

unplanned **PREGNANCY**



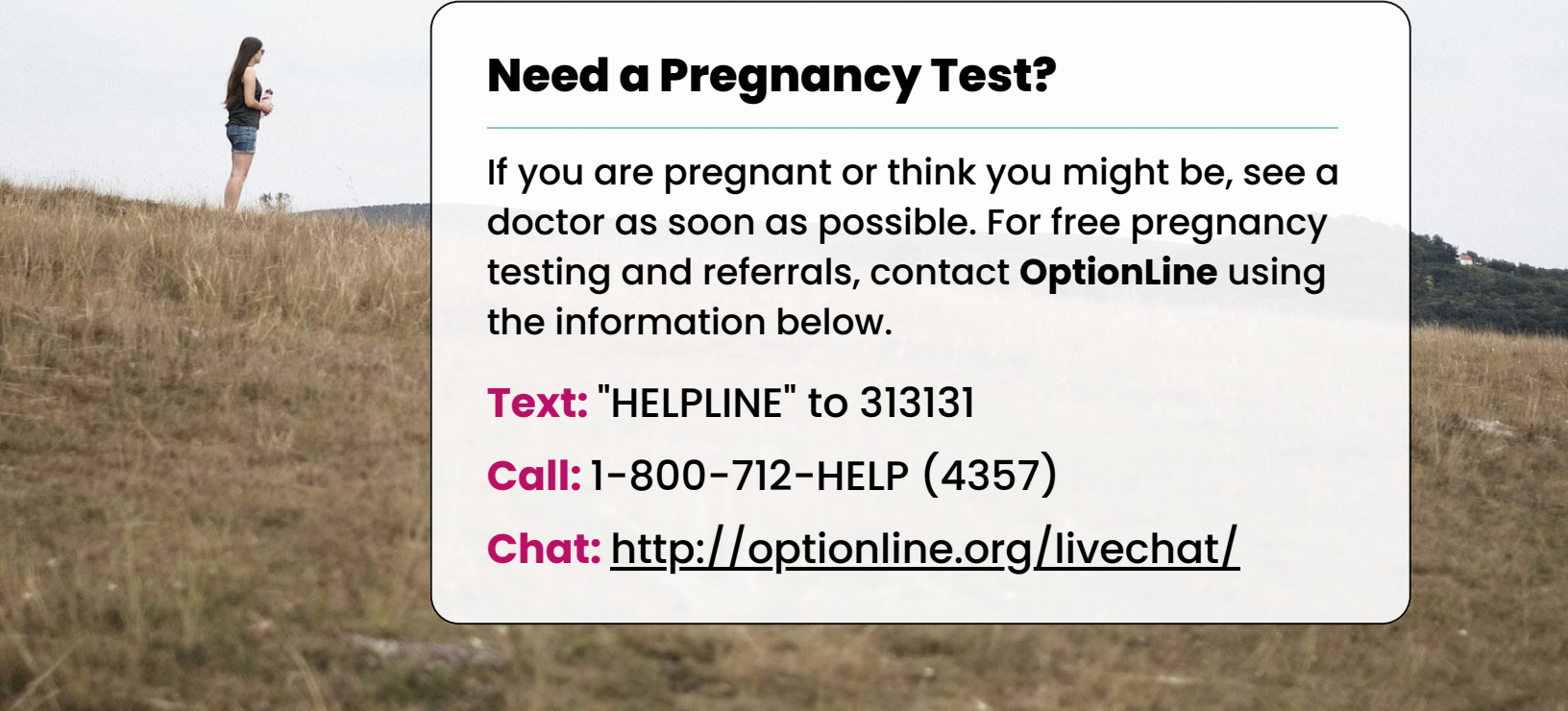
THE **HOPE** LINE

I'm scared I might be pregnant.

An unintended pregnancy can feel overwhelming, especially when you are young. You may experience a range of emotions, including denial, depression, guilt, shame, stress, and worry. It is also common to feel fearful, afraid to tell your parents or boyfriend, or concerned about what others might think.

No matter what emotions you are feeling, there is hope. Understanding your options will help you make this important, life-changing decision wisely.

If you need someone to talk to, you can always chat with a Hope Coach at thehopeline.com. TheHopeLine is a safe place to share what you're going through and get some guidance for your situation.



Need a Pregnancy Test?

If you are pregnant or think you might be, see a doctor as soon as possible. For free pregnancy testing and referrals, contact **OptionLine** using the information below.

