

Teen Parenting



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A teenage girl finds herself pregnant, while still navigating her way through school, is suddenly forced to face new decisions while also dealing with a boyfriend who spreads rumors about her across the school and believes the girl tried to entrap him by getting pregnant and therefore does not want anything to do with her or her unborn baby.

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"Shirelle, what the hell do you want me to do about it? I'm not the one who went and got pregnant, you did," Ronnie said to his girlfriend, six weeks after she discovered she was pregnant. They were in the park sitting on the swings, watching parents as they watched over their children playing around Ronnie and Shirelle, both sixteen.

"yeah, you know what, you're right Ronnie, you're not the one who's pregnant but you are responsible for getting me pregnant, I know that much. I didn't get pregnant on my own. If I could I wouldn't need you..."

"How come you weren't taking your birth control pills? All of a sudden you're allergic to them or you just forgot to take them?" Ronnie asked sarcastically. "Or, just maybe, you were trying to get pregnant on purpose."

Shirelle stopped her swing and glared at Ronnie before she spoke. "You know, all the times we've been together and this is how you think of me, like I'm some cheap girl who needs to trap you by getting pregnant. You're a complete ass. You knew from the beginning I didn't want to get pregnant. I don't play games like that and for your stupid information...again, I don't take birth control pills. That's why you should have been wearing a condom..."

"Yeah but..."

"Shut up Ronnie. Just shut the hell up. There are no buts. I'm already pregnant and it's too late for buts. Now what am I supposed to do? I'm gonna end up getting kicked out of school and the house." Shirelle was shaking her head. "What the hell kind of life am I going to have with no education and probably won't even be able to get a job because you got me pregnant? and I aint trying to get on no welfare either."

"Is everything alright over here?" asked a lady, dressed in a nice summer dress and expensive looking sun glasses, at the same time a small boy asked Ronnie if he could have his swing since he's not using it.

"Get away from me kid and you mind your business lady..."

"Ronnie, don't talk to her like that..."

"This isn't her business."

The lady was taken back by Ronnie's tone. She looked at Shirelle, who pulled her hoodie so far down over her head that it nearly covered her whole face. "Excuse me young man, do you speak to your parents like that?"

Ronnie rolled his eyes then shook his head as he looked away, gritting his teeth between his jaws. He looked down at the kid then suddenly hopped off the swing. "Here, take the damn swing since you want it so bad but don't expect me to push you." The boy smiled as he began to make his climb up on the swing.

The lady was appalled and leaned in close to him, as she helped the small boy on the swing then stood behind the swing and pushed. "Is that what you would tell your own son, to get the hell away from you? Thank the almighty God in heaven you do not have children and for their sake, I should hope you never do because if this is the way you are planning on treating them, their mother should run for the hills and never look back and if she does, I hope it is not at you."

Ronnie twisted up his face, twisting on his T-shirt irritably. "How the hell do you know what I don't have, lady? You don't know me."

The lady shook her head in disgust but was not backing down. She was not raised to back down, no matter the element. "Alright, fair enough, I'll tell you what Mr. Foul mouth, if you have just one child anywhere on this earth, I will pay that child's full college tuition. What do you say to that, big man? Put up or shut up and if you do not have any children, you shall not talk that way again to any adults. What's your child's name?" the woman leaned her head to the side a little, raising her eyebrows behind her sun glasses. She was wearing expensive perfume.

Ronnie looked down at Shirelle, not knowing whether he even wanted to say anything to this stranger about his business. Obviously, he and Shirelle haven't thoroughly talked things over yet and he doesn't need a stranger stepping in and giving him some lame advice or telling him what to do with his unborn child. Shirelle glanced up at the lady then looked away and lowered her head again.

The lady poked Ronnie in the chest with her finger. "That's what I thought. Now you need to find you some manners and get rid of that smart mouth of yours and learn how to respect yourself and others and for Christ sake, learn how to treat a girl before you have a baby..." Ronnie spun away then walked off. Shirelle did not look up to see him but the woman watched him walk out of the park, glare back at her through the chain link fence then head on his way.

