

Lesson Seventeen: Uncovering the Facts about Adoption, Abortion and Teen Parenthood

Student Learning Objectives:

The students will be able to...

1. Identify who can legally consent to have an abortion, make an adoption plan and/or choose to parent
2. Define parenting, adoption, and abortion
3. Name at least two facts about adoption, teen parenthood and abortion

Agenda:

1. Introduce the lesson.
2. Define unplanned pregnancy, adoption, abortion and teen parenthood.
3. Do true/false activity with students.
4. Summarize activity

1. Introduce the lesson.

Today we will be talking about adoption, abortion and teen parenthood. When an individual or a couple learns that a woman is pregnant, especially if they were not expecting to be pregnant, they must make a choice. Will they choose to make an adoption plan, to have an abortion or to become parents? This is a very important decision, and people deserve to have all of the correct information that they need in order to make the best decision they can.

I also want to acknowledge that these are controversial topics – people have a lot of different beliefs about adoption, abortion and

teen parenthood. Right here in this class we may have very different beliefs and we may not agree with one another. That's okay. The purpose of today's lesson isn't for us to explore our own values and beliefs, although that is a great thing for people to do. The purpose of today's lesson is to give you a chance to learn factual information and get your questions answered about adoption, abortion and teen parenthood.

2. Briefly define and give an overview of unplanned pregnancy, adoption, abortion and teen parenthood.

Unplanned Pregnancy...

An unplanned pregnancy, also sometimes called an unintended pregnancy, is a pregnancy that happened on accident. The person who is pregnant may be very happy to be pregnant, or it may be terrible news for them. Either way, it was a surprise. About half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended.

- About half of the time a woman with an unintended pregnancy chooses to have an abortion, and about half of the time she chooses to continue the pregnancy.
- Less than 1% of all unintended pregnancies end with the woman making an adoption plan (the actual percentage is .66%).

Adoption...

Adoption is when someone becomes the legal parent of a child that is not their biological son or daughter. Adoption is a more common occurrence than many people think; over 2% of all U.S. children are adopted.

- The most common type of adoption in the U.S. is when a step-parent adopts the child of their new spouse
- Aside from step-parent adoptions, there are three main types of adoption:

- Adoption of children who have been in foster care
- Adoption of children whose birth parents decided to make an adoption plan while they were still pregnant
- Adoption of children from other countries

Abortion...

An abortion is when a woman ends her pregnancy under a doctor's care. Abortion is the most common surgical procedure performed in the U.S.¹¹ Almost 25% of all pregnancies in the U.S. end with an abortion. • There are two kinds of abortion: medical and surgical.

- Medical abortion is when a woman ends her pregnancy by taking a medication that is prescribed to her by a doctor. This type of abortion is for women who have been pregnant for 9 weeks or less.
- Surgical abortion, which is sometimes called an in-clinic abortion, is when a doctor ends a woman's pregnancy by removing the pregnancy tissue from her body with a suctioning machine.

Teen Parenthood...

Teen parenthood, is, of course, becoming a parent when you are still a teenager. Approximately 4% of all young women and 2% of all young men become parents while they are still teenagers. Many more will become pregnant but will not choose to become parents.

- Over 80% of all teen pregnancies were unplanned.
- Babies born to teenage women are more likely to be born early or be too small when they are born.
- Men and women who become parents while they are teenagers face unique challenges, and may have more difficulty finishing high

school, attending college, or earning enough money to support themselves and their family later in life.

3. Facilitate a True/False activity to dispel misinformation regarding abortion, adoption and parenting.

True/False Statements:

1) Only about 1,000 children are adopted each year in the United States. **False**

Actually, more than 80,000 children are adopted in the United States each year. There are currently 1.5 million adopted children in the United States, more than 2% of all children.

2) Most families who adopt children do so because they are infertile – that is, they cannot get pregnant. **False**

Although many families do choose adoption for this reason, over half of U.S. families with adopted children also include birth or stepchildren.

3) Most adopted children were adopted when they were babies. **False**

Approximately 14,000 infants are adopted each year because the birth mother voluntarily chooses to make an adoption plan for the baby. Most children are actually adopted from foster care, and are usually not babies when they are adopted.

4) If a woman chooses adoption for her baby, she needs to get written permission from the person she got pregnant with. **True**

The person a woman got pregnant with is the biological father of the baby, and if he can be located, he must give his permission to make an adoption plan.

5) If someone decides to plan for an adoption, they can pick the family that adopts their baby, if they want to. **True**

Almost all adoptions today work this way, they are called "open adoptions."

6) It is legal to buy someone's baby, as long as everyone involved agrees to it. **False**

Although some birth parents are sometimes reimbursed for costs associated with the pregnancy, adoptive parents do not ever "buy the baby."

7) Most abortions only take 5 or 10 minutes, even though the woman is usually in the clinic for 2 to 3 hours. **True**

The surgical abortion procedure takes about 5-10 minutes. The appointment is much longer, including time for paperwork, preparation, and time to rest afterwards.

8) If a woman has an abortion, she is more likely to have a miscarriage later in life. **False**

Women who have an abortion, or even several abortions, are no more likely to have a miscarriage than women who have never had an abortion.

9). If a woman wants to have an abortion, she needs to get written permission from the person she got pregnant with. **False**

10). Most women end up waiting until pretty late in their pregnancy to have an abortion. **False**

The overwhelming majority of abortions are performed in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy

11). There is a pill you can buy at the store that makes you have an abortion. **False**

There are two pills that people sometimes get confused with each other. One is prescribed by a doctor for a women who wants a "medical abortion." She can only get this pill from a doctor/clinic, it can no just be bought in a store. The other pill, called "emergency contraception," is a special birth control pill that can be taken after sex. EC does not cause an abortion, just helps to prevent pregnancy. Anyone who is 17 or older can buy this pill at a store/clinic at any time, they do not need a prescription from a doctor.

12). If a woman is pregnant and wants to give birth, her boyfriend or parents can legally make her have an abortion or adoption instead. **False**

No one can force a women to have an abortion or make an adoption plan. She does not need anyone's permission to become a parent.

13). Most teenage women who are pregnant do not see the doctor as often as they should. **False**

Most teenage women do receive adequate prenatal care. However, it is true that more teens receive late prenatal care or no prenatal care at all compared with women who are not teenagers.

14). Three of the best things a woman can do to have a healthy pregnancy are to not smoke, not drink alcohol, and go to the doctor or midwife regularly. **True**

Exposure to drugs and alcohol very dangerous to the developing fetus, and can cause birth defects or miscarriage. Women who visit the doctor regularly during their pregnancy are more likely to deliver healthy, full-term babies.

15). The basic responsibilities of parenthood include providing children with food, shelter, clothing, healthcare and education, and protecting their children from abuse and neglect. **True**

Parents are legally responsible for their children's physical health and well-being, and for ensuring their access to an education. Parents who do not provide a safe environment for their children may be taken to court and may even have their children removed from their care.

16). Becoming a parent is the leading cause of dropping out of school among teen girls. **True**

Only 40 percent of young teen mothers graduate from high school, compared to about 75% of women who delayed their first birth to at least age 21.

17). 8 out of 10 teen mothers do not marry the father of their first child. **True**

4. Summarize activity