aiming to make them more self-aware and more in touch with how they felt.

[…] so teenagers can like realise, can relate to their feelings and see how it's like'

However, the aim most frequently identified at this stage was to deter participants from getting pregnant early by demonstrating to them how hard childcare can be.

Yeah. […]Probably just don't get teenage pregnancy around here. [Facilitators] said because you're going [to the nursery] you've either got a good kid or you've got a one that's hard to handle, if you get hard to handle its telling you not to have kids at your age because you get stressed easier. […] because we've got loads of [children at the nursery] you wont have kids that age who some of them are really naughty yeah, or but distracted easily but some of them are good but they haven't seen a naughty one so were going to put yourself off so you can't just see the good ones.
RIGHT OK, AND DO THEY TALK ABOUT IT IN GROUP TIME AS WELL'
F: Yes. Only once […] They just said don't get teenage pregnancy because you've seen all the differences in nursery.

Others expressed this aim as being about choice and making the right choice.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE POINT OF [Teens and Toddlers] IS'
F1 Put us off sex.
F2 [Laughs]
I1 PUT YOU OFF SEX, YEAH. DO YOU THINK IT HAS ANY OTHER POINT'
F2 In a way I think its negative, but I think its trying to make the right choice.

Individual interviews

The participants in the final one-to-one interviews (undertaken towards the end of the programme) still emphasised the deterrent attributes of the interaction with the toddlers. However, they also emphasised more positive objectives around having children at the right time and being more prepared for parenthood.

Like, that's what they said to us, the whole point is to learn, like, what kids can be like when you have your own, so, like, you don't want them too early, and you learn about sexual stuff.

One of the participants made a link between a desire for a child and underlying issues such as self-esteem, etc.

AND ARE THERE PARTICULAR KINDS OF PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BENEFIT MOST'
Yeah I think maybe the people that want to get pregnant at an early age, go Teens and Toddlers and experience having a toddler and that that probably might change your mind and they wouldn't have lack of confidence, low self esteem

3.2.4 Comparison group

Interviews with control participants took place towards the end of the programme, and focused on issues around potential contamination (e.g. whether the young women in the intervention group were talking about what they learned on the programme with those in the control group) and confounding factors (e.g. whether control participants were taking part in other programmes, with similar aims).

When asked what they thought the aim of the programme was, the girls in the comparison group focused almost exclusively on the interaction between the girls and the toddlers. For them, this seemed to constitute the main or most important part of the programme. All said it was about learning and gaining experience through ongoing interaction with a toddler. However, only a minority thought it might have something to do with working with children in the future.

> *I think it will help people if they want to become a teacher, how to react if someone's naughty or something.*

For the majority, it was seen to provide some kind of intervention around pregnancy and/or parenthood, including providing a disincentive to young women who might be considering becoming pregnant, or for whom becoming pregnant young might be an acceptable choice.

> [T&T is for]*girls who are sexually active and girls that don't have an… like they don't know what it is like […] they think they want to have a child but they don't know what it's actually like to have a child.*

> *Yeah, I think it is trying to change, to more realise how harder it will be being a young mum, taking care of a little child.*

Another aim identified was to enable those young women considered most likely to become pregnant to make choices around their pregnancy or improve their parenting skills.

> *I think it's trying to help like to show them like how to be safe and like not get their self in that predicament, and if they do, how to deal with the predicament as well yeah.*

> *If you become a young mum, it will help you improve, look after a baby.*

However, some resisted the idea that one could predict which young women were likely to become pregnant.

> *Difficult to predict which girls would benefit. […] Like some people say like 'Oh, children with bad families and that might get in that predicament'... I think they can be*

the most quietest person and you would never know they get into that predicament, but I don't think it's any sort of person, I think anyone could really do it.

This was echoed by others who thought that although some girls may be more at risk than others, any girl who gets pressurised or finds herself in a relationship might become at risk.

Erm, I'd say there was a few girls but erm, no, I think it's mostly everyone that, cause you, if you make a mistake or something then it could be anyone. Like, or if you're like pressured or'

3.3 Perceived and reported impacts

Describing how young women and other stakeholders report impacts is important in enabling us to explore qualitatively any impacts that are observed quantitatively through the RCT, to explore impacts that may not be shown quantitatively and consider the range of impacts, including those that were not intended. It also provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between the stated and perceived aims of the interventions and the reported impacts.

3.3.1   Impacts perceived by facilitators, school and nursery staff

Behaviour of participants

During fieldwork, facilitators, nursery and school staff were asked whether they had noted changes in the behaviour of the young people while they were attending the programme. The facilitators reported the most marked changes, often about gaining maturity or responsibility.

They grow up. They've had a, they've been given a job with a lot of responsibility for a toddler. Obviously, they have a big impact on them. They'll say some, you usually hear comments like 'I'm not having a kid for another five years? or something like that [moderator chuckles], 'cause they can see how much work is involved in it and also they,'cause they get challenged in a supportive way then, then they grow, yeah, I would say, and also their ability to self-reflect and to, you know, realise they've got more choices than they thought they had. Facilitator

Others described young women as becoming more assertive or simply more engaged.

*...and I think she's learnt about responsibility and [name] I think has realised that she can't remain silent all the time and just look pretty...*Facilitator

School staff did not tend to report such noticeable improvements or changes, though on the whole, they were not expecting to. Often a slight improvement or simply maintaining the young person in the school was considered an achievement in itself.

…so like today they had sandwiches and stuff and they were just chatting and they seem fine. So, I wouldn't say their, their, their behaviour hasn't certainly deteriorated at all in any way. […] I wouldn't say it was a huge improvement but I would say I have noticed a positive, I've noticed positive reactions from them so, and sometimes as well it's, it's small steps isn't it? Sometimes we look for the big, the big change and sometimes it might be really big for them, do you kind of get what I'm saying? Teacher

Some nursery staff noted the development of a bond with the toddler, describing young people who had entered the programme seeming quite detached subsequently developing strong emotional ties with the children.

You wouldn't think they would be too fussed, but yeah, they do. They, they, they do, although it's only just, you know, what is it? Six weeks, well, it's longer than six weeks, isn't it, but it's only for a couple of hours a week over a period of time, they do build up a little bond with those children, yeah. Nursery Staff

Some participants were seen to be changing markedly within the programme, although these changes were not transferring immediately into their attitudes or behaviours towards school. However, for those within the school, getting positive reports about the young person within another setting was often seen as evidence of change and potential.

Oh yeah, I mean like because I have on the programme now, there are three or four girls who are really doing exceptionally well, who were problematic at school but worked really well with the toddlers, getting real good reports from their mentors about how they're doing at the nursing, so that's been really quite good and quite positive, yes. Learning Mentor

Social development and social skills

Improvement in confidence and self-esteem was the strongest reported impact across school staff, the facilitators and the nursery staff. Staff in some schools were particularly proud of the fact that the young people had achieved something that was recognised and clearly respected by family and the school community.

…they received their certificates this week the girls and the boys that originally did the project and you know have just come on so much. I was talking to one of the girls and said you know, 'you've changed so much you know, you've really matured so, […] the initial celebration that we had with them over at the Civic, their parents came to that and we, a lot of parents come and the feedback from parents was good, you know they did appreciate the girls and boys doing it, they had felt they benefit from doing it so, you know and the fact that they'd all come along to a celebration I think it said how they felt about it. Teacher

Others highlighted changes to young people's confidence and their ability to express their opinions and emotions more fully.

I've seen a, a lot more confidence especially in two of the young girls, they've got a massive boost in confidence, now they express their opinions more freely, they're a lot more, their self-esteem has improved, they're a lot more comfortable with themselves and with the children and I think that all comes with the fact that there's someone who looks up to them, that looks up to them and that wants them to be there which is not always the case, you know, with, with teenagers. Facilitator

School staff talked about how such improvements were noticeable within the school environment.

…so for some of the girls that we've got on there, they're vulnerable in a different way: they're sort of, they're, some of them are very, very shy and disengaged and, and I have seen from my window, I can see them in the playground now laughing and joking with their friends, although whenever I see them [it's] 'oh, don't smile and don't do that' so it has brought them out in themselves, which I quite like to see.
Learning Mentor

Such confidence was seen to enhance young people's position within the school and increase their engagement, or feel some sense of self-worth or belonging within the school environment.

[Participants] really began to develop greater self-esteem, greater confidence and starting to, to actually see that they, they were actually valuable people and have a place in school, have a position in school, and I think because they worked with, you know, toddlers, so to speak, I think it gave them a sense of worth and a feeling that they could be role models and were quite positive role models, and I think that one of the powerful things about Teens and Toddlers for me is that I think it gives these young women a sense of place. It gives them a sense of belonging to something.
Inclusion Officer

Attitudes towards pregnancy and having children

For the most part, respondents did not have high expectations of the intervention having an immediate impact on the young people's attitudes towards teenage conception and pregnancy. This was generally because this was seen as a longer term impact and there was often an attitude of 'wait and see' accompanied by the hope that the intervention might prepare the young people for future choices.

*But I, I mean, in terms of me working with the girls and what kind of impact? I mean, we won't know, because the girls would have left by the time it's had an impact, but I can say that being in an area of high teenage pregnancy, you know, I think the [this area] has the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the UK. […] The Teens & Toddlers, I would say, is one of the ways that we can address that, and it's the best way, because you're getting into the, you know, you're getting to the girls early.*Teacher

For others, the main impact they thought the programme would have was to make young women question the prospect of having a child at their age as a viable option. This

impact was seen as occurring through their experience of the hard work of childcare, and the programme dispelling some myths about being a teenage mother. For girls whose own mothers became pregnant at an early age, the programme was seen as helpful in allowing young women to question their mother's choices while still maintaining respect for their mother.

