# Frequently asked questions: pregnant and parenting young people in education

***What educational pathways are available for pregnant and parenting young people?***

The [Guidelines to retain and support pregnant and parenting young people in education](https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/pregnant-and-parenting-students-retention-guidelines.doc) outline a range of available educational pathways. These include continuing in mainstream schools with added flexibility around education delivery, enrolment in a school of distance education allowing students to complete their education from home, and enrolment in an alternative education centre that may provide on-campus support.

***Can a school refuse to have pregnant and parenting young people at school?***

Under the *Anti-Discrimination Act (Queensland) 1991*, schools are responsible for the retention and support of students who are pregnant and students who are parents. Every student is entitled to receive an education and a refusal to provide an appropriate education on the basis of pregnancy or parenthood would be discriminatory under the Act.

***Is there a time limit for students to complete their senior certificate?***

Students may complete their senior certificate over a flexible timeline.

It is important that they discuss their career goals with a guidance officer or teacher who will outline the ways these goals might be attainable.

If the student is prepared to delay/prolong their education in order to attain educational or career goals, then there is leeway available in terms of assessment, timetabling and attendance at class on a part-time basis.

Each student has a basic allocation of semesters (26 semesters from Prep to Year 12) and may apply for additional semesters to complete their senior certificate if necessary. Refer to the [Allocation of state education](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/allocation-of-state-education-procedure) procedure for further information.

***Are students eligible for leave prior to, or after, the birth of their child?***

There are no specific guidelines for students regarding leave. It is appropriate for schools to consider medical advice. It is important for schools to consider the health and welfare of the student and their child in any decisions about the student attending school.

***Can students aged under 18 give consent for actions regarding the health and safety of their child?***

Students who are parents of a child have responsibility for their child and can make decisions about their health or safety, including consent for actions that occur at school. However, duty of care obligations come into play if the safety and wellbeing of the student and/or their child is believed to be at risk. Each situation will be different and needs to be considered individually.

***Can a student request that information be withheld from their parents and/or other people within the school?***

A student has a right to privacy in terms of what information is collected, stored, accessed, used and disclosed by the school in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) and the confidentiality provisions of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld). Schools should respect the wishes of a young person who requests a level of confidentiality. However, this should be balanced against the school’s duty of care to the young person’s health, safety and wellbeing. Each situation will be different and the young person’s needs will be assessed on an individual basis.

***Can students bring their babies to class?***

One of the most significant issues for young parents continuing their education is child care. As a short-term solution or in emergencies, a student can request to bring their baby to class. In this situation, schools are to consider issues including workplace health and safety, the welfare of the baby, and potential disruption to the learning environment for the parent and/or other students.

The availability of affordable, reliable child care provides opportunities for the young parent to focus on their studies and for children to come together, play and learn in safe surroundings.