

Mexican girl, 9, gives birth, authorities seek father

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A nine-year-old Mexican girl has given birth and authorities are looking for the presumed father, who is 17, officials said Wednesday.

The girl, identified as Dafne, gave birth by Cesarean section to a baby girl weighing 2.7 kilos (5.7 pounds) and measuring 50 centimeters (20 inches) on January 27 in a hospital in the western state of Jalisco.

The girl was not seen by doctors during her pregnancy and was almost in labor when she arrived at the hospital, said Enrique Rabago, director of the Occidente General Hospital where the child gave birth in the town of Zapopan.

"It is dismaying that a young girl became pregnant. You shouldn't be pregnant at this age," Rabago told a news conference.

A C-section was carried out because it was safer for the mother and baby, he said. The two were released in good condition and they will have an extensive follow-up in the coming days due to the mother's age.

The hospital notified the authorities of the birth.

Sources in the Jalisco state prosecutor's office told AFP that the girl declared that she had consensual sex.

The girl and the teenager were apparently a couple, the source said. The boy offered that the girl live with him when he found out she was

pregnant, but she refused.

But Jorge Villasenor, an official at the prosecutor's office, described the encounter as a case of rape or child abuse.

"We are looking for the young man to get his story because she does not understand what has happened. This is a rape or child sex abuse case," he said on Tuesday.

Dafne's mother said the girl was eight when she became pregnant.

"The father is a boy who is 17, but we have not found him, since he ran away," the mother told reporters.

A source close to the investigation said Dafne comes from a large family in Ixtlahuacan de los Membrillos, a humble village some 30 kilometers (19 miles) from Guadalajara.

"There are 11 siblings. Apparently their parents are separated and there was little care by the mother with so many children," the source said.

"With the birth, (Dafne's mother) and grandmother are taking care of things now."

Each year, 480,000 girls between the ages of 14 and 18 give birth in Mexico, according to the health ministry.

"There are pregnancies among teenagers, but girls between 10 and 12 years old are exceptions and most of the time it is due to a rape," Doctor Antonio Flores Villalon, a reproductive health specialist in Mexico City, told AFP.

"Girls are still growing at that age. They are physically immature, and this puts them at higher risk," he said. "This is the case for all minors

who are under 18, but when they are under 15, the risks increase."

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