> *Well I do partially think it's a lot to do with they're feeling a bit protective over maybe their family's route or they're very much like 'well my mum done it and there's nothing wrong with us', you know like they're quite protective over that. But we very much go 'yeah you're right, yeah they're right and look at you. You've turned out fine, you've turned out perfect', but we're letting you know there are choices out there, …You have got the right to say, 'maybe I would like to look down this route and have a bit of a career first and then have the decision'.* Facilitator

Some mentioned that if girls do become pregnant they will be better able to make choices both about keeping the child versus adoption or abortion and better able to parent themselves.

> *I just hope that, well to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies in that group. Hopefully it will make an impact. Hopefully, even if they do, something happens and they become pregnant they will be more equipped to kind of deal with it because they know a little bit more about kind of like the whole child development, and what is needed to kind of bring up a child…*Teacher

However, staff in schools with the highest rates of teenage pregnancy were often quite sanguine about the capacity of this one programme to 'turn things around', either at an individual or a school level. They were not being negative about the intervention, they were merely aware that there was no 'magic bullet' and, in the light of prevailing local social and cultural norms, the difficulties experienced by the young women were greater than could be addressed by just one intervention.

> *I think it's a small experience, a positive experience for some vulnerable young women, and then that, their life would be hopefully lots of positive experiences that you can build on. I'm not sure that one 17 week programme will do it, you know what I mean? I think it's…am I being unfair? [Long pause] Well I mean a young woman last year who did the programme in year 9 was pregnant by year 11. I think it's complicated. That doesn't say I don't value the work and think it's very, very important […] I think living in [area] is difficult as well for them. […], Where it's just assumed that they have sex. One of the stats that I always read out when I do this class is the average age of losing your virginity in the UK is 17 or something, about that, you know, in [area the school is in] we know it's 13. I mean there's nothing wrong with, by the time you've left school for you not to have lost your virginity […] and in fact that puts you in a norm, you know for the country.* Teacher

Capacity to benefit

Capacity to benefit is a factor of social interventions that is hard to assess when conducting evaluations. There is not only variation in the way interventions are delivered, but also in the way they are received, and the young people have a range of starting points, needs and prior experiences informing their responses.

There are so many different factors which, which impact on, on a student's progress on the, the attitude, the behaviour and really from student to student. Teacher

Motivation of the young person was seen as key, and this was often difficult to maintain whilst balancing other priorities within the school.

Yeah, I think obviously to a degree, they have to be somewhat motivated. When you're dealing with teenagers, a lot of them feel the need to miss school or not go in or stay at home or call in sick. I've noticed that more in this group, actually, and there's also exams and things during the times when we have our sessions, not our counseling sessions but the actual Teens and Toddlers, so that kind of impacts on the group because they're not here as much. But I think just a certain degree of motivation because otherwise, yeah, you'd get kind of behind. Facilitator

Maintaining motivation was seen to be a major issue in completing the programme and facilitators often expressed surprise at who had dropped out and who had remained to the end: it was not always the young people they would have expected.

It depends on who they are and […] how involved they are and how committed they are to kind of their toddler, I think, realistically. I think everybody takes away something. But […] there are degrees. Some people take it kind of very seriously and they're committed to kind of their role, their responsibility that they've been given, and other people might start off very committed and then actually it becomes a bit boring for them, to be honest, and they'd rather be chatting to their friends or […]That's a lesson in itself. Facilitator

There were sometimes overarching problems in a young person's life that meant they found it difficult to engage with aspects of the programme.

Some […]find it very difficult. In the last group I think there was a, there was a young girl, I don't know what her, but she found it really, really difficult to get along [working with the toddlers]
I: DID THAT CHANGE, DID THAT GET EASIER FOR HER?
I don't think it did. I think, I don't think it got any easier for her, but I think that was to do with whatever her issues were. I think it was more than just the toddler and being

here. There's, a lot going on in her life and she […] seemed anti quite a lot of things, you know? Some weeks she'd be fine and then other weeks, the mood would kick in and you could see it in her body language and, but she didn't really want to be here and, at that time. Nursery Staff

3.3.2   Impacts reported by participants

Our analysis of impacts reported by participants derives mainly from the interviews that took place mid-way through and towards the end of the programme (the joint and single interviews), as at these stages the young people had more clearly formed ideas about what kinds of impacts the programme had had on them. We examine how they felt participation had affected their self-confidence, self-esteem and interpersonal skills and explore key facets of their lives: changes to how they experienced school; changes to their ambitions or plans for the future; changes to how they related to family and friends and, finally, whether the programme had had any influence on their attitude towards parenthood.

Self-confidence, self-presentation and interpersonal skills

The majority of the young women felt that the T&T programme had had a beneficial effect on their self-confidence overall.

> *I'm more confident because now I know that if I, if I've got a point then it must be right, if I think it's right then it is right.* (Single Final)

They attributed this to various aspects of the programme, including the counselling sessions and the work with toddlers:

> *Like in counselling. I got to talk and stuff, and build up my confidence, cause first of all I didn't really like talking and stuff but now I do.* (Single Final)

> *[T&T made me] feel a bit more confident because once you get over an obstacle with your toddler then it's like I helped him through it so maybe I could again or maybe I can do that.* (Paired)

Working reflectively with the toddlers gave some girls an increased capacity for self-analysis and self-regard that, in turn, allowed them to think about the way they presented themselves to others.

> *I used to be like…I wasn't rude but I used to be a bit to the teachers, like I didn't like them...[…] but like now I know how it feels because that's the way the little children, that's like what the little children do to me. So, now I know that, how it feels, so I don't do that anymore. I just try and be good to them. (Single Final)*

…I saw how like I, I don't know how to say it, like I reflected it to see how I act and like I just like saw myself from a different view and looked how I act and everything like that, so I guess I just like changed a little bit. (Single Final)

Having to respond appropriately to the toddlers taught some of the girls self-control and self-presentational skills.

[In the nursery] wouldn't be able to be rude because the children are there and they look up to me as role model so if I had something to say, I had to say it in appropriate way because they are there so, I used that and I use it in school so I don't get myself in trouble. (Single Final)

[I learnt] Like listening, body language. […] you have to like crouch on the floor and talk to [the toddlers on] the same level otherwise they get scared. And then listen to everything they say and reflect on what they were saying. (Single Final)

Another way in which the programme had had an impact, was in developing self-management or response control in the young women. These were seen as key interpersonal skills.

Oh, because I understand, like, sometimes I get angry quickly, so I sorted that out.
I: SO WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET ANGRY?
F: I, like, count to ten.
I: AND WHO TAUGHT YOU TO DO THAT?
F: [Facilitators name].
I: OK. AND DOES IT WORK?
F: Yeah. Or listen to music. (Single Final)

Others talked about how their attitudes and motivation had been affected:

Well, my attitude has changed. […] Like, before, when I started Teens & Toddlers, I used to be, like, shallow and didn't want to do nothing. But now that I've got used to it, I'm, like, starting to do more stuff. So it's quite good.
I: SO WHAT MORE STUFF ARE YOU DOING?
F: Playing with different toddlers. And then, like, doing counselling. (Single Final)

Experience of school, ambition and career plans

The girls had mixed responses to whether the programme had impacted on their attitudes towards, and experience of, school. Roughly a quarter of the girls interviewed felt that the programme had little or no impact and that they maintained the same attitudes they had when they entered the programme.

[T&T has] not really [changed my attitude to school], but I like missing lessons (Paired)

I: HAS [T&T] CHANGED HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT EDUCATION AND SCHOOL?

No.[…] I dunno. It's important but I just really can't be bothered.
I: OKAY. EVEN THOUGH? SO YOU TALKED ABOUT HOPES FOR THE FUTURE.
F Hmm. […] I just wish I could go straight working? (Single Final)

Of those who said it had an impact on their experiences of school, the impact was perceived to be broadly positive and often related to the changes in self-awareness and interpersonal skills (see above). Time spent forming a new relationship with facilitators or nursery staff could allow the girls to re-think their relationship with their teachers which had perhaps been entrenched up to that point.

[before] I hated school. I found it boring and stuff, but now I kinda enjoy it. Yeah, the teachers are kind and we got on well.
YOU MENTIONED A BIT ABOUT HOW THE NURSERY STAFF TREATED YOU CHANGED, OR HAS IT CHANGED HOW YOU GET ON WITH YOUR TEACHERS?
F: Yeah. […] Cause it's like how I treat the teachers at school, it's what gets me in trouble, so if I treat them good then we get on. (Single)

In this example, enhanced self-awareness enabled this girl to think about how she behaves in class.

before I went Teens & Toddlers I used to get a lot of detentions, and I used to be quite bad, and I didn't even know why […] but now, like, I understand myself better, and I know how to behave well. (Single)

A key point of change for some was making the connection between how they applied themselves at school and their future prospects. Simply thinking of the future in very concrete terms was important.

I never used to like pay attention to stuff, but now I like, I think about my future, because we talk [at T&T] about like when we get older and stuff. (Single)

Others had developed or articulated specific career goals and had made the connection between their input at school and their chances of realizing those goals. The qualification associated with the T&T programme had made the following respondent think more generally about the use of qualifications.

I want to work with children so I'm going to need qualifications and GCSE's so it's kind of changed, […] I was interested in school but not as much [as now].
AND THAT'S DOWN TO TEENS AND TODDLERS?
Yeah. because […] at least I've got the level…I don't know… if I've got the level 1 qualification […] if I wanted to start my own business I'd rather have it with a qualification or I work with children at least I have some experience of children and yeah, become a teacher, experience with children yet again.

