

# 10-year-old gives birth in southern Spain

November 2 2010

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(AP) -- A 10-year-old girl has given birth in southern Spain and authorities are evaluating whether to let her and her family retain custody of the baby, an official said Tuesday. The baby was born last week in the city of Jerez de la Frontera, said Micaela Navarro, the Andalusia region's social affairs minister.

Navarro told reporters the father of the baby is also a minor, and both the mother and the baby were in good health. Her department declined to give details, including the sex of the baby, but said authorities do not consider this a case of rape and that no criminal investigation is under way.

Under Spanish law, having consensual sex with someone under age 13 is classified as child abuse, an official with the Spanish Justice Ministry in Madrid said. But this particular case is complicated by the fact that the father of the baby is also a minor and it is not clear if he could be charged, the official said.

Spanish newspapers said the mother is of Romanian origin.

The daily *Diario de Jerez* reported the girl was already pregnant when she arrived in Spain, but did not say when she came to this country. It is not clear if the father is in Spain.

Medical experts warn that because young girls are still growing, they are at higher risk during pregnancy. Studies have shown that teenage girls are more likely to give birth to premature babies and their infants have a

higher chance of dying by age one.

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