Text: "HELPLINE" to 313131

Call: 1-800-712-HELP (4357)

Chat: <http://optionline.org/livechat/>

I'm pregnant... now what?



3 IMPORTANT FIRST STEPS

1

Tell Someone

Facing an unplanned pregnancy can be difficult to talk about. You might feel scared or embarrassed to share what you're going through, but having support during this time is so important. Try to think of someone in your life you trust and open up to them. If you don't have anyone you feel comfortable talking with, you can always reach out to a Hope Coach at thehopeline.com for confidential support.

2

Schedule an Appointment

Scheduling an appointment with a doctor or pregnancy center is an important step for both your health and your baby's health. You can start by contacting your primary care physician, or visit OptionLine.org to find a doctor, explore free resources, and get answers to your questions.

3

Understand Your Options

Understanding your options can help you make the best decision for yourself and your baby. It's important to take time to consider the pros and cons of abortion, adoption, and parenting. You can learn more about each option in this guide.



How am I supposed to tell my **PARENTS?**

Telling your parents about your pregnancy can feel scary, and that's completely understandable. If you're unsure how to start the conversation, here are a few tips that might help.

Find a quiet time and place to talk. You may want to ask if you can speak with them privately, and kindly request that they set aside distractions like their phones or the TV so they can really listen to you.

If your parents are divorced, consider talking first with the one you feel closest to. You might then ask that parent to join you when you share the news with the other.

Remember, this is big news for your parents too. If they didn't know you were sexually active, your pregnancy might come as a shock. Just as you've felt a lot of emotions, they may feel sadness, anger, anxiety, or even guilt. It may take them some time to process everything.

Before you talk with them, make a short list of what you want to say. Tell them you love them, share honestly how you're feeling, and let them know how much you need their support right now.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR *OPTIONS*

When facing an unexpected pregnancy, you have three options to consider. Whatever choice you make will be life-changing, so it's important to be as informed as possible in order to make a wise decision you can feel confident about.

Abortion Adoption
Parenting





Understanding Abortion

Many people view abortion as a quick solution to an unwanted situation, but it is much more than that. **It is a life-changing event that can have significant physical and emotional consequences.** Many women who have had an abortion later wish they had fully understood the facts and risks before going through with the procedure.

What physical risks come with abortion?

Abortion can come with serious risks. Possible complications include bleeding, hemorrhaging, infection, damage to organs that may affect future pregnancy, permanent scarring of the uterus, and possible injury to the bowel or bladder. In some cases, these complications can be life-threatening.

What are the emotional effects of an abortion?

After an abortion, some women may feel immediate relief, believing the crisis is over and life will return to normal. For many, however, the emotional struggle may continue. Processing the moral weight of the decision can be deeply distressing and may lead to regret, grief, guilt, anger, or other emotional challenges over time, including depression, substance abuse, nightmares, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts.

Is abortion wrong?

This is an incredibly difficult question, but it deserves to be considered honestly. Most people agree that taking a human life is wrong. Since it is so difficult not to regard a baby in the womb as a human life, it follows that abortion raises serious moral concerns. Despite this, people will often refrain from referring to the baby as being a human life as a way of trying to avoid those moral concerns.



Understanding Adoption

If you are not ready to parent, you can still give your baby the gift of life by choosing adoption. **Making an adoption plan does not mean you do not love your baby, and it does not mean you are taking the easy way out.** It means you are thoughtfully considering how to best meet both your needs and your baby's needs, now and in the future.

Is adoption the right choice for me?

There are many factors to consider when making an adoption decision. This is ultimately your decision, but it can be helpful to seek input from trusted people in your support system, such as your parents, pastor, social worker, doctor, therapist, or psychologist.

Reasons to consider adoption

Personal and Financial Readiness

- You believe you cannot financially support a child or meet their basic needs.
- You feel unprepared for parenthood.
- You are too young to raise a child yourself.

Relationship and Living Situation

- You are in an unsafe or toxic relationship or living environment.
- You or someone you live with has untreated substance abuse issues.
- You want your baby to be raised in a stable, two-parent home (but not in foster care).

Trauma and Privacy

- Your pregnancy resulted from sexual assault, abuse, or other trauma, leaving you feeling unable to care for a child.
- There are people in your life whom you do not want to know about your pregnancy.

Shared Decision

- You and your co-parent agree that adoption is the best choice for your child.



Understanding Parenting

Parenting a child can be both challenging and deeply rewarding. Parents, grandparents, and other trusted adults can be valuable sources of support, offering guidance, encouragement, and practical help. **Don't hesitate to reach out and ask for their support when you need it.**

Where can I get help?

