



Learner Outcomes

P12 *Examine aspects of healthy sexuality, sexual wellness and responsible sexual behaviour*

- *Assess the consequences of being sexually active*

How To Use

This lesson plan contains activities to achieve the learner outcome above. It is strongly recommended that the lesson on birth control is completed before this lesson.

Classroom Activities & Timing

- A. Ground Rules (5-10 minutes)
- B. Making Choices (30-45 minutes)
- C. The Skills of Parenting (10-15 minutes)
- D. Question Box (5-10 minutes)

Required Materials

HANDOUT: Scenario Solutions Chart

HANDOUTS: Making Choices Scenarios 1-3

Background Information for Teachers

Comprehensive sexual health education stresses the need for students to make decisions and respect the decisions and values of others. Perhaps one of the hardest decisions a teen could ever have to make is if they are faced with an unintended pregnancy.

Having a baby at a young age can have significant adverse impacts on the health and well-being of both the parents, the baby, and society. Teen pregnancy is associated with increased school drop-out rates, low socio-economic status and increased likelihood of repeat pregnancies. Health risks to the baby may include pre-term birth, low birth weight and infant death. Statistics on the rate of teen pregnancy, live births and abortions can be found in the [Youth Sexuality: Stats and Trends](#) report.

It can be challenging to create a balance between prevention and positive messages related to parenthood and pregnancy outcomes. Prevention programs must consider different views and perceptions to be effective. Some cultures support earlier pregnancies and in these cases delaying pregnancy could alienate individuals from their culture. Addressing teen pregnancy is two-fold: interventions focusing on prevention and interventions addressing relevant options (abortion, adoption, and parenting), in addition to support and services for effective and positive health outcomes for young parents and their children.

Abortion

Abortion is a safe procedure when performed by a qualified doctor.

If the abortion is performed without any complications there is no effect on the ability to become pregnant again in the future.

In Alberta, there are two options for abortion procedures:

- Medical abortion – up to 10 weeks of pregnancy
- Surgical abortion - from 6 - 20 weeks of pregnancy

The type of abortion procedure depends on how far along the pregnancy is and the services offered by the clinic or hospital. The cost of an abortion is covered by Alberta Health Care. Surgical abortion services are not available in every community; more information is available at www.ahs.ca/abortion

A medical abortion involves an initial visit to the clinic (which in some cases may be a virtual visit), a combination of prescription medications that terminate the pregnancy, and the abortion takes place at home..

A surgical abortion takes about 5-15 minutes but a person can expect to stay in the clinic or hospital for 2-3 hours as the visit will include counselling, an ultrasound if needed, and recovery time.

In Alberta, people under the age of 18 do not need parental consent to have an abortion. Consent is based on a person's ability to understand the procedure and its risks.

Adoption

There are different types of adoption:

1. **Closed Adoption:** Closed adoption means that birthparents and adoptive parents are not given identifying information on each other. It also means that the child does not know who their birthparents are while the child is growing up.
2. **Open Adoptio):** Open adoption means that the birth parents meet the adoptive family they have chosen and having some type of ongoing contact with the family before and after the placement of the child, if they wish.
3. **Direct Placement:** A direct placement adoption is one where the birthparent places the child with a friend, family friend or relative.

For more information about adoption visit the [Government of Alberta](#).

Parenting

Having a baby involves many changes; these may be lifestyle, emotional, physical and financial. It is important to see a health care provider for regular [prenatal care](#) while pregnant. Information about pregnancy and parenting is available at [Healthy Parents, Healthy Children](#).

Inclusive Language

Language is complex, evolving and powerful. In these lessons, [inclusive language](#) is used to be inclusive of all students, including those with diverse gender identities, gender expressions and sexual orientations. This includes the use of 'they' as a singular gender-neutral pronoun. The lesson plans use the terms 'male' and 'female' when referring to sex, such as when discussing reproductive anatomy. A person's reproductive system can be male, female or intersex (not clearly defined as either male or female).

Sex is independent of gender identity. Gender identity is a person's internal sense of identity as female, male, both or neither, regardless of their sex assigned at birth.

For many people, their gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender). Others may identify as being transgender or gender diverse if their gender identity and/or expression does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. A person's gender identity can be girl, woman, boy, man, transgender, non-binary, gender fluid, gender queer, agender or another. The intention in this material is to use language that reflects these many possibilities.

A. Ground Rules

CALM Pregnancy and Pregnancy Options

Ensure [ground rules](#) are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can help ensure a successful lesson.

