

## I'M PREGNANT, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

*Choosing what to do when you are pregnant is difficult and none of the options is the “easy” or “right” choice. Each choice comes with its own set of challenges. Consider all your options and how each one will fit with your life and beliefs. When possible, talk this over with your parent(s) or another trusted adult. Your health care provider can also assist you in learning about and discussing your options.*

### WHAT ARE YOUR CHOICES?

#### 1. Parenting

Being a parent is a hard job for anyone. It can be even harder if you are a young parent. It is a 24-7 responsibility for at least 18 years. These questions may help you think about whether or not you want to be a parent at this time in your life:

- Where will you live?
- What will you do about money? How will you support yourself and your child?
- What will you do about school?
- Who will provide childcare while you are at work or school?
- What do you want out of life for yourself? What do you think is important?
- What are your goals and how will you meet them? (a college degree, a job, a family?)
- How will having a baby change your social life?
- How will the baby’s father be involved in your pregnancy and parenting?

#### 2. Abortion

If you are not ready to be a parent or go through a pregnancy, abortion might be something to consider. An abortion is a medical procedure that ends a pregnancy. Your health care provider can tell you the names of providers and



Image reproduced with permission by Pro-Choice Public Education Project. Copyright © 2005

clinics that are covered by your insurance plan. You can also call Planned Parenthood to discuss this option further or visit their website (see the resources box above).

If you have had an abortion, you may consider calling Exhale, a counseling service for women who have experienced abortions, at 1-866-4-EXHALE. Visit their website at [www.4exhale.org](http://www.4exhale.org).

#### 3. Adoption

Adoption is another choice if you do not want an abortion but are not ready to become a parent. There are a lot of different types of adoption. In an open adoption, you know who the adoptive parents are. In a closed adoption, you do not know who they are. For more information about adoption, call the National Council for Adoption hotline, 1-866-21-ADOPT. Also check out <http://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/> for more information and resources.

#### RESOURCES

For even more information about your options and the experiences of other teens who have gotten pregnant, visit or call:

- Stay Teen  
<http://www.stayteen.org/>
- Planned Parenthood  
<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/teen-talk/>  
800-230-PLAN
- Sex, Etc.  
<http://www.sexetc.org/>

#### Safe Haven Laws

The Safely Surrendered Baby Law lets you confidentially give up you baby. The baby must be 72 hours old or younger. As long as the baby has not been hurt, parents may give up their newborn and not get in trouble or arrested.

<http://www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org>