Supporting Pregnant Teens in Schools
What do you do when a student faces any difficult decision?
Things to consider

- Age of Consent
- School district policies
- Ethical dilemmas/ personal feelings
- Does she seem forced or coerced into any option?
Your care matters
Parenting, Abortion, Adoption…

There is not an easy choice.
Parenting

Protective Factors Leading to Successful Teen Parents:

- Cognitive Ability
- Sense of Optimism (aspiration to stay in school)
- Self-sufficiency
- Relational Skills
- Parenting Competencies
- Supportive Adult
- Supportive Peers/Partner
- Living with a Family Member
- Positive School and Community Environment

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/guide_teen.pdf
Parenting

HHS Office of Adolescent Health:

Compared with their peers who delay childbearing, teen girls who have babies are:

• Less likely to finish high school;
• More likely to rely on public assistance;
• More likely to be poor as adults; and
• More likely to have children who have poorer educational, behavioral, and health outcomes over the course of their lives than do kids born to older parents.
Parenting

What are some things for her to consider?

- Living Arrangements
- Childcare
- School and career goals
- Financial Responsibility
- Support and Community (family, peers/partner)
- Ability to be mentally and emotionally present with the child
- Is anyone pressuring her?
Abortion

Things to Consider:
- Age
- Parental Consent
- School Policy
- Is anyone pressuring her?

2 Options:
- Medical (Abortion Pill)
- Surgical
- Options are based on how far along they are in pregnancy
Abortion

In a research study done by the Guttmacher Institute in New York, the reasons most frequently cited for having an abortion were:

- that having a child would interfere with a woman’s education, work or ability to care for dependents (74%)
- that she could not afford a baby now (73%)
- that she did not want to be a single mother or was having relationship problems (48%)
Adoption

- Voluntary relinquishment of rights
- Opportunity to choose the family
- Opportunity to have an open relationship with the child and adoptive parents
- NOT foster care
Every open adoption is unique! There is a continuum of openness for her to consider:

Traditional ➔ Semi-Open ➔ Fully Open

Lifeline Does not do Traditional/Closed Adoptions
What if she feels like she is abandoning her child?

**Untruthful adoption language** = “giving up”, or “giving away”, a child for adoption

**Truthful adoption language** = “making a plan” or “placing a child” with a permanent family or entrusting her child to a prepared family
Adoption

According to a study published by the Guttmacher Institute, women who choose to make an adoption plan typically:

- Have higher educational aspirations, are more likely to finish school, and less likely to live in poverty and receive public assistance than mothers who parent their children.
- They delay marriage longer, are more likely to eventually marry, and are less likely to divorce.
- Are more likely to be employed 12 months after the birth and less likely to repeat out-of-wedlock pregnancy.
- They are no more likely to suffer negative psychological consequences, such as depression, than are mothers who rear children as single parents.
Adoption

Things to consider:

- Her desires long term for her life and for the life of her baby
- What her dream family would look like
- Her desired level of openness with the baby and the family
- What she wants her hospital time to look like
- The Legal Side of Adoption
- Is anyone pressuring her?
- If adoption, who does she utilize?
What does Adoption Look Like at Lifeline?

- Separate pregnancy counselor for birthmom (they have their own advocate)
- Options Counseling
- They are in the driver's seat and choose the pace of the process
- They choose the family and the level of openness (there are LOTS of waiting families)
- They create their hospital plan
- In most cases they do not sign legal paperwork until after the baby is born
- Extensive post adoption care and grief support
Lifeline’s Services
Even if a girl does not choose adoption, we still want to serve her!

- 24/7 helpline 205-967-0811
- Maternity Home or Housing Expenses
- Pregnancy expenses and help with Medicaid
- Legal counsel
- Transportation to and from doctor’s appointments
- Referrals for OB/GYN’s
- Referrals for Parenting Resources and Classes
- Referrals for Post Abortion Support
Reach Out To Us!

Live Chat with a Counselor
Pregnant.lifelinechild.org
Call the main line for 24/7 SUPPORT:
205-967-0811

FOLLOW US
Facebook: Lifeline Pregnancy Counseling
Instagram: @lifelinepregnancycounseling
Website: pregnant.lifelinechild.org