



The Baby Trap: Special Report

October 24, 1994

7:40 AM

Pasadena, Calif.

For the second time this morning, Mandisa is hungry. Five minutes later, Maresha decides she wants to breast-feed too, and Angela Myada, 17, cheerfully gets prepared to nurse her 4-month-old twins simultaneously. But first, both babies need their cough medicine, because both have colds. “They get everything together,” says Angela, sitting in the living room of the three-bedroom apartment she shares with an older sister and her mother, Judith, who has multiple sclerosis.

Angela, a recent high school graduate, met the twins’ father, Lee, in the summer of 1993 at the Jefferson Children’s Center, where she worked as a teacher’s aide, but the couple are no longer seeing each other. Lee’s contribution to his new family so far? A \$20 diaper bag. “That’s it,” Angela sighs. “That’s my wonderful life.”

Revisiting “Baby Trap” Five Years Later

October 11, 1999

Angela Myada, 22, with Maresha, 5, and Mandisa, 5

Angela Myada is a puzzle. Obviously bright and devoted to her twin daughters Maresha and Mandisa, she has struggled to get clear of homelessness and unemployment. Last January, she landed a secretarial job with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Atlanta. But in July she quit after a run-in with her boss, Rev. E. Randel T. Osburn. “I got tired of him yelling at me,” she says.

It didn’t occur to her to have another job lined up before walking out. “Angela is young,” explains Roxanne Gregory, general counsel of the SCLC. “She is living the life of somebody who ought to be a lot older than she is.”

Myada lives in public housing, works as a cashier at Wendy’s and gets \$150 a month in food stamps. She lost contact with Lee Franklin, the twins’ father, when she moved to Atlanta from L.A. in 1996. Recently she lost a baby when she miscarried at 3½ months. She has had bad luck in general with men. “A lot of the guys think selling drugs is the way to make money,” she says, adding that she is not looking for romance but stability.

Myada wishes that she had gone to college and gotten married before getting pregnant. “I’m still growing and learning,” she says. “I’m not there yet.”