

Options for Unplanned Pregnancy

Almost half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned. If you become pregnant unexpectedly, making the best decision for you may seem overwhelming. Talking with a spouse or partner or consulting a health care provider can help guide your decision.

There are three options facing women who have an unplanned pregnancy:

- She can have the baby and raise the child herself
- She can have the baby and place it for adoption or foster care
- She can end the pregnancy.

1) Parenting

As a parent, you accept the responsibility of raising a child. It's important to decide if you and your partner/family can financially and emotionally handle this life-changing decision. You may feel overwhelmed but there are many resources available to help you. For example, there are classes on pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting. There are agencies to help you find medical care, clothing, and furniture. There are people to lend a helping hand or listening ear when you need it. Family members may initially be shocked by the news and may even be angry, but in the long run many families will be supportive and helpful.

2) Adoption

Local adoption agencies can guide you in starting this process.

There are many couples waiting to adopt a baby. If you feel financially, emotionally, and physically unable to care for your baby, this may be an excellent choice. There are many emotions during an adoption process. It's important to remember that you set the rules that work for you. You can decide what kinds of parents will raise your child. The adoptive parents can be involved with the pregnancy or not based on what you're comfortable with.

3) Abortion

Abortion is a procedure that ends a pregnancy. It is performed by a licensed physician or surgeon. You will need to contact individual abortion clinics directly for information. Most abortions are performed during the first 13 weeks of a pregnancy. In Iowa, abortions are not allowed after 20 weeks of pregnancy and parental consent is required for people under the age of 18.

Consult your doctor to find out if they perform abortions. If not, they can direct you to another medical provider who does.