

Abortion



A person has three legal options when they are pregnant:

1. Terminate the pregnancy with an **abortion**.
2. Continue with the pregnancy and **parent**.
3. Continue with the pregnancy and place for **adoption**.

The choice belongs to the person who is pregnant.

This booklet is about abortion.

The Sexual Health Options, Resource & Education –
SHORE Centre is
Pro-Choice.

This means we respect a person's right to make the best decision for themselves. We provide up-to-date, accurate and evidence informed information and resources about all pregnancy options, and allow people to choose what is right for them.

We support people in every way we can without judgement.

**If you have questions about abortion please
contact:
SHORE Centre at 519-743-9360.**

Things to Think About?

- What are your feelings about abortion in general?
- Are there circumstances when you think abortion is okay?
- Are there circumstances when you think abortion is not okay?
- At what stage of pregnancy, if any, would you be against an abortion?
- Should abortions be more or less restricted in Canada?
- How would you feel if abortion became illegal?
- How, if at all, would you be affected if abortion became illegal?
- How, if at all, do you think it would affect others if abortion became illegal?
- How do you feel about a person having an abortion who never used birth control?
- How do you feel about a person who has had more than one abortion and is not interested in using birth control?
- What are your feelings about birth control?
- What are your feelings about condoms?
- How do you feel about a person having more than one abortion?
- How do you feel about the statement, "abortion is murder"?
- How do you feel about a teenager having an abortion and not telling their parents?
- What are your feelings about a teenager who wants to parent?
- How do you feel about a married person or a person in a long term committed relationship having an abortion?
- How do you feel about a person having an abortion without telling the other person involved?

- How do you feel about a person having an abortion when someone else would like to raise the child?
- What do you think of the saying, "Adoption not Abortion"?
- Do you think adoption is a more noble choice than abortion?
- Do you think adoption would be a hard choice?
- How much do you know about abortion?
- How much do you know about adoption?
- Would you want to adopt a child?
- How much do you know about pregnancy and childbirth?
- How much do you know about parenting?
- How do you feel about a person who is not financially stable being a parent?
- How do you feel about a person who is financially stable having an abortion?
- How do you feel about a person who does not want to be a parent?
- What are your feelings about parenthood?
- Do you want to be a parent?
- Do you know how much it costs to raise a child?
- What are your feelings about abstinence?
- What are your feelings about sex outside of marriage?
- What are your feelings about teenagers having sex?



Ways to Help Prevent Abortion

Provide people with Comprehensive Sex Education.

It has been shown extensively in research that a lack of sex education and/or abstinence only sex education, does not prevent young people from having sex. It does however, prevent them from having safer sex and using birth control and condoms properly. If individuals do not know how their bodies function, the process of reproduction or how birth control works, how can they prevent pregnancy?

Individuals also receive misinformation from teachers, parents, peers, the Internet and the media. Many teachers and parents are uncomfortable talking to children and youth about sexual health, often because they do not know the answers themselves. Therefore teachers and parents should also be provided with the knowledge and tools to teach their students and children. Because the media is overridden with sexuality advice, ideas and advertisements, people with the facts are better able to decide for themselves what information is accurate and what information is not. Comprehensive sex education of teachers, parents and young people, therefore results in fewer unintended pregnancies and fewer abortions.

Make birth control more accessible.

Although many may think birth control is readily available, this is not true for all people. Many barriers exist for people when attempting to access birth control. Some of these obstacles include, the knowledge of where and how to access birth control, the cost of birth control, time and transportation to get birth control and keeping birth control use private (e.g. from parents or partner).

Although condoms are free in various locations, this may not be known, they may be hard to access, one partner may refuse to wear

them or they may not be the best type of birth control for the person. Having birth control readily available free of charge, or at a discounted cost, would increase use. This goes hand in hand with education teaching people how to use and talk about the use of birth control.

Get everyone involved.

In order for a pregnancy to occur there must be an egg, a sperm and a uterus. More than one person is involved in this process. There needs to be more programming and emphasis placed on education for every person, not just the person carrying the pregnancy. It is also important for everyone to know about pregnancy options and that the choice belongs to the person who is pregnant.

Improvement of Birth Control Methods.

Vasectomies and tubal ligation offer effective protection against unintended pregnancy (they are still not 100% effective), but these methods are permanent and many people want or need temporary methods of birth control. Among the temporary methods of birth control such as the pill, the patch, the ring, the IUD, the condom, the diaphragm, the sponge and spermicides – none are 100% effective, even with perfect use, and some are far from 100% effective. Many are considered inconvenient and many have undesirable side effects.

People want temporary methods of birth control which are safe, effective, easy to use and without side effects. This would increase birth control use. We must continue to research methods which could be all these things. However funding and government support is needed to do so.

Increase Self-Esteem.