Others talked about how their ambitions had become more concrete. For some, this meant abandoning ambitions that they had previously held.

Well firstly I like doing drama so I thought something with drama but I felt like that wasn't really gonna get me anywhere. So I changed.

Others simply confirmed their pre-existing career ambitions.

It hasn't really changed. I want to be a lawyer – ever since I was in Year 6. Hasn't really changed. I just know I could be anything I want to do, like obviously a lawyer)

This respondent's interaction with the counsellor over time allowed her to revive ambition she felt she had lost.

My self-confidence…I used to have like a lot of that when I was younger but then as I've got older I sort of didn't have that much self-confidence and [counsellor] helped me again on that sort of thing because like she explained to me that like how I'm special as well and stuff, and all of that. […]I dunno, I always wanted to be like a doctor or something like that and I didn't think I was clever enough and stuff, and like [counsellor] like reassured me sort of thing that I could be whatever I wanted to be if I like tried my best sort of thing.

Relationships with family and friends

Respondents felt that the programme had had an impact on their personal relationships, both at home and with friends/peers. Siblings and parents were frequently mentioned in this respect. Working with toddlers allowed some to change their relationship with younger siblings.

Well, like my little brother kept on, he's like annoying, was annoying. But now, like when he annoys me, erm, I like just don't do anything bad to him and stuff, 'cause normally I hit him 'cause he's so annoying but now, I just try to get on with him. […] I thought, I thought like kids were annoying and stuff but they're just like trying to get attention and then the more you give them attention it's, the less that they're going to be annoying and stuff.

Respondents reported getting on better with parents, specifically mothers.

Like me and my mum have always got on well anyway, but like at a certain point erm, we stopped and then now yeah, I get on well with her again.

F: [Hesitates] I didn't really talk to my dad and my sister and my mum that much, but, like, I do now. Like, don't know. I get on with them better.
I: OK. OK. WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?
F: Cos I know, like, it's actually quite hard being a parent. Like, so, like, I just […] help with cooking and stuff, and jobs. I get on with my mum now.

Again, reflecting on the behaviour of the toddlers and feeling a sense of responsibility, allowed some girls to understand their parent's position.

…sometimes for my mum I might be hard to work with but like she can't give up so she has to like carry on through and I'm more nice to her because I know what she goes through.

Others found the counselling helpful in developing ways of dealing with their parents or with their families.

I never really like used to have that much of a relationship with my family coz my sister's like always at her boyfriend's house and she's much older than me, and my mum's always looking after my brother, and I just wasn't that close with my dad at all sort of thing. And when I spoke to [counsellor] she gave me like ideas to try and talk to them. Like going out with my mum to go shopping and stuff like that, and that's really helped when I did speak to my mum and now I like feel a lot more close with my family.

Others reported changes to their relationships with friends. Central to these changes was learning about dealing with confrontation and anger management.

My friend's always angry and like I help her calm down and stuff and tell her stuff. […] I, sometimes I tell her to breathe [...] because she gets too angry. Or, erm, I tell her like, if she does something bad how she can get in trouble, and like to stop.

More commonly, young women reported appraising their friendship networks and considering the types of influences friends might have on them.

F: I hung out with people who, like, gave bad influence. I've seen, like, how they can change your life if you hang around with bad people.
I: SO HOW DID YOU LEARN THAT?
F: Like, when we watched a video about […] like, this girl was hanging around with another girl, and I thought, 'Wow, that could, like, end up being me one day,'
I: SO WHAT, WHAT DID YOU DO? […] WHAT HAPPENED?
F: Well, it was like [I said to friend] you, like, give me a bad influence and everything, and even, like, everyone at school said I've changed, so, like, I don't know.
I: ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ONE PERSON, OR A NUMBER OF PEOPLE?
F: There was just this one girl in particular. Everyone else was all right, just her. [Hesitates] She was like drinking every day and everything. So I was just like, 'I don't want to hang around with someone like that.'

Others reported that the interaction with their toddler had made them think about the types of people they were drawn to socially.

I don't really hang around with loud people anymore. Like people that draw attention, I hang out with like, well they keep themselves to themselves, they are quiet, still speak their minds at times and they are a good influence in my life.
AND THAT'S BECAUSE OF TEENS AND TODDLERS?
Yeah. […]like I said I didn't use to speak to shy people because I just thought that they were just shy and I don't know that they were just there but when I saw [toddler's

name] she was nice, yeah, her personality was nice as well and I thought 'OK from a toddler, someone my age, yeah I might be, interact with them more' . So, I just started to speak to a different type of people and I clicked so, changed the group of friends I'm with.)

Attitudes towards getting pregnant and having a baby

The young women were less likely to report an impact on attitudes towards getting pregnant and having a baby. Respondents were asked whether the programme had had any impact on whether they wanted to have a baby ever and if so, when they thought the right time was for them to have a baby.

Roughly half of the young women reported that the programme had had little or no impact either on their desire to have children or the time to have them. The programme had not changed the minds of those young women who said they were unsure whether they wanted a child or said they did not want them at all.

> *AND HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT HAVING A BABY OF YOUR OWN?*
> *F: That ain't changed. I don't know if I want one.*
>
> *OK WHAT ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN OF YOUR OWN?*
> *F: I don't want them.*
> *DID YOU EVER WANT THEM?*
> *F: No. […]Because they're brats.*
> *EVEN THOUGH YOU LIKE THE TODDLERS THAT YOU WORK WITH?*
> *F: Yeah because they're not mine.* (Paired)

Other girls said that they would consider having children but that the programme had not influenced the age they thought was right for them to become pregnant. However, all of these respondents stressed that they wanted children at the 'right' time.

> *I [WAS] WONDERING WHETHER [T&T] CHANGED IT FOR YOU?*
> *F No […] I still feel like that I could like finish all my things first like... my education and that stuff and get a job and all that stuff and then I could have kids, because then if I have a baby that could go in the way...*

Of the respondents who did report an impact, this tended to be as a result of experiencing how disruptive or what hard work looking after a young child was. These young women reported either wanting to have children later or have fewer children overall.

> *Because like at home with my niece and nephew I can say 'go to your mum' but the toddler was my responsibility I had to look after her so even though I was tired and I couldn't be bothered I still had to put effort into it so I was just like [makes negative sound].*

SO BEFORE YOU HAD THAT EXPERIENCE WHEN DID YOU THINK YOU WERE GOING TO HAVE A BABY?
Like 22.
OK SO IT'S PUSHED IT BACK BY QUITE A LONG WAY.
Yeah. (Single)

[Before T&T] Like, I wanted loads of kids… like about four!   [Laughs]
I AND NOW YOU'RE CHANGING?
F I'll probably just stick with one. [Laughs] (Single)

For others, however, the experience of looking after a toddler had removed some uncertainty they felt about raising a child. They felt that they would make good mothers as a result of their experiences.

F1: I used to say to myself when, when I be older it will be really hard 'cause you have to take care of the children and that, but it's not true […] 'cause the thing that we learnt, when we're [at T&T], it helped.
I: OKAY, AND [other respondent], HAS IT CHANGED WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT HAVING A BABY OF YOUR OWN?
F2: It's going to be easier, like, to your child when they grow up 'cause we can tell them because of the experience that we're getting so, so like it's going to help us. (Paired)

3.4 Conclusions

3.4.1 Acceptability

Acceptability is a key prerequisite for an effective intervention and, overall, the intervention was perceived as acceptable to all of our respondents, both the adult stakeholders and the participants. However, it should be noted that we only interviewed school and nursery staff who were tasked with implementing the programme in their institutions. We did not interview representatives from schools that may have refused or discontinued the intervention. Furthermore, we only interviewed participants who were near to completing the programme. We did not interview any participants who had dropped out. (These are included in the interviews for the RCT).

As part of our scoping study for a cost-benefit analysis of Teens and Toddlers (see Appendix A) we asked school and nursery staff about the impact on their roles and responsibilities. The lead contact in each school tended to report that there was nothing that 'didn't get done' and that administering T&T was simply a part of their role. However they did report that the extra work involved in T&T might result in some other tasks being deferred. Most nursery staff indicated that the programme had no impact on their roles or responsibilities and some felt that the presence of the girls helped relieve pressure by providing additional support.

Although the young women participants we interviewed were pleased to be involved in the programme, some did express upset and resentment at the notion that they were viewed by school staff as being at particular risk of teenage pregnancy.

The perspective of parents is absent from this study. Although young women mainly reported their parents as happy that they were attending the programme, we have been unable to verify this.

3.4.2 Perceived aims and impacts

Stakeholders were clear that the young people would vary in terms of their capacity to benefit from the programme. There is not only variation in the way interventions are delivered, but also in the way they are received, and the young people have a range of starting points, needs and prior experiences informing their responses.

The reported impacts varied depending on the role of the respondent. Facilitators reported greater impact, while school staff noted smaller or subtler impacts. Reported impact seemed to be influenced by expectations of the intervention. Those with the greatest or most developed understanding of the aims of the intervention (facilitators) were also those that noted the greatest impact. This is not to say that facilitators were trying to exaggerate the impact, rather that teachers expect less of the intervention and tend to place its impact within the larger context of social norms within the school and the community.

The greatest impacts reported by stakeholders and participants were improvements in self-esteem, self-confidence and interpersonal skills. These in turn were seen as having an impact on participants' capacity to recognise the choices available to them, articulate those choices, and negotiate power more generally with those around them.

