

PREGNANCY – YOUR OPTIONS

Becoming pregnant can be surprising and confusing and stressful at any time in life. We recommend talking to someone close to you for support, and to a family planning service or doctor who will be able to tell you all your options. A number of websites are also provided at the bottom of this page. Outlined below is a general guide to get you started in the decision making process.

Are you pregnant?

Step 1 Do a test!!

See your local family planning service or a doctor to take a pregnancy test. This is a confidential process and nobody else needs to know. Having said that, it can be very helpful to have a trusted friend or family member to support you.

Step 2 Is it positive?

If the result is positive it is important to establish with a doctor how many weeks pregnant you are. Then you need to think about what you want to do next. Your options are set out below.

Your options

1. Becoming a parent

Being a parent can be a wonderful experience. However, being a teen parent is often very difficult. Raising a child involves major commitments in time and money. Teens often have to put school and career plans on hold in order to raise a child. Spending time with a child takes priority over going out with friends and having fun. The children of teen parents may have a harder time growing up than children who are raised by adults. Raising a child without a partner can be even more of a challenge.

2. Abortion

Abortion is a medical procedure that terminates or ends a pregnancy by emptying the uterus. This procedure is performed at a specialist clinic or hospital. An abortion only take about 15 minutes but there is preparation and recovery time which, altogether, takes 3 to 4 hours. Many women choose to have abortions every year for many different reasons.

Abortion is available in all areas of Australia. It is a safe procedure and generally does not result in problems. Choosing an abortion is a serious decision and it is important to think carefully about what you want to do and talk to someone you trust.

3. Adoption

Adoption is the process of having a baby but letting someone else take over the baby's care once the baby is born, and giving up your parental rights. Not many people choose this path but it is an option.



How do I decide?

Making this decision for many can be complex and difficult. For others, there is only one clear path. If you are not sure what to do there are some questions here that might help you work it out:

- Do I want to be a parent now?
- What would I have to do as a parent?
- Will I be a single parent?
- How will this affect my study, career and travel plans?
- Do I have emotional and financial support available?
- What is best for me in the long term?
- Can I afford to be a parent?
- Will I be comfortable with my decision in the future?

You could talk to a friend or family member, your partner, school counselor, or other trusted adult. Choose someone you trust, who will listen to you, be supportive, respect your privacy, and not try to pressure you into choosing a particular option.

Links

For more information see the following websites:

Children by Choice

www.childrenbychoice.org.au

Gives a full and comprehensive overview of your options if you are pregnant.

NSW Family Planning

www.fpnsw.org.au/sex-matters/factsheets

Provides general information about pregnancy and pregnancy options.

Department of Community Services - Adoption

www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents_carers_and_families/fostering_and_adoption/adoption.html

Provides comprehensive information about adoption and fostering options.

