

Adoptions
with Love



I'm Pregnant, Now What?
A Guide for Expectant Mothers

Table of Contents



| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| What Does This Pregnancy Mean?..... | 2 |
| Coping with a Crisis Pregnancy..... | 3 |
| Pregnancy Considerations..... | 4 |
| Where to Get Pregnancy Help..... | 5 |
| Unplanned Pregnancy Options..... | 6 |
| Parenthood | |
| Termination | |
| Adoption | |
| Exploring Adoption as an Option..... | 7 |
| In Conclusion..... | 8 |



Unplanned Pregnancy

Finding out you are pregnant can feel like a complete crisis. This guide is designed to help you through the process.

Introduction



You just found out you are pregnant. This is not what you had planned, and maybe, it is not what you want right now. Even if you wish to have a family down the road, you may feel unprepared to raise a child at this time in your life. This is okay. As an expectant mother, you have several options. You also have time to think about these options carefully, before deciding what to do next.

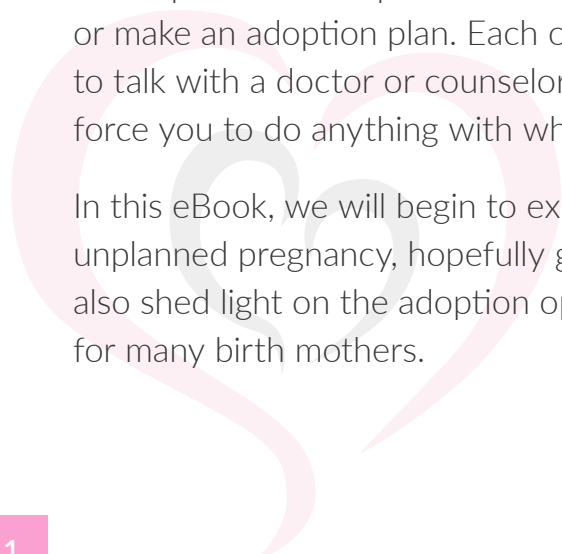
If you are completely overwhelmed and in complete crisis, take a deep breath. Know that you are not alone in this. Today, nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned. There are also professionals out there who can help you through this time. Rest assured you do not have to tell anyone or make a decision right away. However, there are steps you should take now, to take care of yourself.

After discovering your pregnancy, the first thing you should do is contact your doctor. Even if you may not carry the baby to term, it is important to make your health a priority right now. This means your physical health, as well as your emotional and mental well-being. Your doctor will talk you through prenatal care, as well as any questions and difficult emotions you might have, in a safe and confidential environment. Your doctor can also refer you to professionals to talk about your options.

More than likely, you already have questions about what this pregnancy will mean for you: How will pregnancy – or a baby – change your life and your relationships? Do you have the financial means, and a safe living environment, needed to raise a baby? Are you mentally and emotionally prepared to raise a child? Or, would you like to explore other options?

As you consider what to do next, you will want a team of trustworthy professionals who can help you with every facet of your journey – from options counseling to making an actual plan. As an expectant mother, you can parent your baby, terminate the pregnancy, or make an adoption plan. Each of these options has their pros and cons, so it is important to talk with a doctor or counselor before making a decision. No one can pressure you or force you to do anything with which you are not comfortable. You will know what is best.

In this eBook, we will begin to explore the questions and choices that come with an unplanned pregnancy, hopefully guiding you through this emotionally charged time. We will also shed light on the adoption option, and how it offers empowerment and peace of mind for many birth mothers.





What Does This Pregnancy Mean?

If you are facing an unplanned pregnancy, you may feel very scared and confused in this moment – as though you are in complete crisis. This is to be expected, given the difficult decisions you are facing. Like many young women in this situation, you might also be wondering what this pregnancy will mean for you, your future, and the future of your baby.

No matter what you decide to do, your pregnancy will have a long-term impact on your life. Raising a child, for example, has an obvious impact on a mother's life and obligations, since a child requires constant care and nurturing, as well as financial and emotional support for the rest of your life. Alternative pregnancy options will also have a lifelong impact, though this will be felt on a more emotional level. Choosing an option like adoption will allow you to still pursue college, a career, or other goals.