When the woman yelled out, "You're forgetting somebody!" Ronnie yelled back, "I aint forgot shit," even though the park was filled with children, then he disappeared into that space most expecting fathers disappear in, who refuse to claim responsibility for raising a child and feel a need to stake a claim after the child is older and manageable, wherever that place is located.

"Are you alright, honey?" The woman turned her attention back to Shirelle.

"I'll be ok," Shirelle responded, still not looking up.

"You know he's not coming back, don't you?"

"I don't care." Shirelle took the end of her sweat shirt and wiped her misty eyes because the fact of the matter is, she does care. She does not want to be all alone while she's pregnant but that surely looks like the case.

"That's the problem baby, you should care. Do the two of you even get along? By the sound of things, it does not appear to be that is the case." The lady eased down on the swing next to Shirelle, after the boy ran off to play on the slide with the other kids.

"No, not really, Ronnie is a class "A" jerk. He's a narcissist. He doesn't care about anybody but himself. He thinks he's a playboy. All he does is fool around with other girls anyway. He's been acting like an ass ever since I..." Shirelle trailed off, wiping more tears. She leaned her head back to keep more tears from falling.

Usually, holding her head up like this would work for her when she felt she was about to cry but this time it feels different. No matter what she did, the tears would not stop flowing. She knows Ronnie just walked out on her and their unborn child, not only leaving her to fend for herself and raise the baby on her own but leaving her with the biggest decision she's had to face up until this time...whether she would keep the baby or abort. Being in poverty as a single teen mother was challenging enough and was not exactly a part of her plan but during the course of life, most teens make regrettable mistakes they must face, no matter the magnitude.

The woman kicked her legs out in front of her, looked down at her shiny black boots, remembers just how destitute she was and how bad she had it when she was Shirelle's age but persevered by way of hope, prayer, work, optimism, not allowing things, like being a single teen parent and having a strong desire to improve her life situation, to get in her way of becoming successful and independent.

"How far along are you?" the woman asked, lowering her feet, catching Shirelle off guard.

"Huh?" Shirelle had been staring at the woman's boots herself, wishing she had a pair just like them but knows, with her present condition, it will be a very long time before she could afford anything that resemble them or anything else for herself. The only independence she has as it is, is the air she breathes. She has to rely on her mother for everything else. "How do you know I'm pregnant? Ronnie and I barely talked about it three times."

"Well, I imagine you can call it a mother's intuition, a sort of right of passage to know, along with my personal experience about this sort of thing." The lady shifted her body so she was nearly facing Shirelle but she was also keeping an eye on the small boy.

"Well, that all sounds good and dandy but I don't think any of your intuition is going to keep me from getting kicked out of school or my moms house after everybody finds out I'm pregnant."

"Well, no, I wouldn't say that..."

"Why not, what are you, an angel or something?"

"I wouldn't say that either. Well, no, wait, I guess you can say that about me. At least my grandson thinks his Grammy is an angel. My intuition is fairly good nonetheless." The lady dug in her small purse and pulled out a card and handed it to Shirelle. "I'll tell you what; this is my personal home phone number. I'd like to sit down and make a personal plan with you..."

"Plan for what?" I aint never made any plans for anything. I sure didn't make any plan to get pregnant, in which I'm going to have my baby, just to show Ronnie what his stupid butt will be missing out on."

"That right there is a good planning reason. You should never make plans that include a man, correction, boy, just because he was the reason you got pregnant and decided he's not man enough to stick around and help raise your child. Girls need to learn and stand strong without a man after their child's father walks out of their life, not make them the excuse for further screwing yourself. You have to learn to step away from that mole" The woman abruptly stood then retrieved who Shirelle is sure is her grandchild, left the park, got in a shiny black Mercedes four-door, parked across the street then drove off.

Shirelle glanced down at the business card in her hand and did not make anything of it, as she stuffed it in her pocket. *That lady doesn't even know me*, she said to herself, as she left the park.

Before Shirelle could even tell her close friends, Kenise and Samantha, about being pregnant and ask what kind of advice they have for her, Ronnie had spread some bad news about her being a ho and went and got her stupid self pregnant, thinking she could trick whoever the daddy is into staying with her and that whoever it was that got her pregnant was a fool for doing so and she's just as stupid for trying something foolish like trying to trap the guy.