



## Advice for Women with Disabilities Who Want to Become Mothers *Plain-Language Version*

The Disabled Parenting Project (DPP) hosted two Mother's Day Twitter Chats. In 2016, 152 people participated. There were 900 tweets. In 2017, 83 people participated. There were 377 tweets. Each Twitter Chat lasted an hour and covered many important topics. One of these topics was advice for women with disabilities who wanted to become mothers.

### Encouragement

Several of the mothers were happy to hear that other women wanted to become mothers. The mothers encouraged these women to have children if they wanted them.

- *"Do it! There is never a convenient time."*
- *"Don't have regrets [about] parenthood. We can be and are amazing parents."*
- *"Define your family in your own terms. It's [definitely] challenging but the most rewarding thing you'll ever do."*
- *"YOU are the world's foremost and only expert on yourself. If you know you can do it, then do it."*
- *"Follow [your] dreams. If [you] dream [to] be a mother, put [your] efforts into making it a reality. Find other disabled women [to] support [you]."*
- *"It's an act of defiance to be a mother. It tells society you won't let it tell you what you should/shouldn't do w/ your body."*

### Be Prepared

Many of them said that women should be prepared for motherhood. Ways to be prepared include researching, planning ahead, and finding the right supports and services.

- *"Plan ahead but be fearless. Your 'disability skillset' is totally applicable to parenthood."*
- *"Never will be a perfect or right time. Do [your] research & go for it if [you are] considering conceiving or adopting."*

- *"Find doctors and others who are supportive. ask other disabled women for supportive OBGYNs."*

### **Find support from other mothers with disabilities**

Most of the mothers said that it was very important to find support from other mothers with disabilities. It is helpful to get information and advice from people who have gone through the same thing.

- *"Even able-bodied parents need support. Please ask and accept help from your community. You can do it!"*
- *"Find great mentors; disabled people are successfully raising kids; you're not alone."*
- *"Start connecting [with] disabled moms beforehand & building network/gathering info. Motherhood [with] disability adds another dimension."*
- *"Go for it! Recognize parenting is hard, and most difficulties have nothing to do with disability."*