As an expectant mother, you have the power to make an informed decision for yourself and your baby. That is why it is so important to think about all that lies ahead. Once you have digested the initial news, take time to consider how this pregnancy, or having a baby, will affect your life and relationships. Remember, you do not have to make a decision right away.

In the short-term, this pregnancy will also have an impact on your day-to-day life. You may feel the need to share the news with others, particularly if you plan to carry your baby to term. In addition to telling the father of the baby, you may wish to tell your parents, your school administrator, and/or your boss and co-workers. Take the time you need to do this. If you need help with any difficult conversations, rest assured there are counselors (such as the ones at Adoptions With Love) who can help.

Regarding your work or school life, think about how pregnancy and recovery time will impact your attendance and ability, too. If you have a job that requires you to be on your feet a lot – such as waiting tables or working in retail – then you will need to consider how much time you can take off to rest.

This pregnancy does not have to change the course of your life forever, but it is important to acknowledge that it will have an impact on your life (especially short-term) and to make a plan for any changes that it might bring.



This is Your Choice

As an expectant mother, only you know what is best for your baby. If you are unsure what to do, take time to learn about your options.



Coping with a Crisis Pregnancy

When facing an unplanned pregnancy, it can feel like the weight of the world is resting on your shoulders. There is an inner crisis happening within you, and you need to consider your health above all else. Before making any decisions, make an appointment to see an OB-GYN, doctor, or other clinician in your area. Confirming the pregnancy and checking up on your physical condition takes top priority.

Coping with an unplanned pregnancy is a very personal process. Take a deep breath and the time you need to come to terms with your situation and to process all your emotions. Facing this situation can be overwhelming alone but building a support system can help. There are plenty of sources in which you may find this much-needed support. Counselors can lend a sensitive ear, and may be found at a local adoption agency, 24-hours a day, at no cost to you. You may also look to a support group for comfort and compassion. Meeting with and speaking to other women who have walked in similar shoes can serve as a great outlet and valuable source of advice.

Though it is important to acknowledge all your emotions, try to stay as positive as you can during this time. Remember that this is not the end of your life. It will certainly become a big part of your story. In fact, if you choose to carry the baby to term and place your baby for adoption, you will learn that it is only the beginning. It can be the beginning of something wonderful: The chance to pursue your dreams, to give your child a wonderful life, and to give another couple the chance to start a family.

As you absorb this pregnancy news, and connect with professional counselors or other birth mothers, you may begin to consider your options. Once you move to that step, you may feel that you have some control in this situation. You will, hopefully, begin to feel a hopeful for a brighter future ahead.



Adoption is Positive

Adoption allows you to pursue your dreams, give your child a wonderful life, and give another couple the chance to start a family.





Pregnancy Considerations

As you cope with an unexpected pregnancy, there are some special considerations to keep in mind. The first thing to consider is your health. If there is any chance you will carry this pregnancy to term, you should consult with your doctor about receiving proper prenatal care. If you suffer from a chronic illness or disease, ask your doctor how this pregnancy might affect your health.

Another important health-related factor to consider is your work life. If you have a physically demanding job that requires you to stay on your feet for extended periods of time or lift heavy equipment, you will need to think about how this will affect your pregnancy. You may want to discuss the situation with your boss. If you are considering making an adoption plan, you will need to take some time off after – and perhaps before – the birth. If you are unsure you want to carry to term, you may still need to take time off work for recovery.

One of the most difficult parts of an unplanned pregnancy is revealing the news to loved ones. You may feel the need to tell your parents, a close friend or family member, or the father of the baby. If sharing the news with family or friends is intimidating, do not hesitate to reach out to a social worker or options counselor that specializes in pregnancy. This person can listen to you without judgment or criticism. They can also help you share the news with loved ones in a safe and calm environment. Keep in mind, you do not need to disclose your pregnancy to friends or family members, especially if you feel their reactions may upset you. However, it is important to meet with a clinical professional. For example, a social worker at an adoption agency can help you confidentially, educating you on your options and offering maternity assistance through this time.

Another factor to take into consideration is your finances. If you need to take time off of school or work, try to think about how you will support yourself during this time. If you are not working full time – or will not be able to work for some time – what about health insurance for your prenatal and medical appointments? If you are considering adoption, you may receive financial assistance for these costs. If you are considering parenting, however, keep in mind that raising a child is costly. Not only will you need to buy diapers and possibly daycare services, you will also need to plan for supporting your child the next 18 years of his or her life.



