



Margaret Hudson
PROGRAM

The Margaret Hudson Program helps teen families achieve success

The Margaret Hudson Program makes a strong and lasting positive difference in the lives of local pregnant and parenting teens. We help create healthy, prosperous futures for teen mothers. Our nonprofit agency uses a comprehensive approach to help adolescent moms stay in school, graduate, raise healthy children and support stable, nurturing families.

The Margaret Hudson Program (MHP) helps pregnant and parenting teens:

- Give birth to healthy babies
- Raise happy infants and toddlers
- Master effective parenting techniques and child development concepts
- Learn life skills for success
- Graduate from high school with a full diploma
- Develop career goals and prepare for secondary school studies

Founded in 1968, our nonprofit organization was named in honor of Dr. Margaret Hudson, a former Maternal and Child Health Director with the Tulsa Health Department. Dr. Hudson was troubled by the challenges of teen girls who were struggling to cope with pregnancy and parenthood, and the poor health status of many of the babies born to these adolescents. Dr. Hudson became a strong advocate for the special needs of teen girls and their babies, including promoting educational success and facilitating access to maternal and infant health care.

MHP partners with the Tulsa and Broken Arrow Public School systems to provide accredited academic instruction at two school campuses – always providing services on a tuition-free, no-cost basis. Pregnant students from other school districts can request a transfer to attend MHP. Our professional staff provides academic counseling to help pregnant and parenting teen girls graduate from high school, develop career goals and pursue postsecondary studies at local colleges, vocational schools or apprenticeship programs. MHP collaborates with a network of partner organizations to facilitate student access to a wide array of supportive health and social services available in the community.

The Margaret Hudson Program helps teen mothers give birth to healthy babies and become good parents. We strengthen emotional resiliency and provide health guidance to help pregnant teen girls achieve healthy birth outcomes and learn effective parenting and child development concepts. Our dedicated staff of teachers, nurses, counselors, case managers, health and parenting educators, and childcare professionals help our students achieve the following program outcomes:

- **Give birth to healthy babies.** Statistics show that teen mothers are at a higher risk for giving birth to premature and low birth weight babies. By providing prenatal and post-partum care, nutrition education and case management, infants have a much greater chance of being born at proper weight and gestational age. With the benefits of good prenatal care, nutrition education and case management provided by MHP, the infants born to our students are more likely to be born at a proper weight and gestational age.
- **Achieve academic and life success.** One hundred percent high school graduation rates and pursuit of post-secondary education are key goals for our students. Our life skills classes provide a solid foundation for our students to develop a personal plan for life success.
- **Build self-sufficiency.** Our student education programs teach day-to-day skills that are not typically taught in the school systems, including financial literacy, effective communication and healthy relationships.
- **Learn good parenting skills.** Students learn effective parenting techniques and gain an understanding of early childhood developmental stages.

- **Strengthen personal resiliency.** Resilience is the ability to effectively respond to adversity or significant sources of personal stress such as family and relationship problems, serious health issues or life circumstances. Resiliency can be thought of a means to “bounce back” or the flexibility to adjust to difficult experiences. MHP nurses and counselors help students develop personal strategies to respond to stress, build self-confidence to solve problems, maintain hope rather than worry about fears, and move forward on the road to accomplish life goals.
- **Avoid second teen pregnancies.** Nationally, about 25% of teen mothers have a second pregnancy during their teen years. To prevent subsequent teen pregnancies, our students receive family planning counseling and access to contraception services, including long-term birth control contraception is provided through a partnership with the Tulsa Health Department.

For years, Oklahoma has had one of the highest teen birth rates in the United States (currently the second highest in the nation). Fortunately, the total number of births has been going down in recent years. About 720-750 teenage girls become pregnant every year in Tulsa County.

These teen mothers often face significant challenges in meeting their personal needs and those of their children. According to the Oklahoma State Department of Health, postpartum depression is more than twice as likely to be reported by teen moms as mothers age 35 or older. When teen moms describe their depression, they speak of suddenly realizing motherhood, feeling abandoned and rejected by their families and social networks, and feeling torn between motherhood and schoolwork. Fortunately for the teen girls enrolled at the Margaret Hudson Program, our nurses and therapeutic counselors help our students manage their emotional and behavioral health needs.

At the Margaret Hudson Program, we help our teen students take charge of their future so they can achieve life success and avoid a life trajectory of negative outcomes. Without the supportive interventions like those we provide at the Margaret Hudson Program, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy say:

- Only half of teen mothers will likely receive a high school diploma by 22 years of age, versus approximately 90% of adolescent girls who did not have a baby.
- About 25% of teen mothers will likely give birth to a second child during their teen years, making high school completion even less likely.
- The children of teenage mothers are more likely to have lower school achievement, drop out of high school, be incarcerated at some time during adolescence, give birth as a teenager and face unemployment as a young adult.
- The children born to teen mothers are more likely to suffer from childhood illnesses, receive less medical treatment and experience higher incidents of child abuse.

The Margaret Hudson Program is the only organization of its kind in Oklahoma that prepares teen mothers to raise loving families. Without the supportive interventions and wraparound supports we provide, these pregnant teens would likely drop out of school and perpetuate a cycle of poverty and under education.

Through the generous support of our donors and community partners, the Margaret Hudson Program is able to help teen mothers acquire the skills they need to support stable, nurturing families.

Every contribution made to the Margaret Hudson Program supports our teen mothers and their babies – you can make a life-changing difference for generations to come.