Both stakeholders and participants were less certain about impacts on attitudes towards early pregnancy and motherhood. Adult stakeholders either thought that this impact would only become apparent in the longer term, or believed that this intervention alone was unlikely to counter all of the influences that lead to early pregnancy.

4   Conclusions

In this concluding section, we summarise our findings and discuss their implications for the T&T programme.

4.1 Programme fidelity

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the fidelity of Teens and Toddlers delivery to the logic model developed during the formative process evaluation, and across the range of schools in which it was being delivered during the RCT.

4.1.1   Selection and recruitment

The formative evaluation highlighted variance in the process of selecting participants for the T&T programme. This process evaluation has found similar variance. Those responsible for selection varied in their roles and consequent knowledge about individual young people, particularly in respect of risk factors such as sexual behaviour and family-based issues. According to our interviews, the selection tool provided by T&T was not generally used to assess individual young people but, as advised by T&T, was reported to be used to inform school staff's consideration of which young people may be suitable for the programme. Staff tended to apply their own subjective criteria when selecting young people and rarely recorded the reasons for selecting individuals. We can therefore conclude that there was considerable variance between schools and between individual teachers in the criteria by which young women were selected to participate in the programme.

Teachers and other school staff did not generally inform young people about why they had been selected for the programme and expressed reluctance to stigmatise young people by making explicit that they were considered to be at risk of early pregnancy. They were more likely to emphasise the opportunities presented by the programme to gain work experience with young children and obtain accreditation.

Young people, therefore, were generally unaware of the individual reasons for their selection. Although information about the purposes of the programme, including teenage pregnancy prevention, were given during the briefing session, young people were more likely to focus on the work experience and accreditation aspects of the programme. Nevertheless, our interviews indicated that participants did have an awareness of the programme's pregnancy prevention objectives, and in some cases resented the implication that they themselves were at risk.

As this study has not addressed the issue of attrition, and no interviews were conducted with young women who chose not to participate or dropped out of the programme, we cannot comment on what part, if any, selection may have played in relation to this.

4.1.2 Fidelity of programme delivery

The logic model (Appendix B) described three components of the T&T programme:

- A classroom curriculum;
- Experiential learning with toddlers in the nursery;
- One-to-one counselling for those requiring it.

We assessed fidelity of delivery of each of these components through observations in four case study settings and interviews and snapshot observations in 15 further schools.

Our conclusions are that, overall, the delivery of Teens and Toddlers was consistent with that outlined in the logic model. All three programme components were delivered in every site, and although there were differences across sites, we do not consider this to be beyond the variance to be expected when delivering a complex intervention in a wide range of school and nursery settings, and by facilitators with a variety of professional backgrounds.

The main elements of variance in programme delivery were as follows:

Variance in curriculum delivery:
- Facilitators varied in their emphasis on curriculum *content* and group *process*. Although both content and process were considered important by all facilitators, some adapted their pedagogical approach to suit the learning styles of the group in ways which gave greater emphasis to learning through group process;
- Some facilitators were more flexible than others in the delivery of the curriculum, both in the amount of content delivered and the order in which it was delivered;
- Variance in participant attendance, and engagement. Figures obtained from Teens and Toddlers indicate that 26% of participants attended less than half of the programme, though we are unclear how much this represents early drop-out, or sporadic attendance.

Variance in nursery time:
- Facilitators had different approaches to supporting young people in nursery time with some more proactive than others in encouraging teenagers to work closely with their assigned toddlers;
- There was also variance in participants' engagement with their assigned toddlers.

Variance in counselling:
- There were different methods used to select participants for counselling each week;

- There was variance in participants' willingness to attend counselling, and actual attendance;
- Counsellors had different views and practices in respect of attending group activities.

4.2 Programme acceptability

Acceptability is a key prerequisite for an effective intervention and overall, the intervention was perceived as acceptable to all of our respondents, both the adult stakeholders (i.e. facilitators, school and nursery staff) and the participants. This is an important finding. However, the following caveats are appropriate:

- We only interviewed teachers/ pastoral staff and nursery staff who were tasked with implementing the programme in their institutions. We did not interview representatives from schools that may have refused or discontinued the intervention;
- We only interviewed participants who were near to completing the programme. We did not interview any participants who had dropped out (although the RCT will be doing so);
- We were unable to interview parents. Although our participant interviews indicated that parents were accepting of the programme, we were not able to verify this.

4.3 Perceived aims and impacts

Teens and Toddlers facilitators expressed higher expectations of the intervention than school staff, who, for example, often discussed the programme simply in terms of giving girls useful work experience. In turn, the participants themselves were rarely provided with explicit information about the aims of the programme. Where aims are not clearly communicated and shared there is a risk of failing to select the most appropriate participants and of reduced fidelity over time. There may be scope for greater clarity of communication about the aims of the programme and its underlying theory.

Stakeholders were clear that young people will inevitably vary in their capacity to benefit from the programme. There was variance in the types of participants accessing the intervention for a range of reasons, including the social and demographic profiles of the schools and the selection and recruitment criteria used.

The perceived impacts varied according to the role of the respondent. Facilitators reported greater impact while school staff noted smaller or subtler impacts, and perceived impact seemed to be influenced by expectations of the intervention. Those with the greatest or most developed understanding of the aims of the intervention (facilitators) were also those that noted the greatest impact. This is not to say that facilitators were trying to exaggerate the impact, rather, that teachers expect less of the

intervention and tended to consider what impact was likely given the wider context of social norms within the school and the community.

The greatest impacts perceived by stakeholders and participants were improvements in self-esteem, self-confidence and interpersonal skills. These in turn were seen as having a consequent impact on participants' capacity to recognise the choices available to them, articulate those choices, and negotiate more effectively with those around them.

Both stakeholders and participants were less certain about impacts on attitudes towards early pregnancy and motherhood. Adult stakeholders either thought that this impact would only become apparent in the longer term, or believed that this intervention alone was unlikely to counter all of the factors that influence attitudes to pregnancy and young parenthood.

4.4   Implications of these findings for Teens and Toddlers

4.4.1   Selection criteria

The process evaluation has identified that there was variance in the way in which schools selected girls to go on the programme. As currently advised by T&T, teachers used the selection tool as a guide but combined this with their own subjective judgements as to which young people would benefit most from the programme.

Predicting which girls are at greatest risk of teenage pregnancy is very challenging. As one young woman put it:

> [It's] difficult to predict which girls would benefit. […] Like some people say like 'Oh, children with bad families and that might get in that predicament'... I think they can be the most quietest person and you would never know they get into that predicament, but I don't think it's any sort of person, I think anyone could really do it.
> Young woman, control group.

Teachers also face practical constraints in making their selections having limited time and information available to them.

It is, however, important that targeted interventions are focused on those most at risk if they are to maximise the chances of achieving reductions in the population rate of teenage pregnancies. There are considerable financial and opportunity costs associated with an expensive intervention being directed at girls who are at low risk of teenage pregnancy. There is therefore scope for refining the selection tool both to improve its ability to capture the full range of relevant risk factors and to encourage wider take up of the tool among teachers.

Based on preliminary analysis of data from the 1970 birth cohort, the key risk factors for teenage parenthood include low reading and maths attainment, involvement in disciplinary problems, lone-parent family structure, dislike of school, positive attitude to parenthood, low future expectations, social housing tenure, family's receipt of benefits, low parental expectations and low parental interest in education. No one risk factor on its own can function as a practical indicator of which young women become teenage mothers. However, we did find that a composite score drawing on all our variables made a much better indicator. It would therefore be possible to develop and pilot a practical targeting measure which draws on as many as possible of the above constructs, with some scope for a more practical measure drawing on routine data available to schools.

4.4.2 Programme delivery

Although our conclusions are that overall programme delivery is implemented with a good degree of fidelity to the logic model, there are some areas of variance. Some of these are an inevitable consequence of different facilitators working in different settings with different young people, but some variance could be reduced by more specific guidance to facilitators and others involved in the programme. For example: guidelines on the priority to be given to curriculum content vis a vis learning through group processes; guidance on the process of pairing young people with toddlers; expectations regarding facilitator's support during nursery time; guidance on the selection of young people for counselling and the role of the counsellor in the group.

4.4.3 Acceptability

Our findings are positive in that both adult stakeholders and participants involved in and completing the programme report it to be highly acceptable. However, there are perspectives we have been unable to explore, including those of young women who refused to participate in the programme, dropped out or attended sporadically, the views of schools choosing not to be involved in the programme, the views of other teachers not involved in the implementation of T&T in their schools and parents who withhold their consent for their child to be involved.

Some of our interviews highlighted that some young women were upset and resentful at the idea that school staff viewed them as at particular risk of teenage pregnancy. This has a bearing on programme acceptability and merits consideration by Teens and Toddlers and participating schools. Teens and Toddlers may wish to consider providing guidance to schools on how to present the programme in an honest and unthreatening way, to avoid ambiguity of understanding. Involving young people who have already participated in the programme may be helpful in this regard.

4.4.4 Perceived aims

Interviews with adult stakeholders suggest that there is some variance in understanding of the aims of the programme which may be of concern for its future replicability. Teens and Toddlers facilitators expressed higher expectations of the intervention than school staff, who, for example, often discussed the programme simply in terms of giving girls useful work experience. In turn, the participants themselves were rarely provided with explicit information about the aims of the programme. Where aims are not clearly communicated and shared there is a risk of failing to select the most appropriate participants and of reduced fidelity over time. There may be scope for greater clarity of communication about the aims of the programme and its underlying theory.

