

Your Rights at School

You can be pregnant or a parent and still finish your education. Massachusetts and federal law are on your side.



Too many young parents leave school because they think they have to. **You do not.** Here is what your school is required to do, in plain language. Keep this with you.

What your school cannot do

It cannot push you out or make you leave.

A school cannot exclude you, drop you, or force you into a separate program because you are pregnant or parenting.

It cannot punish you for pregnancy-related absences.

Pregnancy, childbirth, and recovery count as excused medical leave. You return to the same standing you had before.

It cannot stop you from making up your work.

You have the right to make up assignments and tests you missed.

It cannot treat you worse than other students with a medical need.

Pregnancy must be treated at least as well as any other temporary medical condition, including reasonable accommodations.

It cannot allow harassment.

You are protected from bullying or harassment about your pregnancy, parenting, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

What you can ask for

Reasonable accommodations.

Bigger desk, extra bathroom breaks, a place to rest, a chance to step out, or help getting between classes.

A voluntary alternative program, only if you want it.

If a separate program exists, it has to be your choice and has to be as good as the regular one. You can say no.

To keep going after the baby.

Free options exist to finish high school or earn a HiSET, with childcare help. See the resources below.

If your rights are not being respected

Ask for your school's **Title IX Coordinator** first. Every district has one.

Free legal help (custody, school, family): South Coastal Counties Legal Services · **508-979-7150**

File a discrimination complaint: Mass. Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)

Finish school / HiSET: NBPS Adult Learning Center · **508-997-4511 ext. 33550**

Parenting students (New Bedford): Parenting Teens Program, Wendy Andrade · **508-997-4511 ext. 2403**

This is general information, not legal advice. If your rights are not being respected, talk to your school's Title IX Coordinator or the legal-aid line above, or call us at 774-775-2656.