Where to Get Pregnancy Help

When you are facing an unplanned pregnancy, it is important to find the help you need by trusted professionals who will listen to you and respect any choice you might make. It may feel as though you are all alone, but it is important to remember that there are places to turn for support.

Just as you need to make that all-important prenatal appointment to confirm pregnancy, it is helpful to speak with a medical professional in regard to your options. This can be your doctor, or through a health clinic, such as Planned Parenthood. These types of clinics are a great way to get low-cost prenatal care and medical information.

A credible and trustworthy adoption agency, such as Adoptions With Love, is another great place to turn if you are looking to learn more about alternative pregnancy options. There you can find caring and non-judgmental social workers who will sit with you to discuss your pregnancy, your options, and your hopes for your child. They will also listen to you and answer any questions you may have, calm your fears and concerns, educate you on your rights as an expectant mother, and respect any choice you make.

Should you choose to work with an adoption agency, you will be supported by a team of professionals, including licensed social workers. These counselors work with you – free of charge – throughout your pregnancy and for the many years following birth, should you choose to place your child for adoption. You will also get free legal help, help with medical care, and financial assistance.



Finding Pregnancy Help

You can go to an adoption agency, like AWL, for free support and information. You will not be pressured into making an adoption plan.

Unplanned Pregnancy Options



Facing an unplanned pregnancy can be an overwhelming and confusing experience. It can certainly feel scary but remember - we are not living in the dark ages. Women today have options. Making your decision is not necessarily going to be easy, but it can be done with plenty of support. As you lean on your support system and the help of professionals, you can begin to consider your choices.

Parenthood

Raising the baby may have been your first consideration. This is a natural reaction. As you consider this option, you will need to think about the realities of parenthood. Parenting is a rewarding job, but it is also a demanding one that requires hard work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Becoming responsible for a baby means putting his or her needs before your own. You will need to consider the financial obligations and childcare costs, as you work to support this child.

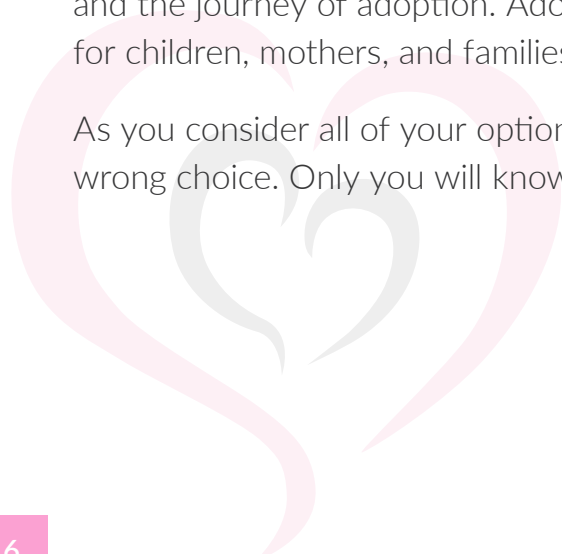
Termination

If you feel that you cannot carry your child to term, you may be considering abortion. This is an option for a short time, at the start of your pregnancy. If you are considering termination, it is important to first speak with a healthcare professional to understand the exact procedures, timeline and side effects.

Adoption

Much like the option of parenthood, adoption is a decision that requires a lot of love and selflessness. It is a brave decision that offers the possibility of a bright future, for both you and your child, as well as hopeful adoptive parents. If you are considering adoption, or simply looking to learn more about it, you will can find much-needed support and care through an adoption agency. An adoption agency is there to teach you about your options and the journey of adoption. Adoption is not an easy decision, but it brings many benefits for children, mothers, and families. We explore this more on the next page.

As you consider all of your options - it is important to remember that there is no right or wrong choice. Only you will know in your heart which path is best for you and your baby.