B. Making Choices

Emphasize that any person who is faced with an unintended pregnancy is dealing with their own unique situation, and the choice is ultimately the personal decision of the person who is pregnant. However, the partner of the pregnant person and their families will have feelings and be impacted by the situation and decision as well. Making the decision about what to do can be very difficult and stressful. Some people may not have the non-judgmental support of a partner, family or friends. Agencies and counselling services can help.

Students use problem-solving skills to determine what choices could be made when a teen discovers they or their partner are pregnant.

1. Distribute the **Scenario Solutions Chart** handout to each student.
2. Divide students into small groups.
3. Provide each group with a **Making Choices Scenario** handout.
4. Allow each group to read the scenario.
5. Give groups time to discuss and fill in the handout.
6. Write the possible choices across the board:
 - **Abortion**
 - **Adoption**
 - **Parenting**
7. Have each group present their scenario and response to the class.
8. Discuss the options using the questions below. Use the background information from the beginning of the lesson plan to supplement the discussion about pregnancy options.

Abortion

Abortion means choosing to terminate (end) a pregnancy. There are many reasons people choose to have an abortion. An unintended pregnancy may have been a result of not using contraception or contraception failure (e.g. condom breakage). Some people discover genetic defects as a result of tests on the fetus and choose this option. A person may have been sexually assaulted or became pregnant because of sexual coercion. Sometimes a person may experience changes in their life situation that makes them re-evaluate the pregnancy.

No matter the circumstances it is most important a person make the decision that is right for them.

In Alberta, abortions are legal, safe, and free with Alberta Health Care.

If the abortion is performed without any complications there is no effect on the ability to become pregnant again in the future.

In Alberta, there are two options for abortion procedures:

CALM Pregnancy and Pregnancy Options

- Medical abortion - up to 10 weeks of pregnancy
- Surgical abortion - from 6 -20 weeks of pregnancy

Some questions to consider include:

- Do I have spiritual or moral beliefs that may impact my decision to have an abortion?
- Do I have people in my life that will support me with my decision?
- How will making this decision impact my life?
- What about my partner's and family's feelings?

Adoption

For some people, making an adoption plan for their child is the best decision for them. Birthparents who choose open adoption have the opportunity to select the adoptive parents, decide if they want to meet the adoptive family before the adoption, and what type of ongoing relationship, if any, they will maintain with the family and their child. Some questions to consider include:

- How would I feel about continuing the pregnancy and giving birth but not keeping the child?
- Could I live with the idea that someone else is raising my child?
- Am I able to provide for them? How would adoption impact my child's life?
- Do I have the support I need to continue the pregnancy and make an adoption plan?
- What about my partner and family's feelings?
- Which kind of adoption would be best for me?
- How would making this choice impact my life in the long run?
- If a person chooses adoption, maintaining good health throughout the pregnancy is important for the baby and the pregnant person.

Parenting

Having a baby and becoming a parent involves many changes –lifestyle, emotional, physical and financial. It's common for parents to have a wide range of feelings—from joy, excitement and amazement to fear, sadness and frustration. Parents may have less sleep, freedom and time for themselves. Some questions to ask yourself about parenting and what it means to be a parent include:

- How will raising a child affect my current lifestyle and the lifestyle I want to have?
- Am I ready to change my lifestyle to meet my child's needs?
- Do I like children? How do I feel about having a child around all the time?
- Do I know enough about raising children?
- Which skills can I share with and teach my child?
- Have my partner and I talked about how we would manage parenthood? What do we know about parenting? How do we learn to be a parent?

CALM Pregnancy and Pregnancy Options

- Is it important to have a partner involved? If a partner is not involved, is parenting still an option?
- What type of support do I need to help me raise my child? Does that support exist in my life right now? Is it possible for me to get that support?
- What are my reasons for wanting to have this child?
- Can I handle a child and school and/or work at the same time?
- Can I afford to support a child right now? In the future?

Some people have lots of experience with children, while others have very little. Learning to be a parent takes time. All people bring their own skills, attitudes, experiences, beliefs, values and culture to their families. Whether someone parents with a partner, on their own or with the support of family and friends, they will need to give their child loving, consistent and supportive care.

C. The Skills of Parenting

Students recognize the importance of skills and characteristics needed for parenting, and the value of acquiring them before becoming a parent.

1. Write the headings **Need to Have** and **Nice to Have** on the board.
2. Ask students to think about what the 'requirements' are in our society to become a parent. Help students to realize that in reality, there are no requirements.
3. Ask students to make a list of requirements they think should be met before becoming a parent, and put it under the 'Need to Have' heading. The group does not have to agree completely on this list. Encourage discussion about which items might better belong on the 'Nice to Have' list instead.
4. Ask students to list any other qualities that are 'nice to have' in a parent, but not essential.
5. Ask students which of the listed qualities they already have, and which they anticipate having later in life or never.
6. Discuss the implications of this for their decision to become parents now or in the future.