Comprehensive sex education and birth control knowledge may be useless if a person does not have the self-esteem to use it. People with high levels of self-esteem are more likely to set goals, plan for the future, use birth control if they choose to, have sex when they choose to, make healthy decisions and do what they feel is right for them.

Facts about Abortion

- In Canada there are no criminal laws surrounding abortion.
- The Canadian Medical Association regulates abortion.
- The Supreme Court of Canada decriminalized abortion in 1988.
- People of all racial, socioeconomic, cultural and religious backgrounds have abortions.
- People of various ages and abilities have abortions.
- Legally the person who is pregnant must make the decision to have an abortion.
- In Canada you can have an abortion up to 24 weeks of pregnancy.
- In the United States you can have an abortion past 24 weeks of pregnancy – these are extremely rare.
- In Waterloo Region you can have an abortion up to 13 weeks of pregnancy.
- The majority of abortions occur in the first trimester of pregnancy (under 12 weeks).
- In many countries in the world abortion is illegal.
- In Canada abortions are performed in hospitals and in abortion clinics.

- In Ontario, abortions are free of cost if you have OHIP. You must show your health card in order for the abortion to be covered by OHIP.
- In Ontario abortions are also covered by UHIP, DND, IFH.
- Abortions are performed at Grand River Hospital in Kitchener.
- You do not need a referral from a physician to get an abortion, you can self-refer, and your physician does not need to know.
- You do not need permission from your parents to get an abortion and your parents do not need to know.
- You must know the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP) in order to book an in-clinic abortion. If you do not know your LMP you must have an ultrasound. It is a good idea to keep track of your periods.
- Under proper medical conditions, abortion is a very safe medical procedure.
- The earlier in your pregnancy the abortion is performed, the safer it is.
- 97% of people who have a first trimester abortion have no complications or any post-abortion complaints.
- 2.5% of people who have an abortion have minor complications.
- Less than 0.5% of people who have an abortion experience serious complications requiring follow-up treatment.
- A first trimester abortion procedure takes less than 10 minutes.
- The abortion pill was approved in Canada in 2015, it is available at some clinics and hospitals. It is available at SHORE Centre.
- The abortion pill can only be used for a pregnancy under 9 weeks

- The emotional response after an abortion is different for each individual because the circumstances of each individual considering an abortion are different.
- Post Abortion Stress Syndrome (PASS) is not recognized by the American Medical Association.
- Studies have shown no association between breast cancer and abortion.
- SHORE Centre does not perform clinical abortions, however we can provide you with the information and referrals you need to book one.
- SHORE Centre can prescribe the abortion pill and birth control – appointment necessary
- SHORE Centre can insert and remove IUDs

Barriers to Accessing Abortion in Canada

- Not enough abortion providers
- Unexpected costs (childcare, elderly care, lost wages)
- Travel time & expenses (abortions may not be provided in your city or community)
- Transportation issues (abortions may not be provided in your city or community)
- Reciprocal billing issues (if you are out of Province you may have to pay out of pocket)
- Unknowledgeable and/or judgmental Health Care Providers and Professionals
- Wait times at clinics and hospitals
- Hospital regulations

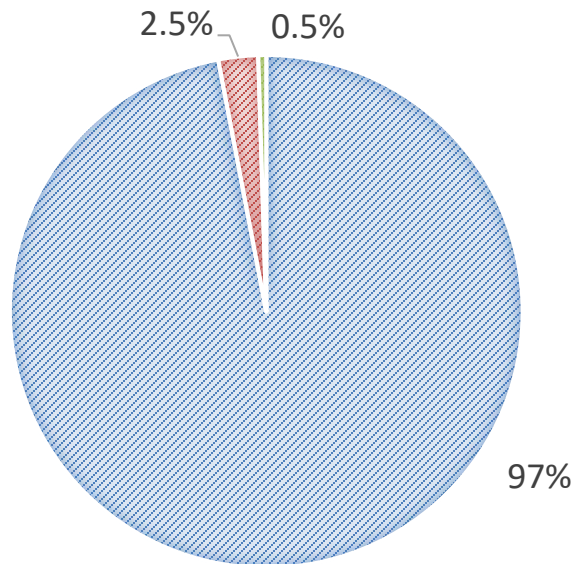
- Pre-existing medical conditions such as epilepsy or bleeding disorders (may not have a choice but to have the procedure at a hospital with emergency services)
- Lack of Family Physician or medical support
- Conscience Claus (physicians can opt out of providing service due to their belief and value system)
- Bad referrals to Pro-Life organizations (e.g. to a crisis pregnancy centre, locally they are called Dawn Centre) – this may happen by accident or on purpose
- Difficulty in reaching abortion providers by phone (voicemail)
- Language barriers
- Lack of proper Health Care insurance (e.g. OHIP) and therefore must pay for the procedure
- May be new to Canada and lack insurance, knowledge, Health Care Provider etc.
- Abusive relationships
- Private clinic fees
- Lack of sexual health education and resources
- Inaccurate information
- Lack of support
- Stigma

**Making abortions illegal does not prevent abortions.
It does however make abortions less safe.**



SAFETY OF ABORTIONS

■ No Complications ■ Minor Complications ■ Serious Complications



Source: prochoice.org

Responses to Common Misunderstandings

Pro-choice people are pro-abortion.

