



Creating a Parenting Plan

A Parenting Plan isn't a specific form or method, it is a process to help you think objectively about what is needed to provide for a child.

When adoption is an option you are exploring as part of your parenting plan, you will find that some of these questions are geared toward deciding between parenting and placing. However, most of them are questions that anyone planning to become a parent should ask themselves.

Your circumstances are different but the impact of your answers and decisions on your child's life are the same. So, don't feel like you are alone in your struggle or being judged differently because your pregnancy wasn't planned.

First and foremost a parenting plan has a lot of questions. They are intended to provoke deeper thoughtfulness and exploration into what you think and feel is the best decision for you and your child. The goal is to help you organize your thoughts, ideas, and feelings that will allow you to actively make a decision.

In an attempt to not overwhelm you we have broken the questions down into 6 bite sized areas of consideration. They are in no particular order so work through the different areas at your own pace and in your own way.

The only tools you will need are:

1. Your time
2. A writing utensil
3. A notebook or notepad



AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

1. Let's talk about YOU!	<i>Questions to help you explore how parenting changes your life, for better or worse, and if parenting at this juncture of your life will be fulfilling for both you and your child.</i>
2. Options and Outcomes	<i>We don't have a crystal ball but we have the ability to reason. These questions are intended to help you examine every imaginable outcome, from multiple viewpoints and rate them on a scale of realistic to ridiculous.</i>
3. Support Systems	<i>Every parent needs one, is yours rock solid or more cooked noodles?</i>
4. Recognizing and Managing Expectations	<i>Expectations are simply the manifestation of our hopes and dreams. They can be beneficial to accomplishing our goals. However, when left objectively unchecked, they can become harmful.</i>
5. Questions, Questions, all around... but Decisions Must be Made	<i>Questions that will help you explore your personal decision making process based on past experiences. The decision is yours but you have to make a decision.</i>
6. Financial Strains	<i>Money isn't everything, but everything costs money. Questions to help you research what it would cost to support your child in their first year of life.</i>

*****Remember**, you owe it to yourself and your child to be 100% open and honest with your answers. We ALL have thoughts and feelings we would NEVER admit to or say out loud.

Give yourself permission to think those thoughts, feel those feels, and own them. Nobody is judging you except for you, so be kind and cut yourself some slack. This is a difficult task with difficult questions and even more complicated answers.



Consideration One: Let's Talk About You!: First answer the questions thinking only of your wants and needs.

1. What goals do you have for yourself?

Short (less than a year)

Mid-term (1-3 years)

Long-term (3+ years)

2. What do you need to meet these goals?

3. How old will you be at each of those stages?

4. What do you want to do for a living?

5. What are your current emotional and financial needs and/or wants?

6. When you are around kids, how do you feel about them?

7. How much time and space do you typically like to yourself?

8. Are there material items or services you wouldn't want to go without?

9. Are there social situations or events you wouldn't want to miss out on?

10. What methods do you use to destress, decompress, and deal with your anger?

*Now, examine your answers and ask yourself, "How would parenting change this?" and "How would placing change this?"

Here are some side-by-side comparison charts that can help you visualize your answers depending on your options:

Problems I would/could have if I raised my child	Problems I would/could have if I placed my child



If I raise my child, I am most looking forward to ...	If I place my child, I am most looking forward to...

The MOST convincing reasons to raise my child	The MOST convincing reasons to place my child

Consideration Two: Options and Outcomes: Think about all the different ways that raising or placing your child would look and feel like. Create your own system to rate them from realistic to ridiculous.

1. Your partner...
 - a. Will they be part of your support system?
 - b. Can you create a happy home and family together?
 - c. What would they provide for you and your child?
 - d. Can you both fulfill each other's needs and the needs of your child?
 - e. Can you do it all without them?
2. Your Support System:
 - a. Is there someone in your life whose opinion matters? What would they think about your options and decisions?
 - b. Who could you trust to help you raise your child?
 - c. Are you prepared for unsolicited advice and criticism?
 - d. If you were to decide to raise/place your child, what would you need help with?



