

The RealCare Baby Experience Comes Into The Classroom

As teachers, it can sometimes be challenging to explain concepts from a textbook alone. Some things require a more practical approach. With this in mind, the RealCare Baby® Simulator has been designed to give students a hands-on experience of caring for a baby.

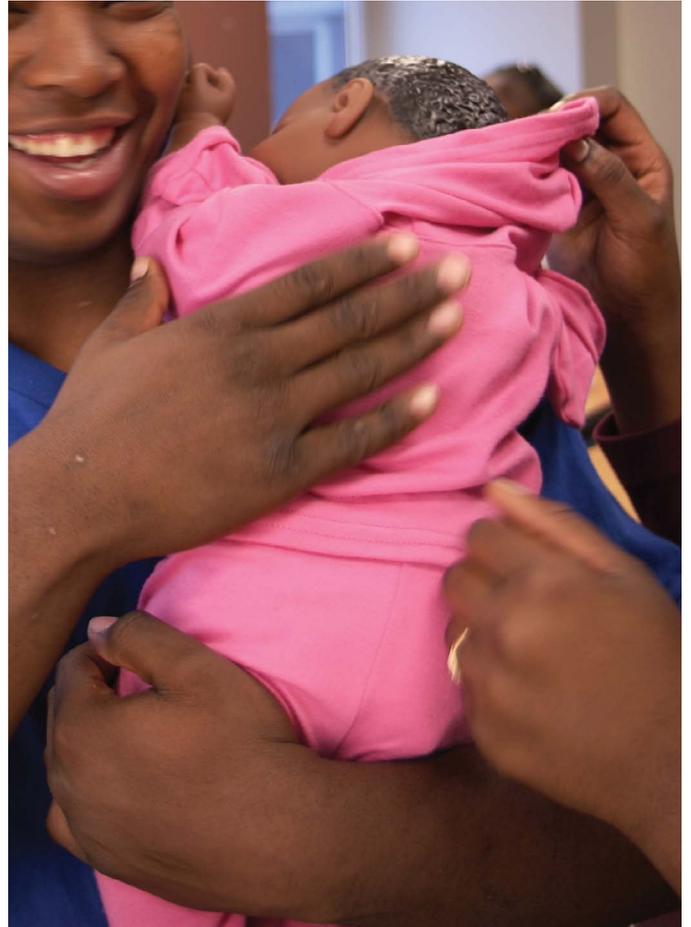
Clubs for Young People Northamptonshire (CYPN) deliver programmes for schools to develop young people's skills in relationships, empathy, budgeting, sexual health and drugs/alcohol awareness.

In 2021, CYPN delivered the RealCare baby programme to over thirty Year 11 boys and girls to support the National Curriculum syllabus.

The CYPN wants young people to be able to:

- Distinguish between positive and negative relationships
- Understand the support needs of a young child
- Be able to produce a budget for essential baby items
- Understand the impact of drugs/alcohol on decision making
- Know how to access sexual health services and support

The students took the RealCare Babies home for an overnight experience to better understand what caring for a newborn is like without a full night's sleep.



Students' perspectives

While the students enjoyed the programme overall, they did find it challenging to cope with the demands of a new baby, especially multitasking such as cooking and looking after the baby.

Taking a RealCare baby home changed the students' views on how easy it might be to look after a baby, with many students over-confident of their skills before taking the course.

The top three things that students learned by participating in the programme were:

- Empathy for someone else.
- How drugs and alcohol can affect decisions and what the consequences of that might be.
- Items needed to support a baby.

The RealCare baby experience created many memorable moments for the students, such as visiting a shop with their baby and babysitting their friends' babies.

The CYPN recommends RealCare Babies to other institutions. It is proving a great solution to an identified problem – teaching the reality of parenting to students using a practical approach.



“The RealCare Baby programme is a complete course in its own right, reinforcing other curriculum elements and providing a practical application for subjects such as math.”

- Teacher at CYPN