4.4.5 Impacts

This report focuses on the impacts of the programme as perceived by stakeholders and participants. Actual impacts, as measured by the RCT, are reported on separately.[10] The impacts most commonly perceived by both adult stakeholders and young people related to confidence, self-esteem and interpersonal skills. Respondents did not report direct impacts on attitudes to early pregnancy and parenthood or on improved educational attainment and engagement, despite these being identified as outcomes in the programme's logic model. However, some young people did report that involvement in the programmes helped them to make the connection between how they applied themselves at school and their future prospects and others had developed or articulated specific career goals.

It is perhaps not surprising that respondents, particularly the participants who are relatively young and may not be thinking that far in the future, focused on the more immediate impacts of the programme, particularly those centred around attitudes and outlook. The personal and interpersonal impacts that were described may be viewed as an important interim step in an approach to reducing the risk of early pregnancy and improving education and employment outcomes. It is a reasonable theory that more confident, assertive and articulate young women are less likely to be subject to the peer and other pressures that can lead to unplanned pregnancy and there is some evidence

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[10] Maisey, R., Speight, S., Keogh, P., Wollny, I., Bonell, C., Sorhaindo, A., Wellings, K., and Purdon, S., (2012) Randomised controlled trial of the 'Teens and Toddlers' programme. DFE-RR211, DfE Research Report, DfE: London.

that higher self-esteem is associated with later sexual debut among girls (Spencer et al, 2002).[11]

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[11] Spencer, J.M, Zimet, G.D, Aalsma, M.C., and Orr, D.P, Self-esteem as a Predictor of Initiation of Coitus in Early Adolescents. PEDIATRICS, 109,4, 2002, 581-584.

Appendix A   Economic scoping for cost benefit analysis

Introduction

The evaluation team was not asked to undertake a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) of Teens and Toddlers; however, the department expressed interest in scoping the feasibility of undertaking one. As a result, questions about the 'burden' of implementing the programme on schools and nurseries, including direct and indirect costs, and the perceived benefits, were added to the topic guides for use with school and nursery staff interviewed during the process evaluation. These stakeholders were also asked their views on what types of costs would need to be monitored if a full CBA were to be carried out at a later date.

Staff were on the whole unfamiliar with cost benefit analyses and were unable to provide much information on either the feasibility or the methodology of such a study. However, they were able to provide some insight into the costs and burden of running Teens and Toddlers in school and nursery settings, and outline the potential benefits. We were especially careful to encourage staff to consider a 'normal' cycle of Teens and Toddlers and not the current cycle which is likely to have incurred additional administration costs because of the ongoing evaluation, in particular for schools managing the randomisation process and the implementation of three waves of pupil surveys.

We do not have a substantial amount of data on costs and benefits as staff on the whole had not appeared to have given this much consideration prior to agreeing to take part in the programme; most were instead primarily concerned with the benefits for participants (schools) and the impact on the day to day running of the nursery. Based on this limited data, we provide below an overview of what would need to be considered in designing a full CBA under the following sub-headings:

- Set up costs, including selection of pupils;
- On-going administration costs;
- Types of staff involved, and impact on their roles and responsibilities;
- Non-staff costs
- Perceived benefits that should be included in a CBA

Set up costs, including selection of pupils

The primary cost for schools is staff time spent becoming familiar with the T&T intervention and the selection of pupils. We describe in section 2 the selection process. For schools new to T&T, time is also required for an introductory meeting about the programme with T&T staff and/or the local teenage pregnancy coordinator when the school is approached to run the programme.

Unsurprisingly school staff reported that time spent on set-up and selection decreased after the first T&T programme at the school as staff became familiar with the process. Activities that should be costed for include meetings between staff to discuss selection, briefings with pupils, and managing the process of gaining consent from pupils and their parents. School staff estimates of the time required ranged between two and ten hours.

The set-up time for nursery staff was considered to be less. A number of respondents reported no set-up time was required at all; others recounted time spent meeting with T&T staff and briefing all staff in the nursery. The highest estimate of time spent was two hours.

On-going administration costs

Both school and nursery staff reported very little time spent on the programme once it was 'up and running'. Nursery staff in particular were clear that the burden of supervising the girls lay with T&T facilitators and that having the girls in the nursery had no impact on the day-to-day running of the nursery. Some reported giving up time to attend the girls' award ceremony at the end of the programme, though not all nursery staff would do this and those who did often went in their own time.

School staff reported weekly tasks that needed attention. These included
- 'rounding the girls up' each week ready for collection by the T&T facilitators
- Organising packed lunches for the girls
- Speaking with girls who do not want to attend that week, or want to drop out altogether
- Communicating with T&T facilitators

Not all these tasks were reported in each school (for example, in some schools the participants are responsible for making their own way to meet the T&T facilitators or were not offered lunch). Estimates of time required by school staff ranged from between 15 minutes to one hour per week.

Types of staff involved, and impact on their roles and responsibilities

We outlined in section 2 the types of school staff who tend to be the main contact for T&T and lead on selection and ongoing liaison with T&T facilitators. These include those responsible for pastoral care or inclusion, including heads of years or groups, learning support mentors, counsellors, PSHE or SRE teachers or SEN coordinators. Beyond the lead contact, staff also mentioned that other staff could be involved at times, including other teachers, heads of year, assistant heads/head teachers, and directors of learning. All staff time would need to be included in any CBA although it appears that in most schools one member of staff takes on much of the 'burden' of T&T.

When asked about the impact on their roles and responsibilities, the lead contact in each school tended to report that there was nothing that 'didn't get done' and that administering T&T was simply a part of their role. Staff tended to manage their own time and would report that while T&T added to their workload, it had not displaced other tasks. However they did report that some tasks would be deferred and this might impact on the school; for example, not dealing immediately with disruptive pupils or checking up on attendance for regular truants.

For nursery staff, few reported the involvement of more than one member of staff aside from in some instances the involvement of the head of the nursery in the initial meeting with T&T staff. Most respondents indicated that having the programme running did not impact on their roles or responsibilities, indeed for some staff they felt that the presence of the girls helped relieve the pressure on some nursery staff as those children in need of additional support were being supported by the participants rather than staff.

Non-staff costs

Very few school or nursery staff were able to identify any non-staff costs. Those that were mentioned include:

- Provision of rooms for counselling and group time, and meetings with T&T facilitators
- Packed lunches provided to participants
- Stationary supplies (letters to parents etc.)

Perceived benefits that should be included in a CBA

Staff, particularly in schools, were on the whole more responsive in outlining the potential benefits that should be included in any future CBA than outlining activities to cost. We asked staff to consider benefits both to their organisation, as well as for the participants themselves.

Some nursery staff suggested there may be benefits for the toddlers assigned to T&T participants, for example, in having 1:1 support for 90 minutes each week. They were not sure that these benefits could be quantified. Interestingly one nursery manager said the benefits were more likely to accrue when male participants attended T&T, as for some toddlers the absence of a good male role model was seen as a key concern. They also identified some benefits for staff, in relieving the pressure cased by dealing with so many toddlers. Having the T&T participants there might mean there were only '*three toddlers shouting at you, not four*'.

School staff identified a number of benefits to the school which included being able to offer a broader curriculum, particularly around health and well-being which could link with and provide supporting evidence for the implementation of the school plans (in particular, links with SRE, and the Every Child Matters outcomes). Some mentioned the usefulness of this with particular regard to Ofsted inspections.

Staff also reported that where T&T had had a positive impact on participants' behaviour at school, this could impact on other pupils' behaviour and make classes easier to manage. Even a slight improvement in behaviour or maintaining a young woman in school was seen as a successful outcome. T&T was seen as another tool to reinforce the messages the school was trying to give young people about their behaviour. Staff were more likely to concentrate on the benefits to participants than to the school itself. Perceived benefits to pupils include: self confidence, self esteem, inter-personal skills and self-awareness.

Appendix B   Logic model

Logic model

Intervention components

T&T curriculum:
- Keep a journal to record thoughts and feelings
- Provide information on interpersonal skills e.g. communication, listening
- Earn and accredited award in interpersonal skills
- Develop social skills — constructive conversation, receiving criticism, giving and receiving compliments
- Teach stages of human development, emphasising toddlers and children
- Provide information on healthy parenting skills
- Discuss the importance and role of fathers for children's development
- Explore the pros and cons of teenage sex and the consequences of unplanned pregnancy
- Teach and develop the characteristics of a sexually healthy adolescent
- Self-assertion and self-affirmation
- Describe healthy pregnancies — "conscious conception"
- Discuss human potential
- Inform sources of support for mental and physical health, including sexual health