If someone is pro-choice it means they think the decision to have an abortion is personal and private and they do not think a person should be forced to have an abortion, place a child for adoption or bear a child. People who are pro-choice think abortions should be accessible and available to anyone who wants one and they recognize that having an abortion is often not an easy decision to make. They do not wish upon anyone to have to make this decision or have this procedure.

There should be no need for abortions when birth control is readily available.

This statement ignores the fact that all birth control – even properly used, effective birth control – occasionally fails. Furthermore, birth control methods are still not easily available to all who need them, especially the underemployed, the young and people in isolated rural areas. Comprehensive sex education about effective birth control methods is lacking in many schools, communities and homes; and ignorance, embarrassment or restrictive religious teachings lead many people to rely on ineffective methods or no methods at all.

Abortion is dangerous to your health.

Abortion is an extremely safe procedure, safer than childbirth. People who have legal abortions are just as likely to have a healthy baby in the future as other people are. Approximately 2% of people who have an abortion before 13 weeks have complications and these complications are usually minor and easily treatable. However, abortion is still difficult to obtain in many parts of Canada, and delays in accessing abortion can increase the risk to a person's health.

People who have more than one abortion are irresponsible.

It is never irresponsible for a person to end a pregnancy when they are physically, emotionally, financially or socially unable to bear or care for a child. It is unfair to label a person who has had more than one abortion irresponsible or careless. Some people for health reasons cannot use the most effective methods of birth control, some people have partners that won't allow the use of birth control and some people get pregnant because their birth control failed. And if a person is "irresponsible" or "careless" should we force them to

become a parent? It is a person's right in Canada to access medical services. Abortions are a medical service.

What about adoption.

People have the option of carrying their fetus to term and then placing for adoption. This is usually not an easy decision for people to make, or to carry out, and can cause much emotional stress. Pregnancy and birth itself can be extremely hard on a person's body and emotional state. People should not be forced to be pregnant, deliver a baby or go through the adoption process.

People have abortions for convenience or frivolous reasons.

Many people choose abortion because they take parenthood seriously. They often realize how important the spacing and the number of children can be to the well-being of their family. They take building a healthy and happy family seriously. They also may realize that abortion gives a person the opportunity to have a child later, when they may be able to better welcome and provide for it. People also have abortions because they simply do not wish to be pregnant. This is their right.

They had their fun. Let them pay for it.

This vindictive phrase, equating parenthood with punishment for sexual activity, could only be made by someone who does not value children or parenthood. As for paying for it, often when people who are not financially stable give birth, the financial cost is paid by society.

Should taxpayers have to pay for abortions?

Yes. Government supported medical care was established to reduce financial inequality and to ensure that all Canadians receive universal health care. If people had to pay for abortions, only those who could not afford them would be forced to bear unwanted children. By funding abortion services we are ensuring that all people are receiving good quality health care.

Should a person be able to get an abortion without their partner's consent?

Yes. The Supreme Court has ruled that the abortion decision is between the person who is pregnant and their health care provider. The person who is carrying the pregnancy is putting their health at risk. If the person has a healthy, supportive relationship they may involve their partner in the decision, unfortunately, all too often it is the person carrying the pregnancy who must take sole responsibility for raising a child.

**If you have questions about
abortion please contact:
SHORE Centre at 519-743-9360.**



1.888.642.2725

24-hour Canada wide toll free number that provides information on reproductive and sexual health and pregnancy option referrals.

Resources

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

sexualhealthandrights.ca

Sexual Health Options Resources and Education – SHORE Centre

shorecentre.ca

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

plannedparenthood.org

National Abortion Federation (NAF)

prochoice.org

The Pro-Choice Action Network

prochoiceactionnetwork-canada.org/index.shtml

Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada

arcc-cdac.ca

Medical Students for Choice

ms4c.org

The Morgentaler Clinic

morgentaler.ca

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals

arhp.org

**“It’s not Voldemort, you can say it,
abortion.”**

Jason Biggs, Orange is the New Black

For more information contact:

SHORE Centre

Sexual Health Options, Resources & Education

235 King Street East, Suite 130
Kitchener, ON N2G 4N5

Email: education@shorecentre.ca

Website: shorecentre.ca

Phone: 519 743 9360



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