



Teen Pregnancy

Before considering how you might respond to the news that your unmarried teenager is pregnant, take a brief tour of the emotions and thought processes that are likely to be swirling through her mind and heart.

Fear is an Overriding Emotion in Nearly Every Teen Pregnancy

- "I can't tell my parents. They'll kill me!"
- "How can I finish school when I'm pregnant?"
- "My boyfriend will take off if I don't have an abortion."

The adolescent with a crisis pregnancy probably sees nothing but loss on the horizon — loss of love, time, education and physical health. Fear of one or more of these losses propels most of her other responses. Remember that the average age difference between the father of the baby and the teenage mother is 6.4 years.

Denial is Common

especially during the early weeks of pregnancy when the only indication might be one or more missed periods, a little fatigue, possibly some nausea or even a positive pregnancy test. The longing for things to be "the way they were" may delay acknowledging the problem and seeking appropriate help for weeks or even months.

Ambivalence about being pregnant may cause fluctuating emotions. One day the only solution may appear to be an abortion, while the next the prospect of a cuddly baby may seem appealing. Time spent with a friend's crying newborn may jolt the emotions in yet another direction. Indecision and apparent lack of direction in such an overwhelming situation are common.

Guilt

When a pregnancy results from the violation of moral values held since childhood, an adolescent

will usually feel ashamed and worthless. Her growing abdomen becomes a constant reminder of her failure. This is a time when you can come alongside your child and cement a lasting relationship with her.

Pressure to Have an Abortion

This may come from several directions. A teenager may be weighing what appears to be a dismal future of hardship and remorse against a quick and relatively inexpensive procedure. "No one needs to know, and I can get on with my life."

A boyfriend (who may be dealing with his own fear and guilt, along with concerns about future financial responsibilities) may exert considerable pressure to abort, even offering to pay the bill. He may also threaten to bail out of the relationship if the pregnancy continues. Some parents, worried about their daughter's future or perhaps their own reputation in the community (or even the prospect of being responsible for the actual child-rearing), may also find abortion attractive.

The "Cuddly Doll" Mentality

Some unmarried teenage girls see their pregnancy unrealistically as an escape from a difficult and unpleasant home situation. They may envision a baby as a snuggly companion who will require roughly the same amount of care as a new puppy, not realizing the amount of energy a newborn will take without giving much in return (especially during the first few weeks). Teens with this mindset need to adjust their expectations of child-rearing — not to drive them to abort, but to help them make more appropriate plans. If adoption is not chosen as a solution, some careful groundwork should be laid to prevent serious disappointment and even the mother's abuse of the baby.

from www.focusonthefamily.com



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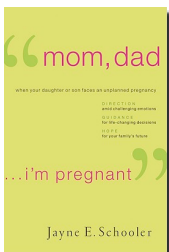
Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture (Psalm 100:3).

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be (Psalm 139:13-16).

But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased (Galatians 1:15).



RELATED RESOURCES



"Mom, Dad . . . I'm Pregnant": When Your Daughter or Son Faces an Unplanned Pregnancy

Jayne E Schooler
ISBN 978-1576834824

"Mom, Dad...I'm Pregnant." These are words you never want to hear from your unmarried daughter. In an instant, your dreams and hopes for your daughter or son permanently change. You feel battered by an array of conflicting emotions. What you and your family need now more than ever is compassion, understanding, and direction. Long-time educator, writer, and speaker on family life issues, Jayne Schooler offers a comprehensive guide to the challenges faced by parents of children who experience unplanned pregnancies. As a mother and grandmother, Jayne also chronicles her own family's experience--from the initial heartbreak and shock upon hearing her daughter's news to a new level of love, maturity, and spiritual commitment. By sharing her own story and those of other parents, as well as the expertise of a broad range of professionals, Jayne offers deep insight and hope to those who need to know that God's love and grace is readily available for all.



Deliver Me: Hope, Help, & Healing through True Stories of Unplanned Pregnancy

Dianne E. Butts
ISBN 978-0983164906

She stares at the test strip, palms clammy, breathing uneven. She's never felt more alone. Tears blur her vision. Panic edges in. An unplanned pregnancy can leave emotional wounds that take years to heal. The options are many: abortion, adoption, keeping the child. The questions are even more: How? Why? Where can you go for help? What do you do?

Deliver Me: Hope, Help, & Healing through True Stories of Unplanned Pregnancy explores each of the choices and their after-effects, highlighting the most sensitive moments women and men in unplanned pregnancies face, and how it affects grandparents, friends, and other loved ones. You'll find:

- More than 50 intriguing true stories
- Facts and statistics about unplanned pregnancy
- Practical help
- Valuable resources

Cumberland Crisis Pregnancy Center

<http://ccpchope.org/>
615-451-1717

Cumberland Pregnancy Center provides the following confidential services free of charge:

- Pregnancy Tests
- Abortion Education
- STD/STI Information
- Medical Referrals
- Men's Program
- Abortion Recovery Support
- Pre-Natal Classes
- Parenting Classes
- Mentoring Program
- Baby Layettes
- Material Aid
- Adoption Referrals
- Community Referrals
- Education Assistance Referrals
- Legal Referrals