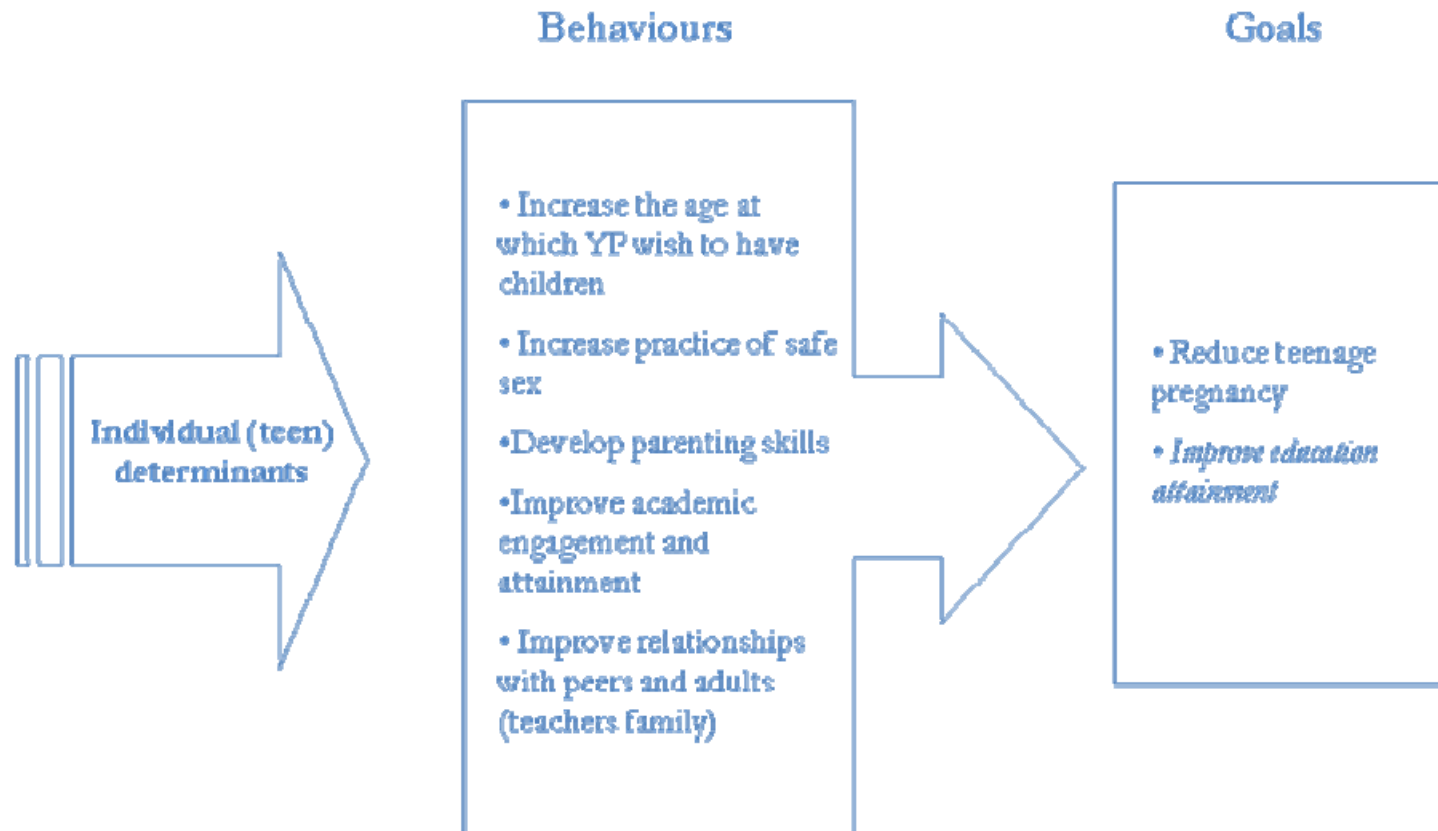**'Experiential learning' with toddlers in nursery:**

- Paired with and mentor a child under 5 needing additional attention
- Receive positive feedback about their work in the nursery from the facilitator following each session.

One to one counselling sessions

Individual (teen) determinants

- Develop emotional literacy (self-reflection, self management, awareness of others) and social skills
- Increase options for future education/employment
- Increase sense of self, self-worth & self-esteem
- Increase knowledge and awareness of contraception
- Increase future aspirations and goal setting
- Increase young people's sense of control of their life
- Increase understanding and appreciation for the responsibility and work involved in parenting
- Increase skills in self-reflection

Logic model continued...

Behaviours

Goals

Individual (teen) determinants →

Behaviours
- Increase the age at which YP wish to have children
- Increase practice of safe sex
- Develop parenting skills
- Improve academic engagement and attainment
- Improve relationships with peers and adults (teachers family)

→

Goals
- Reduce teenage pregnancy
- *Improve education attainment*

Appendix C   Topic guides

Topic guide for paired interview with participants

- The primary aim of these interviews is to build on the earlier focus groups and paired interviews and explore T&T participants' experience of the programme to date, perceptions of its impact and anticipated outcomes, and possible causal pathways.
- This is a *topic guide*, and wording and ordering of questions is subject to change depending on the circumstances of the interview. In all cases groups will be facilitated by researchers experienced in carrying out research with young people.

1. Introduction

- Introduce self & NatCen (reminder)
- Introduce study: (reminder)
- Digital recording – check OK
- Reassure re confidentiality
- How we'll report findings
- Reminder of interview length – (max 40 minutes) check OK
- Reiterate voluntary nature of interview (also that can take a break and fine to refuse to answer any question)
- Any questions/concerns?

2. Respondent backgrounds

- Remind me about your background
- Age
- Family members
- Ethnicity

3. Taking part – in general

How did you feel about being chosen for the programme?
What did the teachers or facilitators say about the reasons you were chosen?
How do you parents feel about you being involved?
What do your friends think about you being involved?
Have you made any new friends through being involved?
How do you get to and from the nursery?
Do you get to and leave the nursery on time?
What school lessons do you miss to attend the sessions? The same or different each week?

What if any problems does missing these lessons cause?

4. Experience of taking part – working with toddlers

- Tell me about the toddler you have been working with?
- Have you had the same toddler all along?
- Why do you think they were chosen for support?
- In a typical session do you work with that toddler only or do you work with other toddlers too?
- What kinds of things have you done with your toddler?
- What is the best memory you have of working with your toddler?
- What is the most challenging experience you've had with your toddler?
- Overall, would have you enjoyed spending time with your toddler? What did you enjoy most? What did you enjoy least?
- What have you learned from your toddler?
- What do you think your toddler has learned from you?How has your relationship with your toddler changed over the 20 weeks?
- How has the facilitator helped you work with your toddler?
- How has the nursery staff helped you work with your toddler?
- Can you tell me about something you learned during **classroom time** that helped you during **toddler time**?
- Can you tell me something you learned during **toddler time** that helped you during **classroom time**?

5. Experience of taking part – the curriculum

Moving onto group time,

- Thinking about the last time you were at Teens & Toddlers, how were you feeling during group time?
- What is your best memory of an activity you did during group time?
- Which group time activity do you like the least?
- How has your relationship been with the facilitators?
- ?
- Do you like playing 'bag o bits'? What is the best piece of information you learned when you were playing that game?
- Can you tell me something else you learnt about sex and relationships in the classroom sessions?
- What has the counselling been like? Do you look forward to it or would you rather do without it?
- How do you normally feel after you've had a counselling session?

6. Impact

What do you think you have learned about yourself while taking part in Teens and Toddlers?

Has taking part changed you in any way? (examples)

Card Exercise:
The participant will be given a piece of flip chart paper and cards with skills written on them. She will be asked to identify a) the attitudes, skills and behaviours that changed as a result of participation, then b) order these, with 'most changed' stuck towards the top of the paper and 'not changed at all' at the bottom.

Emphasise that the cards are ideas, and they can write other ideas on blank cards (provided)

Cards will read:

Prompts:
- How I feel about school/ education;
- My self confidence
- How I feel about children;
- How I feel about having a baby of my own;
- My hopes for the future;
- Who I hang out with;
- Understanding my own behaviour
- Coping with peer pressure
- Understanding what it's like to be a parent
- how I get on with my family;
- how I get on with teachers;
- how I get on with other adults, like the staff at the nursery;
- How I feel about nurseries;
- How I feel about relationships;
- What I know about sexual health
- How I understand sex and relationships
- What I know about contraception
- How I manage my own relationships

The girls will be asked to explain
- their choice of cards and ordering,
- what they understand the cards to mean
- how T&T participation changed the attitude/skill/behaviour

How else has T&T changed how you feel about yourself? *Can you give me some examples of this.*

6. Concluding the interview
Looking back on your time on teens and toddlers

- Are you glad you took part?
- Would you recommend it to others?
- Would you change anything about the programme?

Thank and Close

Topic guide for paired interview with participants

> - The primary aim of these paired interviews is to build on the earlier focus groups and explore T&T participants' experience of the programme to date, perceptions of its impact and anticipated outcomes, and possible causal pathways.
> - The topic guide is designed for interviewing young people in groups.
> - This is a *topic guide*, and wording and ordering of questions is subject to change depending on the circumstances of the interview. In all cases groups will be facilitated by researchers experienced in carrying out research with young people.

1. Introduction
- Introduce self & NatCen (reminder)
- Introduce study: (reminder)
- Digital recording – check OK
- Reassure re confidentiality
- How we'll report findings
- Reminder of interview length – (max one hour) check OK
- Reiterate voluntary nature of interview (also that can take a break and fine to refuse to answer any question)
- Any questions/concerns?

2. Respondent backgrounds

- Tell me about yourselves
  - Age
  - Family members
  - Friends
- Do you like school?
- What kind of student would you say you are?
- How do you usually spend your time outside of school? (leisure time, extracurricular activities etc.)
- What are your plans/dreams for when you leave school?

3. Understanding Teens & Toddlers
- Think back to when you first heard about Teens and Toddlers. Can you tell me what happened?
- What did you understand about the programme when you were first told about it?
- What/who do you believe Teens & Toddlers is for?
- What do you think the programme is trying to achieve?
- Why do you think you were selected?
- How do you feel about being selected?
- Why did you want to take part?
- Have you taken part in a programme like this before?
- Have you done work experience or projects outside school before?

- What do your friends think about you taking part in T&T?

- What do they think happens at T&T?
- Do you tell them about everything that happens?
- Why do they think you were selected?
- Does your parent or guardian know you are taking part in Teens and Toddlers?
- How did they find out about the programme?
- What does your family think about you taking part? Why
- Did you and your parents/guardians give written consent for you to take part?

4. Experience of taking part – working with toddlers

Think back specifically to the last session you had in the nursery.

