

HKCSS - Good Practice Sharing on Trauma Intervention

Unwed Teen Pregnancy

Dec 6, 2007

Pregnant Girls' Services

Mother's Choice

Unwed Teen Pregnancy

- I Findings of survey
- II Services provided by Mother's Choice
- III Emotions & Reactions when facing crisis pregnancy
- IV 3 choices of facing crisis pregnancy
- V Post-abortion Counseling
- VI Post- Adoption follow up
- VII Tips for social workers / counselors

I Findings of Survey

FPAHK- Report of Youth Sexuality Study
2006

- On Sexual Knowledge, Attitude & Behavior toward SEX
- 4400 youths were polled

Sexual Attitude

Acceptance of other's behavior	F.3 – F.7	Youths aged 18-27
1) Pre-marital Sex	M - 53 % F - 44%	M - 71% F - 69%
2) Cohabitation	M - 70% F - 68%	M - 75% F - 78%

Sexual Activity

	F.1 – F.2	F.3 – F.7
Had Dating Experience	M – 46% F – 46%	M – 60% F – 63%
	F.3 – F.7	Aged 18-27
Sexual Intercourse Experience	M – 13.2% F – 8.2%	M – 47.3% F – 39.1%
First sexual Intercourse below 15	M – 6.8% F – 4.7%	M – 5.2% F – 4 %

Value

Concept

Myths

Lack of **sexuality knowledge & myths** +
Increased openness in **sexual attitude & activity**

Having Sexual Intercourse +
didn't think about the consequences

→ **Crisis pregnancy**

II Services provided by

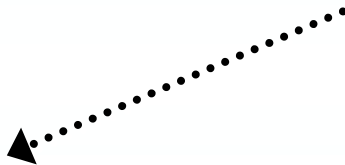
Mother's Choice

What can PGS do?

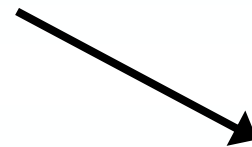
Discover Pregnancy



Hotline Service



Abortion



Continue with Pregnancy



Live at hostel



Live at home



Parenting



Adoption

**Post Abortion
Counseling**

Referral to FSC

Referral to AU

III. **Emotions** when facing

Crisis Pregnancy

“I can’t let my parents know, they’ll kill me!”

“I can’t support myself, I want to finish school!”

“My boyfriend will break up with me if I don’t have an abortion.”

“Getting pregnant was an accident, I am not ready!”

“There is no other way!”

“It isn’t really a baby. It just a “blob of tissue”.”

Emotional Reactions:

- ***Shocked, Frightened***
- ***Frustrated***
- ***Angry***
- ***helpless, lost and alone***
- ***worried***
- ***Shameful***
- ***Easily affected*** by significant others.

** Feelings and Reactions differ from person to person.*

IV 3 choices when facing

Crisis Pregnancy



Should I...

Parent?

Abort?

Relinquish for an Adoption?

NAME

A difficult **DECISION** to make...

Depends on ...

- Religious Beliefs or personal feelings of morality
- Family support system
- Partner, friends, social network
- Financial status
- Level of education / employment
- Physical / Emotional / Mental Health
- Personal goal / future plan

It makes a difference ...

- The more the client feel **IN CONTROL** of the decision (*Not feeling pressured*)
- The more **SUPPORT** the client have from others.
- The more **INFORMED** the client is about the details of the choice and possible consequences. (*Not feeling uncertainty or ambivalence*)

Therefore, we should

- RESPECT client's choice.
- DON'T make the decision for them.
- Understand the IMPACTS of 3 choices to the clients
- Understand and inform the client about the PROS & CONS of all 3 choices
- Utilize the RESOURCES

3 Choices

***Things to think about before
Parenting:***

Assessment on -

- *Maturity & reliability of the birth mother*
- *Readiness*
- *Availability*
- *Support*
- *Baby Caring Skills*

Difficulties and pressures - **PARENTING**

- Physical changes
- Psychological changes
- Financial Expenses
- Child care arrangement
- Relationship with partner & his family
- Role change
- Change of lifestyle
- Time management

Abortion

Ordinance on

Termination of Pregnancy

Section 47,

Offences Against the Person Ordinance

Methods of Abortion

Suction	under 12 weeks
Curettage	under 12 weeks
Saline	over 12 weeks
Induce Labor	over 12 weeks

**Having an abortion
under 24 weeks is
considered legal in
Hong Kong**

Legal Abortion can be performed at:

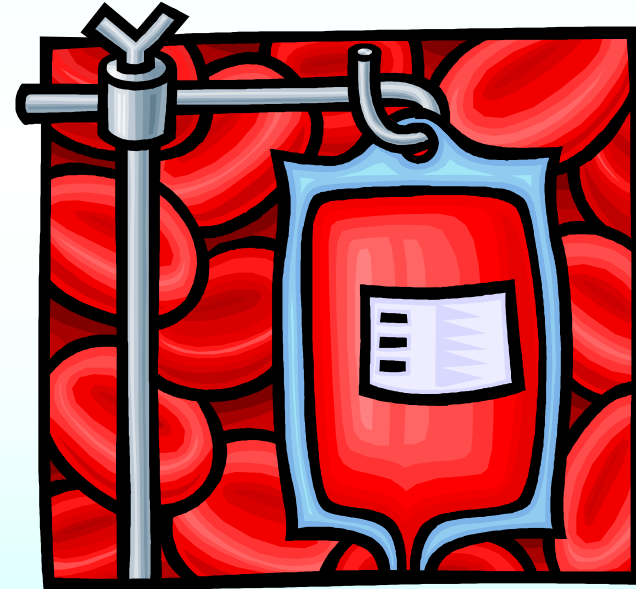
- Family Planning Association**
- Some private hospitals**
- Some public hospitals (referral letter is required)**

