

Other resources

When dealing with a pregnancy decision some people can't go to the people in their life they would usually rely on, and some need more or different support than those people can give. If you want to talk to someone pro-choice and non-judgmental about your decision or get more info or support with next steps, check out these resources:

- PPT's Health Services volunteers or clinicians: in-person information, support & active listening on pregnancy options & sexual health issues.
- To see a counsellor for more in-depth support, contact PPT, the BCBC (416-351-3700), or Choice in Health Clinic (416-975-9300).
- Teen Health Source: information & active listening on pregnancy options & sexual health issues by phone, text, email, & chat.
- All-Options (1-888-493-0092, toll-free): non-judgmental peer support for decisions/feelings/experiences around pregnancy.
- Faith Aloud (1-888-717-5010, toll-free): non-judgmental support for pregnancy options from trained clergy & religious counselors.
- PPT's Case Coordinator can help connect to things like education, employment, housing, or financial supports.
- For pregnant and parenting people 19 and under, Jessie's Centre (jessiescentre.org, 416.365.1888) can help connect to things like education, employment, housing, or financial supports.
- PPT factsheets on *Abortion, Adoption, Having a Baby, Financial Supports for Parents*, and more are available in the clinic or on our website at www.ppt.on.ca/resources/fact-sheets

For youth ages 13-29

Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services

Offers drop-in and scheduled appointments
Call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca

For youth ages 13-19

Teen Health Source

Offers anonymous and confidential sexual health information for teens by teens.
Text (647) 933-5399, call (416) 961-3200, email teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca
Chat online and visit www.teenhealthsource.com

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pregnancy options series

pregnancy decision making

Planned Parenthood Toronto (PPT) is a pro-choice organization. When you are pregnant, we believe that you have the right to access factual, caring and non-judgmental information and services on all 3 of your options: abortion, adoption and parenting. If you need support with decision making, contact PPT to book an appointment.

Making a decision about a pregnancy can be confusing. You may have a range of emotions, from not feeling much at all, to feeling a lot of different things at once. Whatever you feel or don't feel:

- Your feelings are okay.
- Your feelings give you information to use in making a decision.
- Lots of other people have felt the same way(s).

It can be overwhelming to know where to start and how to address all the different factors of a decision. This guide asks questions to give you some structure to sort through your feelings and thoughts. It can give you a place to start. These questions are often not the whole process though, and other support is available if you need it.

You can think over the questions privately, write or journal about your thoughts, and/or share the process with people close to you. If you have people in your life who will support you in your decision, consider reaching out to them and asking for the kind(s) of support you need. Do you need to be listened to? To imagine together what life would look like with each option? To have help booking or getting to appointments? The support you need matters. We've also listed some support options at the end of the factsheet.

As you consider your options, it's common to find that that all of them have drawbacks. For lots of people making a decision isn't about finding the perfect choice, but finding a choice that works better than the others or that they can live with. Some people feel pressure to make the "right" decision, but it's really normal to not feel like no decision is ideal, or to have conflicting feelings about the option you choose.

Getting reliable information

It's normal to have lots of questions about the options you're considering and how to access them. Finding reliable, unbiased info can help make sure you're making the best decision for you. The resources at the end of this factsheet are good places to get pro-choice, non-judgmental info and to ask questions.

Timelines

There can be a lot of pressure to make pregnancy decisions quickly, but some people need time to make a decision, or to work through and feel okay about the decision they're making. Below are some timelines that may be helpful, listed by gestational age (GA), which is the time since the first day of your last menstrual* period.

- **Abortion:** In Toronto, medical abortion is available until 9 weeks GA, and surgical abortion is available until 24 weeks GA, with the simplest one-day procedures available until 12-15 weeks GA.
- **Continuing a pregnancy:** You can start prenatal care if you feel comfortable with it even if you are not sure you will continue the pregnancy. If continuing, it's ideal to start prenatal care as soon as is reasonable for you. Some early tests happen from 11-13 weeks GA and you won't be able to get them later if you miss them.

Questions to consider

What are your thoughts and feelings about abortion? About adoption? About parenting?

You may have strong beliefs that you want to use to guide your actions. You may also find that being *in* a situation feels different from how you might have imagined it would feel before it happened. When making a decision about a pregnancy many people find that they need to consider or do things they never pictured themselves doing. Many also find themselves examining beliefs they might not have had reason to think through in depth before, like religious beliefs about abortion or judgments about who ends up in situations where they feel undecided about a pregnancy.

Where do your thoughts and feelings come from? What have you been taught or brought up to believe about the options? It can be useful to consider how thoughts, feelings, and beliefs line up or don't line up with reliable information about each option, and with your current values and how you want to make decisions in your life now.

If you've made pregnancy decisions before, thinking through those experiences can also be helpful. How did they go? What's similar or different about your situation or feelings now?

*We know that these aren't the words everyone uses for their bodies (eg. trans folks), and support you using the language that feels best for you

What would change or stay the same in your life if you had an abortion? If you continued the pregnancy and arranged an adoption? If you continued the pregnancy and parented?

Thinking about all the aspects of your life can be a lot. It may be helpful to think of a few (maybe 3) important things in your life and reflect on how they would or wouldn't change. This can help focus on the impact of your decision on things that are important to you.

How would your goals and plans for the next 5-10 years change or stay the same if you had an abortion? If you continued the pregnancy and arranged an adoption? If you continued the pregnancy and parented?

For this and the previous question, how would you feel about those changes? Which ones would be positive for you? Negative? Neutral? How big of an impact would they have? Which ones could you manage or deal with, and which ones would be impossible or very difficult to deal with?

How does your financial situation affect your choice?

Financial concerns are an influence in lots of people's pregnancy decisions. If you would otherwise want to parent, money can be an especially big factor. Do you have an idea about what you'd want your financial situation to be if you were going to parent? How does that compare to your situation now? If it's different, how does that make things feel for you?

Some information that may be helpful around financial/cost issues:

- **Abortion:** With an Ontario health card abortions are fully covered. See PPT's *Abortion* factsheet or contact PPT for more info on costs, coverage, or assistance.
- **Adoption:** In Ontario there is no cost to the pregnant person for adoption but other parts of the process (like time off work during/after pregnancy) can still impact your finances.
- **Parenting:** There are some government and other financial supports for parents: see PPT's *Financial Supports for Parents* factsheet for more info.

How would people and communities who matter in your life react if you had an abortion? If you continued the pregnancy and arranged an adoption? If you continued the pregnancy and parented?

Would they be helpful or supportive? Would it change your relationships with them? Would you be able to talk to them about what was going on? If you couldn't tell them or it would change your relationships, how would that feel for you?