- Did you work with one toddler or more than one?
- What was your toddler(s) like that day?
- What did you do when you were with them?
- Who decided what you did?
- How long did you work with the toddler?
- Was this enough time?
- How does working with toddlers make you feel?
- Is working with the toddlers what you expected? How and why?
- Do you think working with the toddlers is important? Why?

5. Experience of taking part – the curriculum

Tell me more about what you actually did that day in group time – the curriculum part.

- What did you do in group time (the curriculum)?
- How did you find this?
- What do you think the point of it was?
- What do you like and dislike about group time?
- How does working with the tutor make you feel?
- Do you think having a tutor is important? Why?
- How do you feel/what do you think about the topics that are discussed during the group sessions?
- What do you think about how they are presented?
- Have you had one-to-one counselling? How was that?
- Do you think having counselling is important? Why?

6. Impact

Have a look again at the biographies.

(Participants chose one each and read it out).

- What difference would taking part in Teens and Toddlers make to this person?
- Why do you think that?
- What might they learn from the nursery?
- What might they learn from the group time?
- Do you think they would benefit from counselling? How?

Now think about each other/-What impact do you think taking part in Teens and Toddlers will have?

Has this programme changed how you feel at all?
Prompts:

- Has it changed how you feel about school/your education;
- children;
- having a baby of your own;
- your hopes for the future;
- who you hang out with;
- how you get on with your family;
- how you get on with teachers;
- how you get on with other adults, like the staff at the nursery;
- nurseries being a good thing for young children;
- nurseries being affordable for parents;
- combining work and being a parent;
- relationships;

Has taking part had any impact on how you feel about yourself?

Can you give me some examples of this

Thank and Close

Topic guide for focus groups

- The primary aim of these focus group interviews is to gain an understanding of respondents' understandings and experience of being on the Teens & Toddlers programme, to inform the integral process evaluation.
- The topic guide is designed for interviewing young people in groups.
- This is a *topic guide*, and wording and ordering of questions is subject to change depending on the circumstances of the interview. In all cases groups will be facilitated by researchers experienced in carrying out research with young people.

Activity	outcomes	resources	time
1a. Introductions - Introduce self & NatCen - Introduce study: - Digital recording – check OK - Reassure re confidentiality; ensure understanding of the term and also no feedback to parents/teachers/ T&T - How we'll report findings - Reminder of session length – (max 90 mins) check OK - Reiterate voluntary nature of session (also that can take a break and fine to refuse to answer any question) - Ask to try not to all talk at once - Any questions/concerns?	Everyone knows each other and understands the purpose of the discussion	- information sheet (provided previously)	**10 mins**
1b. background Participants to spend 2 mins finding out the following about the person sitting next to them, and then feedback to the group - Name - No. of brothers and sisters (and older/younger) - Favourite thing to do after school - Plans for when they leave school - One thing about them that other people wouldn't guess		Resource sheet with questions written on it and space for answers, to be collected in	**5 mins**

2. Recruitment	Explore	None- general	15-20
• How did you find out about Teens & Toddlers? • What did the school/teachers tell you about Teens & Toddlers? • Did you attend a presentation about the programme? • What did you understand about the programme when you were first told about it? • Does your parent or guardian know you are taking part in Teens and Toddlers? • How did they find out about the programme? • What does your family think about you taking part? Why • Did the research process influence you/your family's decision in any way? • Do you know what the randomisation was? • How did you feel about that? • What do you think it has been like for those who were not selected to take part?	participant's understanding of the programme before participation, and decision to take part	discussion	**mins**
3. Selection A. Participants split into two groups, given 2-3 minutes to write on flip chart answers to: • What do you think is the main point of Teens and Toddlers? • Who do you believe Teens & Toddlers is for? Compare flip charts and use for discussion. • Why do you think you were selected? • How do you feel about being selected? B. Participants read (or are read out) three short biographies and asked to discuss	Explore understanding of programme and feelings about why they were selected, and intended outcome of the programme	Flip chart paper and pens Copies of biographies	**20-30** **mins**

a) whether the person would be selected for teens and toddlers b) what they might learn from the programme			
4. **4a. Experience of taking part – the curriculum** Tell me more about what you actually do on the programme starting with group time – the curriculum part. • What do you do in group time (the curriculum)? • What did you do the first day? • What have you done since then? • What is the facilitator like? • What do you like and dislike about group time? • How does working with the facilitator make you feel? • Do you think having a facilitator is important? Why? • How do you feel/what do you think about the topics that are discussed during the group sessions? • What do you think about how they are presented? • Have you had one-to-one counselling? How was that? • What is the counsellor like? • Do you think having counselling is important? Why? **4b. Experience of taking part – working with children** And what about the work with the children? • What is the nursery like? • What are the nursery staff like? • Do you work with one child or more than one? • Do you just do observations or do work yourself? • What happened on your first day working with a child? • How did you feel? • What do you do when you are with the child? • Who decides what you do? • How long do you work with the	Understanding of participant experiences	None- general discussion	**20 mins**

- child?
- Was this enough time?
- How does working with children make you feel?
- Is working with the children what you expected? How and why?
- Do you think working with the children is important? Why?
- Does it make you think any differently about becoming a parent?
- If so, how?
- Do you have any brothers, sisters or cousins that are younger than you?
  - Do you look after them?
  - Is that different from your work in the nursery at all?

5. Impact Now we are going to start thinking about what might change as a result of taking part in Teens and Toddlers. Series of cards – respondents pick one, read it out, and begin discussion… **Talk about next steps, consider pairings for interviews, thank and close**	Begin to consider impact/potential impact	Question cards – see attached	**10 mins**

Teens & Toddlers Process Evaluation - Topic guide for T&T facilitators

Theme	Questions/prompts
Background	• What is your main role at T&T? • How long have you worked with T&T? • What is your background? What did you do before this? • How and why did you get involved with T&T?
Aims of T&T	• In your words, what is the overall aim of the T&T programme? • What do you think of this aim? • What is your aim in working for the programme?
Recruitment/selection	• Are you involved with selecting the girls at all? • At what stage do you first make contact with the school? Who do you speak with? • How do you describe T&T? • What is typically the first reaction of teacher/other school staff when you suggest doing a T&T group with their students? • Once a group is agreed, how is the selection process described to the school? What is their response? • How are the girls selected? Is this the same in theory and in practice? • What sorts of girls are referred to the briefing meetings? • When you speak with the girls at the briefing meeting about the programme, what do you say? • Do you say anything to them about how they were selected? • If so, what? • In general, how do they respond? What kinds of questions do they ask? • In your view, do you think that the "right" girls were selected in the recent selection process? If not, how might they be different? • Would you propose selecting young people in any other way?
School collection	• When are the girls collected from school? • How easy or difficult is it to collect all the girls in time? • Do they receive lunch before they head to the nursery? If no, what do you do for food, if anything? • How long is the journey from the school? • How does the nursery staff respond to the girls being there? • How suitable is the room provided by the nursery for T&T use? Probe: availability, cleanliness, places to sit, teaching materials (board flip chart etc.)
Classroom time: check-in time	• Can you give me an example of a typical check-in exercise? How do the girls

	• generally respond to this?
	• What other exercises or activities do you do in the check in time? What is the aim of these? How do the girls normally respond?
Counselling time	• Do you have a counsellor working with your group? Does he/she attend every session? At about what time do they arrive?
	• Does the counsellor contribute to the group discussions?
	• How many girls see the counsellor, overall and in each session?
	• What issues do they want to discuss (or not want to discuss) with the counsellor?
	• In your view, what is the relationship between the counsellor and the young people?
	• How is it decided who will see the counsellor on any given week? Does this arrangement work well?
	• Typically, how keen or reluctant are the girls to meet with the counsellor?
	• How would you describe the girls' behaviour or mood after meeting with the counsellor?
	• What is your view on the importance of counselling as part of the T&T programme?
Toddler time	• At about what time do the girls enter the nursery?
	• Have you ever had to exclude a girl from the nursery for any reason? If so, what was the reason?
	• Are the girls paired with a toddler?
	• What kinds of toddlers have been selected to work with T&T?
	• Are their parents/carers told/asked about this?
	• What proportion of the time would you say each young person works directly with their assigned toddler?
	• And how much working with other toddlers?
	• Do girls spend any of the toddler time doing anything else, like talking to staff etc.?
	• Can you describe some of the activities that the girls engage in with their toddlers?
	• Where are you during toddler time? Do you have any other support? Who?
	• How do the nursery staff engage with the girls and the toddlers?
	• What are you looking for during toddler time?
	• How long do you typically spend in the nursery? How do the girls find this length of time?
	• What is the importance of having practical experience working with toddlers?
Curriculum time in classroom	• Can you give me an example of a check in activity used after you return to the classroom following toddler time?

	• How quickly do the girls settle down so that the curriculum work can proceed? • What are you looking for during the group time? • How often do you use the 'bag-o-bits'? How useful do you find it as a teaching tool? • How well does the curriculum time work? • Are the girls engaged in it? • What additional support would help you in your delivery of T&T? • What is the best aspect of the T&T curriculum? What would you change? • What is the importance of the curriculum?
Analysis of specific activity/exercise	• I noticed today that you did xx with the girls. • Can you tell me why you did this exercise (probe for understanding of aims, functions and outcomes of the exercise)? • Is this part of the prescribed curriculum • Have you modified this in any way (how? Why?) • What do you think of the exercises appropriateness (could it be improved, could it be done at a different stage)? • Will you be picking up on this exercise at a later stage – (what role does the exercise play in the overall curriculum? Is it meshed in?) • How well do you think it worked today? • How confident do you feel in administering this exercise?
Potential impact	• How do you think the practical experience with toddlers might affect the girls? • In what other ways do you think this experience might affect the girls? e.g. employment; peer groups; their parents/parenthood; school • How is the curriculum intended to affect the girls? • In practice, what effects does it have on the girls? • What benefits do you expect to see in the girls while they are engaged in the programme? • What about once they have completed the programme? In the short term? In the long term? • Will some girls benefit more than others? Why? • What if any problems or drawbacks might the girls taking part in the programme experience? (prompt: disruption, missing school, peers, encourage to have kids, jealousy of peers, parental reactions)
Acceptability	• What is your overall opinion of the programme?