Difficulties and Pressures - **ABORTION**

- Physical complication
- Emotional / Psychological effects
- Relationship
- Financial cost

Cost of abortion

- Physical
- Emotional
- Relationship with boyfriend
- Financial



Adoption

- Through a legal procedure to **relinquish the parental right** of the child.
- The child will then be adopted by a **legal parents**.

Adoption means....

- *Wanting a BETTER FUTURE for your child*
- *Admitting you are not ready to be a parent but want your child to have GOOD LIFE*
- *Being able to continue with your Personal Goals*



Becoming an Adoptive Family:

- Legal parents**

Difficulties and pressures - **ADOPTION**

- Emotional / Psychological
- Relationship change
- Separation with the baby

PARENTING vs. ADOPTION vs. ABORTION

Parenting	Adoption	Abortion
Delivery of the baby		Termination of pregnancy
<p>RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances • Teaching and Raising • Persevering • Giving all of yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital expenses for delivery • No extra Financial Expense • Separate with your child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abortion FEE • Physical harm • Mental burden
Your dream and personal goals will be POSTPONED	Opportunity to achieve your PERSONAL GOALS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch your child GROW • Notice his/her EVERY CHANGE. 	Have HOPE for your CHILD'S FUTURE	

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

<http://psyweb.com/Mdisord/AnxietyDis/posttraumatic.jsp>

- Must have been exposed to a traumatic event or experience involving **intense fear, horror, or helplessness**. The event or experience must involve a **threat of death, serious injury, or physical integrity**. The event or experience may be to yourself or to others around you.

Symptoms of PTSD in 3 ways

- Re-experiencing the trauma
 - Persistent avoidance
 - Increased arousal

V Post Abortion Counseling

A post-abortive woman may experience a number of following symptoms:

- 1) Guilt
- 2) Anxiety
- 3) Avoidance behaviors
- 4) Psychological “numbing”
- 5) Re-experiencing events related to the abortion e.g. thoughts/flashback/nightmares
- 6) Preoccupation with becoming pregnant again
- 7) Anxiety over fertility and childbearing issues
- 8) Interruption or disruption of the bonding with present and/or future children
- 9) Self-abuse/ self-destructive behaviors
- 10) Anniversary reactions

Factors preventing a woman from mourning
the loss of her aborted child

The Purpose of PAC

To provide a safe place for clients:

- To share the pain and emotions of past abortion experience (s)
- To deal with the grief issues associated with the abortion.
- To experience acceptance.
- To learn new skills in coping with ongoing reminders.

The Healing Journey

- 1) Remembering the Pain
- 2) Identifying and Releasing the Anger
- 3) Grieving the Loss
- 4) Learning new ways to deal with the ongoing reminders

VI Post Adoption Follow up

A woman who had relinquished her child for adoption may experience:

- Grief - the emotional response to loss
 - feelings of sadness, hopelessness, depression, numbness, anger and even guilt.
- In some serious cases: depression, emotional disturbances, withdrawal from society, psychosomatic illnesses and low self-esteem. Many of those affected succumb to substance abuse and have difficulty in forming healthy relationships.

Factors preventing a woman from mourning
the loss of her adopted child

grief resolution process

GOAL: To reestablish emotional equilibrium.

4 aspects of dealing with normal bereavement in
Worden's Model (1991)

- 1) Accept the reality of the loss
- 2) Experience the pain of grief
- 3) Adjust to the environment from which the lost person is missing
- 4) Withdraw emotional energy and reinvest it in another relationship

BUT, the grief of relinquishing mothers is more **complicated** and **deep**, Robinson (2000) had suggested the followings as grief resolution for clients after making an adoption plan.

- 1) **Acknowledge and validate the loss**
- 2) **Experience and express the pain of grief**
- 3) **Find support and understanding**

Ways to heal...

- Preparing gifts, letter, photos for the baby
- Creating/ having rituals / memorials – e.g. writing letters/ articles/ poems
- Retrieving any and all documentation, from the relinquishment paper to the original birth certificate, if available. Also, letters and photos from the time of the pregnancy and relinquishment might be helpful.
- To have someone else / support validate your pain and loss through understanding

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VII Tips - Dos & DON'Ts

DOs

- ENCOURAGE them to talk and share.
- LISTEN patiently
- REASSURE them we all make mistakes
- REASSURE their feelings are normal
- ALLOW them to vent their anger toward others.
REMINDE them that it is a sign of deeper hurt
- ALLOW them to regret their choice –we all
LEARN from mistakes

DON'Ts

- SHUT THEM OFF by changing the subject
- CONDEMN them for making bad choice
- DENY that they lost a child
- Encourage them to BLAME OTHERS or PUSH them to forgive others
- INSIST they did the “**right thing**” or the “**best thing**” at the time
- LEAVE them without encouraging them over and over again

What we really need ...

Understanding

Compassion

Hope

~ Thank you ~

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