D. Question Box

CALM Pregnancy and Pregnancy Options

Answer any questions from the [question box](#) in the previous lesson. Have students submit any new questions and address them next class.

Addressing the questions at the next class allows you time to review the questions and prepare responses.

Self-Reflection

During the lesson, were:

- Ground rules being followed?
- Good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?

Student Assessment

During the lesson, did students:

Knowledge:

- Identify pregnancy as a possible consequence of sexual activity?
- Identify the three options available to people in the event of a pregnancy?
- Identify skills and characteristics needed for parenting?

Skills:

- Use problem-solving skills to determine what to do when faced with an unintended pregnancy?

Attitudes:

- Recognize that it is the personal right of every pregnant person to choose how to respond to pregnancy?

Scenario Solutions Chart

Read the Making Choices Scenario with your group.
Follow the steps below to provide solutions for the situation.

IDENTIFY the problem (What is the problem presented in the scenario?)

DESCRIBE three possible solutions	EVALUATE the consequences of each solution
1.	
2.	
3.	

ACT on the best solution (Choose the best solution and describe what happens)

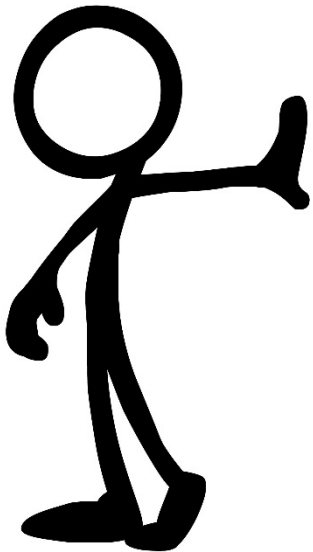
Present your scenario and solution to the class.

Making Choices Scenario 1

Alicia is 16 and enjoys her life. She is a good student and is aiming for a career in the medical field. She can't decide between physiotherapy and dentistry at the moment but she is working hard as she knows she needs good marks to get admitted to university.

Alicia does not have a boyfriend but knew that one guy at school, Mark, was interested in her. A few weeks ago, she decided to go with him to a friend's party. At the party Alicia and Mark had a few drinks. Before she knew it she and Mark were having unprotected sex.

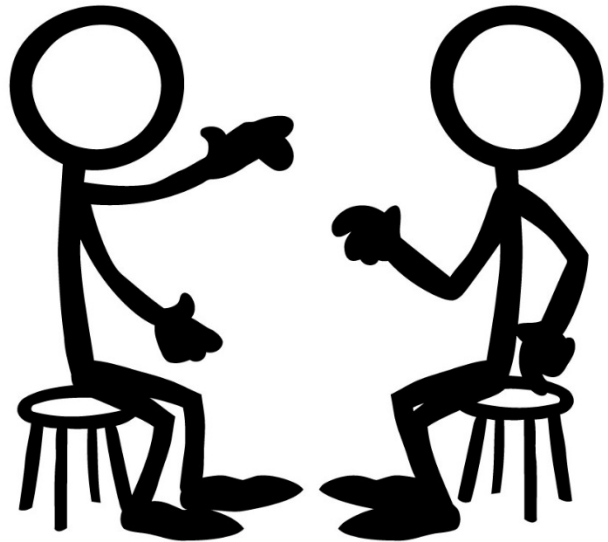
The next time Alicia saw Mark at school she tried to ignore him. She was really disappointed with herself and hoped that she could forget the whole thing. Now she has missed a period and has taken a home pregnancy test that was positive.



Making Choices Scenario 2

Spencer and Rayyan (both 17 years old) have been dating for a year now. They met at a 50th birthday party for Spencer's dad and instantly became friends. Once they started dating they spent a lot of time together. Although they do not go to the same high school they see each other on evenings and weekends.

A couple of months ago they started to have sex. They had talked about it and decided to use condoms to provide protection against pregnancy and STIs. However, Spencer has missed a period and a pregnancy test confirmed they are pregnant. Spencer has shared this information with a friend, but not their parents or Rayyan.



Making Choices Scenario 3

Indira and Jon have been dating since the end of grade 9. They started having sex a few months ago. They never really talked about birth control. They just tried to time sex around Indira's cycle so she wouldn't get pregnant.

Last month Jon dumped Indira and started going out with someone he met online. Indira hadn't been feeling well for a few days, and when her period didn't arrive, she took a pregnancy test and it was positive. She thinks she is about 8 weeks pregnant. She hasn't spoken to Jon since the break-up.



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