

Some of these questions may help you with your decision

- What do I want out of my life?
- How will this pregnancy change my plans?
- How do I feel about being responsible for a child?
- Will I tell the father of my child?
 - how will this affect our relationship?
 - will he help me whatever I decide to do?
- Will I tell my family?
 - will they help me?
- What if I keep the baby?
 - who will help me?
 - where will I live?
 - where will the money come from?
 - what about my education and career?
- How do I feel about adoption or guardianship?
- How do I feel about having an abortion?
- Do I feel I understand all the issues?
- Have I given myself the chance to think things through?

Other Family Planning Pamphlets

Contraception Your Choice
The Pill – Combined Oral Contraceptive
The Pill – Progestogen Only
Depo Provera
The IUD
Male Condoms
Diaphragms
Fertility Awareness
Sterilisation
Vasectomy
Sexually Transmissible Infections
Vaginal Discharges

Unplanned Pregnancy

For more information about Family Planning resources, clinics and health promotion services go to our website, familyplanning.org.nz

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Family Planning provides confidential and non-judgemental sexual and reproductive health and education services. Please contact us for further information.

Everyone who is pregnant has decisions to make. You may have many different feelings. If this is an unplanned pregnancy you may find it difficult to decide what to do.

Before you make a decision you may want to talk to someone else. Choose someone you can trust and who will listen to you. This could be your partner or a trusted friend, whanau or family. Counsellors, doctors and nurses can be very helpful.

Whatever your age you have the legal right to choose what you want to do. Some women will want to involve their family or whanau in their decision.

Do not rush into a decision and do not let anyone else make it for you. Spending time thinking and talking through your choices will help you make a decision that is right for you.

What choices do you have?

CONTINUE YOUR PREGNANCY

- Parenting your child
- Adoption
- Guardianship.

REQUEST AN ABORTION

Continue your pregnancy

You will need to arrange health care for yourself and your baby, with a doctor or midwife. There are organisations which offer emotional and practical support to women during and after pregnancy. If this interests you, ask for details from the Child, Youth and Family Service or your doctor or midwife.

PARENTING YOUR CHILD

You may want to share the responsibility of looking after your child with your partner or family. You

may decide to care for your child by yourself. Work and Income New Zealand can tell you if you can get an allowance or benefit.

ADOPTION

Adoption is a legal process. The rights and responsibilities of parenting are transferred from the birth parent(s) to adoptive parents. To find out about adoption you can phone an adoptions social worker at the Adoption Information Services Unit of the Child, Youth and Family Service. Open adoption is when birth parents and adoptive families continue to have contact by mutual agreement.

GUARDIANSHIP

Guardianship is an arrangement between birth parents (the natural guardians) and the care givers. This is a legal arrangement to decide who has the custody and responsibility for raising your child. To change this you will need to go back to court. When guardianship is used it is usually within families.

Request an abortion

If you are considering an abortion you will need to see a doctor.

It is legal for you to have an abortion before 12 weeks if two consultants agree that this pregnancy would seriously harm your mental or physical health or that your baby would have a serious disability. They will also consider your age and whether the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest. Different criteria apply if you are more than 20 weeks pregnant. Your doctor will be able to advise on this.

Your doctor will arrange for you to see the consultants. If your doctor will not arrange for you to see the consultants, you can go to another doctor. You will also be offered the opportunity to talk to a counsellor.

THE LEGAL SIDE

- Abortions are legal in New Zealand as long as you have met the criteria outlined.
- There is no legal age limit for the person having the abortion. This means that a female of any age can consent to an abortion - or refuse to have one.
- Girls under 16 do not need to inform their parents or seek parental consent.
- A woman does not need the consent of her partner before having an abortion.
- The father cannot force his partner to have an abortion.

HOW IS AN ABORTION DONE?

There are 2 ways:

- Medical. This is possible within the first 9 weeks of the pregnancy. Two sets of tablets are taken and the pregnancy comes away like a miscarriage.
- Surgical. A simple operation to remove the pregnancy.

ARE THERE COMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM ABORTION?

It is safer to have an abortion before you are 12 weeks pregnant. One in 20 women will have a problem such as heavy bleeding or infection after an abortion. It is very unlikely that an abortion will stop you becoming pregnant in the future. If you have any unusual pain or bleeding after the abortion, seek medical help promptly.

Some women experience strong emotions after having an abortion. There are counsellors who specialise in working with women who have had an abortion - it can be very useful to talk through your feelings with one of them.