Exploring Adoption as an Option

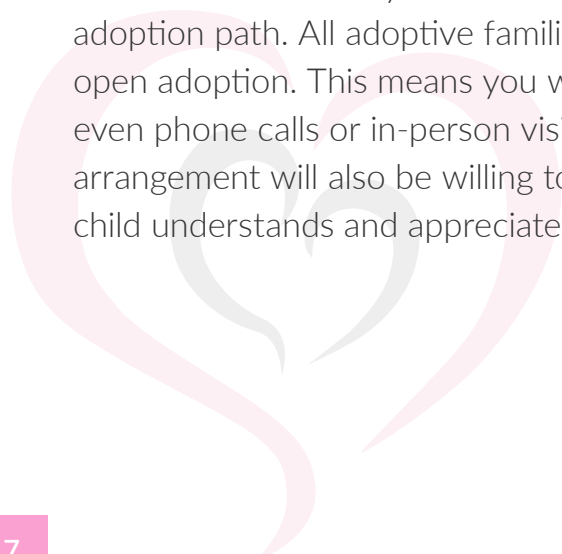
If you are not ready to become a parent, you may be considering placing your baby for adoption. This is one of the most thoughtful and selfless choices a mother can make for her baby. It allows her to provide a loving family and stable life for her child, at a time when she cannot provide for a child. Adoption is not giving up. Rather, it is the loving act of making a plan for your baby, in his/her best interests – placing him/her in a forever home, with a devoted family who is prepared to raise a child.

For expectant mothers, exploring adoption takes a lot of strength, love, and willpower. The strength is needed for those moments you feel like you cannot handle the emotions that often come with adoption. The love and willpower will see you through, making sure you provide the best life possible for your child, even when it hurts to say “goodbye.”

Of course, adoption is not really “goodbye” forever. In fact, many families touched by adoption would agree that it is quite the opposite. Adoption today is not the taboo secret it once was many years ago. Now, more than ever, adoptive families are opening up to the opportunity to stay in contact with the birth parents of their children. This is possible through open adoption.

As you explore the idea of adoption, a trustworthy adoption agency, such as Adoptions With Love, can help you navigate this process. A counselor can walk you through the steps and explain how you can hand-select the family who will raise your child, if you wish. If you have a certain vision for the family who will adopt your baby, your social worker can help you find the perfect set of parents. You can also meet with the family face-to-face, or over the phone, before making your decision.

As an expectant mother, you will also have the power to determine the level of communication with your child’s adoptive family, should you decide to take the open adoption path. All adoptive families at Adoptions With Love agree to at least a semi-open adoption. This means you will have opportunities to receive photos, letters, and even phone calls or in-person visits throughout the years. An adoptive family open to this arrangement will also be willing to tell your story in a positive light and ensure that your child understands and appreciates your loving decision to make an adoption plan.





In Conclusion...

As you face this very unexpected moment in your life, it is important to take a breath and take care of yourself above anything else. You will get through this, and you certainly do not need to go through this all alone. Take some time to find support, and to talk to people who care, as you explore your options.

While it may feel that you are all alone, and that there is no one in this world who could possibly understand how you feel, this is simply not true. There are support groups, adoption agencies, and counselors who can comfort you and offer you the emotional guidance you need during this trying time.

As you explore your options, keep in mind that they are just that: YOUR options. You have choices, and no one can force you to take any one path. As an expectant mother, only you know what it is best for your baby. Should you decide that placing your baby for adoption is a potential option, you should contact a credible adoption agency. They can walk you through the adoption journey and offer you emotional, legal, and financial support. They can also help you hand-select the perfect parents to raise your child. If you would like to receive updates of your child over the years, your agency can help you determine a comfortable level of openness with your child's adoptive family. Choosing adoption does not have to mean goodbye. You can still be a part of your child's life while giving him/her the best life possible.

If you would like to discuss the idea of adoption, you can always reach out to [Adoptions With Love](#). Our caring staff is here to chat with you any time of day, with zero judgment or pressure. We help expectant/birth mothers all over the country learn about their options and make thoughtful decisions in the best interests of their children. **Call us toll-free at 800-722-7731 or text us confidentially at 617-777-0072.**



We Are Here for You 24/7

Adoptions With Love is available anytime of day, any day of the week to answer your call. Call us toll-free at 800-722-7731.

adoptionswithlove.org

Call us: (800) 722-7731 Text Us: (617) 777-0072

*Adoptions
with Love*