

# The stories of Lulu and Martin

## Lulu – 14 years old

I am Lulu. I am 14 years old. I live in a village just outside Mzuzu. I have lived here all my life with my mother and my sisters.

I went to school until I was 12. I had fun. I had friends in my class and we chatted about life and boys. I fell in love with this boy who worked in a fruit store. He was adorable. My friends said he liked me too. The boy and I talked a bit at first, but pretty soon he wanted to make love to me. He said that this was part of a relationship. I did not want to lose him, so I let him make love to me. I knew about condoms. I was afraid of getting pregnant or getting infected by an STI. I wanted to use a condom, but I was afraid to tell him. I thought he might stop loving me. Or that he would make fun of me. That I wasn't a good enough woman to him.

After that one time that we had sex, I felt sick a few days later. I stayed at home from school because I was throwing up. I feared I was pregnant. I was afraid of telling my mom. Luckily I told my friend. She supported me so much. She said I should tell my mom and I should tell my boyfriend, because they would eventually find out. I told my mom and my boyfriend. My mom said I had not taken care of myself, but she would support me. My boyfriend was angry. I told him we should have used a condom and that it was our shared responsibility. He didn't want to believe me. He ran away and he doesn't want to be the father of the baby.

I had to quit school because I was pregnant. My health got worse because my body was not mature enough to be pregnant and deliver a baby. Since the baby was born I suffer from a fistula. This causes major health problems. Also I suffered from great pains in my lower abdomen. Sometimes I can hardly walk. I went to a clinic. The doctor told me I can probably never have another baby.

I love my baby girl! She is a miracle. But I am very sad that I wasn't a bit older when I got her. I could have given her a better future. I always wanted to be a teacher. This is still my dream. It is very sad I dropped out of school. I work hard to support myself and the baby. I save money as well. I want to go to school again when my baby is a little bit older. My mother agreed on this. She thinks it is very important and wants to support me.

I will never ever have unprotected sexual intercourse again. I like to tell every girl to always listen to your heart and never do something against your will! Not even if you think your boyfriend will leave you. If he would leave you for this, he's not worth being with, because you deserve something better!

## **Martin – 16 years old**

My name is Martin. I am 16 years old. I became a father at a very young age. I quit school when I was 14 to work in my dad's shop. Because I started to work early I earned some money. I impressed girls who passed the shop walking home from school every day. Sometimes I bought something for them. Small things, but they appreciated it. I got more popular. More girls started to like me.

Then I started to make love to them. When I closed the shop, I invited girls over. I had sex with them. I knew I should have used a condom, but I did not want to. Sometimes a girl would say something about it, but I pretended I didn't hear it. They would ask me if I was infected with an STI or HIV, but I always said no. Also, they warned me about getting them pregnant. I did not care.

Then one of the girls came back to me and told me she was pregnant. I was shocked. I was convinced that this could not happen to me.

But it did! My dad found out as well. He was very angry with me and told me that he had not raised me to make such big mistakes. I was so ashamed. I let my dad down. That was a very terrible feeling. Also that I made a girl pregnant.

I decided to come forward and acknowledge that I was the father. My whole life changed so quickly. I married the girl and now we live together. I still work at dad's shop. I make more hours because now I have my baby and my wife to take care of. We need to earn even more money, because my wife wants to go back to school when it is possible. She had a dream to be a doctor one day. Together we will save money, so she can achieve that dream.

We have a beautiful baby boy. He is the sweetest. I am very proud of our family and I am very proud that we together make the best of our future. But it would have been so much better when I would have had the opportunity to build a future for myself and maybe had this baby when I was older.

That's what I will tell our son when he is mature enough to understand. I will encourage him to finish school and have protected sexual intercourse when he's ready. I will tell him that he has the control of his own future, and he should not let his future be ruined by mistakes.

## **Questions to answer:**

The girl and the boy became parents at a very young age.  
Neither of them planned to have a baby and neither of them were able achieve their future plans.

Becoming a parent has many consequences. As you heard in the stories, it turned the lives of Lulu and Martin upside down.

Write down the following answers in your tip-top peer book

1. Name 5 consequences of early parenthood that happened to the girl or the boy
2. Name possible health consequences for the girl and boy
3. What other consequences might a young parent face?
4. Can you describe how Lulu and Martin got their lives back together after having a baby?