	• What are its good features? • Which are its less-good features? • How would you change the programme if at all?

Interviews guide for interviews with school teachers selecting participants for T&T

Theme	Prompts
Background	- What is your main role at the school? - How long have you worked at the school? - How long have you been teaching? - How did you become involved with T&T? - How long have you been involved with T&T? - What do you perceive the programme aims to do? - What types of young people/girls do you think it is aimed at?
Actual selection criteria used	- Were the girls you selected in your form/tutor group? If not, what is your contact with them? - How did you decide which girls you would refer to the briefing meetings? (If necessary, prompt: personality characteristics, attitudes and behaviours, and background factors used to select) - What girls would you definitely not select for the programme (probe for specific vulnerabilities or behaviours in addition to who they think doesn't qualify)? - Did you use any written criteria? If so, which? - Did you write down which criteria girls met in order to be selected? For each individual? For the group overall? - Was the process you used this time the same/different as in previous times you've selected girls? - When you speak with the girls you have selected about the programme, what do you say? - Do you say anything to them about how they were selected? - If so, what? - In general, how do they respond? - Do you tell anyone other than the girls selected how and why specific girls were selected? (probe confidentiality, parents) - In your view, do you think that the "right" girls were selected in this process?
Views on guidance from T&T	- Have you seen the teenager selection tool from T&T? [show] - Did you use it? If you did not use the tool, what prevented you from using it? - What did you think of it, in general? - Does it include the appropriate criteria for selecting girls? - Do you have the information to decide if a girl meets the criteria or not? - Are you/would you be comfortable using the tool? - In what other ways could girls be selected for the programme? - Are you best placed to make the selection or should someone else do it?
Random allocation	- Do you know how we decide whether the girls you selected receive T&T or not? If so, describe. - Can you describe how this worked in practice?

	• How did the girls feel about this? Did it cause any unhappiness or tensions? • What were your own views on this? • Did you do anything to provide additional help or support to the girls whom you selected but who didn't receive T&T?
Anticipated impact	• What are your hopes for the girls who take part in the programme? • What changes do you expect to see from the girls once they start/complete the programme? • Are there any possible adverse consequences of girls being involved? (probed labelling, stigma, missing lessons, jealousy etc.)

Burden of programme	• Roughly how long (how many hours) did you spend selecting the girls?
	• Roughly how long (how many hours) do you spend administering other aspects of T&T (getting girls to briefings etc) – probe for T&T vs. research
	• How does selecting/participating impact the time you have to do other things (what things)?
	• Does selecting /participating free you up to do other things (for example less disruption in the classroom, having some kind of assessment of your girls, less need for 1-1 support for girls with particular needs etc.)
	• What benefits does participating bring for:
	   ○ The school,
	   ○ The year group,
	   ○ The class,
	   ○ For you professionally
	   ○ For you personally
	• Given what you have told me about the time it takes and the benefits involved, overall do you think taking part is worth it for:
	   ○ The school,
	   ○ The year group,
	   ○ The class
	   ○ For you professionally
	   ○ For you personally

Appendix D   Guidance for teachers on selecting girls for the T&T programme

- Teens and Toddlers guidance for teachers selecting girls for the T&T programme
- The revised trial guidance for teachers selecting girls for the T&T programme

INFORMATION SHEET

Teenager Selection Tool for teachers

You may be aware that the Teens and Toddlers programme will be working with some of the young people from your school in the near future. If you have received this form, some of the students from your class or year group are being considered for the programme.

Our aim at Teens and Toddlers is to work with the young people who are considered to be most at risk of experiencing or causing early pregnancies. As you might imagine, selecting the right young people for the programme can be quite a complex process. However, through our research, we have identified a number of key criteria that have been shown to have an influence on whether a teenager is more or less likely to become a teenage parent.

We have also found that teachers are very good at predicting the behaviour of their students. Therefore we need your assistance to help us identify which young people are most in need of the Teens and Toddlers programme. On the following page is a 20 item questionnaire that asks you to rate the young person under consideration for the programme according to a number of personality characteristics, attitudes and behaviours, and background factors. All you need to do is tick one of the three boxes for each of the items listed. We estimate that each questionnaire will take no more than 5 minutes to complete.

Please understand that the purpose of this form is to identify which young people will benefit most from the programme, so that we can hopefully prevent some teenage pregnancies from occurring. Your responses will not be considered as judgemental or derogatory to the young people. None of the information you provide will ever be raised with the young people, and the Teens and Toddlers facilitators will not have access to this information. Teachers should be assured that the main aim of the questionnaire is to help us identify the right teenagers to include, and the data won't be used for anything other than research purposes.

It is very important to note that we are very careful in the way we store data. The questionnaire completed by you is only used to select young people, and then responses are quickly stored on a password-protected database which only very few members of staff have access to.

We recognise that some of the questions are entirely subjective and therefore your answers are not expected to be definitive in any way. You may or may not know the answers to the questions asked, but please use your judgement if you suspect the answer to be "yes" or "no".

Thank you very much for your help with this matter and for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

Please note that the school will be responsible for identifying, and excluding from the project
- **people on a list kept under s.1 Protection of Children Act 1000 (individuals considered unsuitable to work with children;**
- **people subject to a disqualification order under the Criminal Justice and court Services Act 2000 (having committed a sexual offence or an offence of violence against a child or having been involved in the supply of drugs to a child).**

Student Number _____ **Age:** ____ **School:** _____

About the teenager's personality		

How does this teenager compare to his/her peers on the following personality characteristics?(tick one box per item)

	Lower than peers	About the same as peers	Higher than peers
1. Shyness (or withdrawn-ness)	☐	☐	☐
2. Negativity and lack of self-belief	☐	☐	☐
3. General sadness (or depression)	☐	☐	☐
4. Nervousness (or anxiety)	☐	☐	☐
5. Anger (or aggressiveness)	☐	☐	☐
6. Disengagement from others	☐	☐	☐

About the teenager's attitudes and behaviours		

How does this teenager compare to his/her peers on the following attitudes and behaviours? (tick one box per item)

This teenager says and does things that suggest they…

	Less than peers	About the same as peers	More than peers
7. Frequently use alcohol and/or drugs	☐	☐	☐
8. Are not interested in thinking about their future	☐	☐	☐
9. Are disengaged from and uninterested in School	☐	☐	☐
10. Are sexually active	☐	☐	☐
11. Believe it is acceptable to have a child as a teenager	☐	☐	☐

About the teenager's background		

The following background issues are well-documented 'risk factors' for teenage pregnancy. Please rate this teenager from your knowledge of their background.

This teenager:…..

	No or "I suspect not"	Don't know?	Yes or "I suspect so"
12. Has a poor school attendance record (truancy)	☐	☐	☐
13. Experienced puberty earlier than their peers	☐	☐	☐
14. Has a history of sexually transmitted infections	☐	☐	☐
15. Has previously been pregnant (or caused a pregnancy)	☐	☐	☐
16. Has a family member who is/was pregnant as teen	☐	☐	☐
17. Has a history of abuse (physical, sexual or emotional)	☐	☐	☐
18. Is currently in care, or has been in care in the past	☐	☐	☐
19. Has a history of family instability & lacks positive role models	☐	☐	☐
20. Generally does not perform well at school	☐	☐	☐

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire

INFORMATION SHEET

Advice for Teachers on Teenager Selection

Children Our Ultimate Investment UK

47 Bermondsey Street
London SE1 3XT

Tel: 020 7089 6180
Tel: 020 7378 6893
Fax: 020 7378 8477

The Teens and Toddlers programme will be working with some of the young people from your school this year. If you have received this form, some of the students from your class or year group will be considered for the programme.

Teens and Toddlers works with young people who could be at risk of experiencing early pregnancies. The first step of the programme is to select students who might be at <u>risk</u> from your school. We have identified some <u>criteria</u> that have been shown to influence whether someone is more likely to become a teenage parent. We would appreciate your assistance in helping us identify which young people might benefit from the Teens and Toddlers programme.

At this stage, we would like you to invite girls in your class or year group who have some or all of the following characteristics to the Teens & Toddlers briefing meeting to be held at your school in the next couple of weeks.

Please give students who have some or all of the below characteristics an invitation letter to the briefing meeting:

► Are disengaged from or uninterested in school
► In general, do not perform well or under perform (*i.e.* do not work to their potential) in school
► Exhibit poor or disruptive behaviour in class
► Have a poor attendance record
► Parent rarely/never attends parents' evenings
► Parent or sibling was a teenage parent
► Currently/previously in care

It is very important that that you invite only those students to the briefing meeting who meet these criteria. This way we give the opportunity to the students in most need.

N.B. The school is responsible for ensuring that the following are not invited onto the project
- Those on a list kept under s.1 Protection of Children Act 2000 (individuals considered unsuitable to work with children;
- Those subject to a disqualification order under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (having committed a sexual offence or an offence of violence against a child or having been involved in the supply of drugs to a child).

Thank you very much for your help with this matter and for taking the time to help with the selection process.