Everyone's situation is different, and the people you can rely on will vary. Support may come from your baby's father, family members, close friends, or caring staff at a local pregnancy center. Wherever it comes from, it's important to remember that you are worthy of support. That support is available to you. **Have courage and don't be afraid to reach out.**

If you have supportive family members or friends, they can offer encouragement, practical help, and a steady presence throughout your pregnancy and after your baby is born. They may be able to assist with everyday needs, provide emotional reassurance, or simply walk alongside you during this time.

If you don't have a strong personal support system, you are not without help. Many organizations are dedicated to walking with you and providing the care and resources you need. Pregnancy centers, community programs, and support groups can offer guidance, education, and material assistance as you prepare for parenting.

For example, [OptionLine](#) can connect you with a local pregnancy center that provides free parenting classes, baby clothes, diapers, and other essential items. These centers often offer a welcoming, nonjudgmental environment where you can ask questions, learn new skills, and receive ongoing support.

No matter your circumstances, you don't have to figure everything out on your own. There are people and resources ready to support you every step of the way.

Pregnancy Resources

Find a Pregnancy Center

Many organizations are dedicated to supporting single parents after they learn they are pregnant. They offer personalized care in a safe, discreet, and confidential environment, so you can feel confident that both you and your baby are protected. **You can find a trusted provider near you through OptionLine.**

optionline.org/center-locator



Adoption Counseling

You don't have to face this alone or feel unsure about what to do next. Reaching out to an adoption agency can help you understand your options and guide you through each step as you consider what's best for you and your baby. **Lifeline Adoption Counseling is here to help you get started.**

optionsinadoption.com



Adoption today is about empowering you to shape a plan that reflects your values and hopes. You have the ability to choose the family where your child will grow and thrive. You can also decide how often—and in what ways—you stay connected with your child and their adoptive family. Throughout every step of the process, you remain in control.

How can I *help my friend* who is facing an unintended pregnancy?

Listen and offer emotional support.

You may not be able to solve her situation, but you can be a steady and caring presence. Take time to listen, affirm her feelings, and remind her that she is not alone. Reassure her that you will love and support her no matter what she decides.

Offer to go with her to appointments.

Doctor visits and pregnancy center appointments can feel intimidating. Going with her can provide comfort and help her feel less alone. You can also help her remember important information and talk through what she learns afterward.

Talk through her options.

While you don't need to have all the answers, you can help create space for honest conversation. Discuss the different options—parenting, adoption, and abortion—and the possible outcomes of each. Give her the freedom to process her thoughts without pressure, judgment, or expectations.

Pray with her.

Prayer can be a powerful source of peace and guidance. If she is open to it, offer to pray with her and for her. This can help both of you focus on seeking wisdom, clarity, and God's direction for her life and her baby.

Share helpful resources.

This guide is a great place to start when learning about unplanned pregnancy and available support. You can also help her connect with trusted organizations that provide information, care, and practical assistance.



A *Spiritual* Perspective

Your pregnancy has not taken God by surprise. He knew about your baby even before you did. Scripture tells us that He formed your baby's inmost being and knit your baby together in your womb (Psalm 139:13). He also has a good plan for both you and your child (Jeremiah 29:11).

God is loving and present with you in this moment. He invites you to seek Him in the midst of this challenge—to come to Him in prayer and ask for guidance, wisdom, and peace. As Jesus says in Matthew 7:7, "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you."

You can bring your questions honestly before Him, asking for clarity as you consider your next steps, including whether to parent or make an adoption plan. **God knows what is best and promises to guide those who seek Him.**

God also invites you to come to Him with humility and honesty. When we acknowledge our mistakes, He does not respond with condemnation, but with forgiveness, grace, and love. As you turn to Him, He will help you find healing, extend grace to yourself, and discover renewed purpose and hope.

THE **HOPE** LINE

If you want to know more about what it means to have a relationship with God or have questions about your faith, our Hope Coaches are available 24/7 to chat with you about whatever is on your mind.



← **CHAT LIVE
WITH A HOPE
COACH**



THE HOPE LINE

Our mission is to help students and young adults in crisis by offering sound advice and a safe place to connect. Through our online resources and the ability to chat live with a Hope Coach 24/7, we are here to help people make a true connection.

Founded by Dawson McAllister in 1991, TheHopeLine is a 100% donor funded ministry. If you would like to learn more about partnering with us, visit [**thehopeline.com/partners-in-hope.**](https://thehopeline.com/partners-in-hope)



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