

14 Girls under 16 who become pregnant

14.1 Girls under the age of 13

14.2 Girls aged 13 and over

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If a girl under the age of 13 years becomes pregnant, the law is that this constitutes unlawful sexual intercourse (rape), as a child under 13 is deemed to be unable to consent to intercourse. This is irrespective of any perceived co-operation or agreement to intercourse.

In these cases, a discussion with the police must occur as soon as possible.

14.2 Girls aged 13 and over

Many young women will have the support of their families. However, where there remains a need for support following provision of health and other services in the community, the young person's consent should be sought for referral to social services as a child in need. In addition, there will be circumstances where concerns about significant harm exist, and a referral should be made in accordance with Part 5 of these procedures, which includes police checks in respect of the alleged father. It may be that there is an immediate need for social services to begin child protection enquiries as part of a core assessment.