3. Examples of Hypothetical Outcomes

- a. My partner and I will raise our child together in our own home with plenty of room and in a safe location. Our child may not always have what they want but we can easily supply all that they need.
 - b. I have a really strong support system ready and willing to help me raise my child as a single parent. I have safe affordable child care options so that I can continue to work towards the goals and life I want for myself while doing what is needed to support myself and my child financially.
 - c. I don't have a reliable partner or support system to help me raise my child. I am not ready or able to be a parent. I like the idea of my child being raised by a family that I have chosen just for them where I am able to be in my child's life without sacrificing my future or theirs.
 - d. I can't handle being pregnant or placing my child for adoption.
 - e. I have NO idea what to do and I don't want to be in this position or make a decision. I just want to pretend this isn't happening and see what happens down the road.
4. If you decided to place your child, what kind of family would you choose?
- a. Two parents, single parent, LGBTQ+ parents?
 - b. Only child or older siblings. If siblings would you want them to be biological or adopted as well?
 - c. Would the reason the parent(s) are adopting matter? Because they are infertile or don't want to give birth?
 - d. Do they live in a certain area or state?
 - e. Do they want to have an ongoing relationship, communication, visitation with you after the adoption? And does that match what you want?
 - f. They are a specific religion, make a certain amount of money, have pets, enjoy similar activities or traditions.
 - g. Do their ages matter?
 - h. Does the length of their marriage matter or if they have been divorced?
 - i. Did they go to college



- j. Will your child have grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles?

Consideration Three: Support Systems: If you have worked through consideration two, you know that we touched on some support system questions. In this part we are going to explore more detailed questions.

1. Who could you trust to be alone with your child?
2. Have you already talked to them about your pregnancy? If not, are you planning to seek their opinions and advice?
3. On a scale of 1-5 stars...
 - a. How dependable are they?
 - b. Do they have experience?
 - c. Could they handle an emergency?
 - d. What if you needed them to go above and beyond and sacrifice their time or wants, would they do it?
 - e. How will they react or let you know if you are asking too much?
 - f. Would they help you with financial support?

Consideration Four: Recognizing and Managing Expectations:

1. How realistic is it to expect your child to...
 - a. Make you feel happy and/or loved?
 - b. Prevent your partner from leaving?
 - c. Strengthen the bond between you and your partner?
 - d. Make you feel and/or look more mature?
 - e. Solve a problem you can't solve on your own?
 - f. Make you feel more in control of your life?
 - g. Make you feel stronger in an area of your life you feel weak?
2. What achievements do you want for your child?
3. How do you want them to see you and the sacrifices you made for them?
4. Do you want your child to be just like you?



5. What experiences did/didn't you have that you want your child to have?
 - a. Can you give them those experiences?
6. What opportunity did/didn't you have that you want your child to have?
 - a. Can you provide those opportunities?
7. Are there any experiences and/or situations you had that you NEVER want your child to?

Consideration 5: Questions, Questions everywhere but... Decisions Must Be Made:

1. What would happen to your child if you didn't make a decision and just let events happen as they may?
2. Think about 3 big decisions in your life...
 - a. Did you make the decisions or were they made for you?
 - b. If they were made for you how did you feel about the decision and the outcome?
 - c. If you were the one making the decision, how did you come to it?
3. Who can you go to for advice?
4. Is there someone you would trust to make this decision for you and your baby?

Consideration Six: Financial Strains: Money isn't everything but everything costs money.

1. Hop on the internet or walk around your local baby supply store.... How much would it cost to support your baby through their first year?
 - a. Formula (Nursing is beautiful, but it isn't guaranteed)
 - b. Bottles: How is your tap water or do you need to buy filtered water
 - c. Diapers and wipes: one use or if you think you will go cloth also consider the time, expense, and availability of laundering them?
 - d. Child Care: How many days per week for how long, do you need weekend child care, how flexible does your child care need to be, what if your child is sick and can't go to a normal daycare)
 - e. Transportation: gas, auto insurance, maintenance, reliable car seat. If you share a car what would the plan be in an emergency?
 - f. Shelter: along with somewhere to live do you have reliable heat, electricity, and clean water?
 - g. Creams and Bathing: What if your baby has specific hair or skin needs?



- h. Clothing: Proper attire for every season, They may be tiny humans but the laundry loads are not. What about laundry needs to wash your baby's clothes?
 - i. Toys and Furniture: Quality over quantity goes a long way. What are your basic wants and needs?
 - j. Health: Vitamins, special dietary needs, health insurance, transportation to doctor appointments, time off work to go to medical appointments, medical bills from giving birth, what if you experience postpartum depression, C Section recovery, over the counter medications, first aide, special needs like a hearing aid/helmet/foot or arm braces/glasses. ER visits, after hours care, 911 calls and first responder costs, etc.
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Do You Need More? We understand that everyone processes complex information and hard decisions differently. Any woman who comes to us seeking to explore their options is treated as a unique individual with a unique story and unique needs. We will never put you in a box or see you as a stereotype or statistic.

As you work through this decision process, If you need more of anything, we would be honored if you allowed us to try and provide that for you.

We Need You To Hear This...

You are our agenda, the reason we do what we do, and the way we go about doing it. We will **NEVER**...

- Pressure you towards one option or another.
- Ask you to commit, sign, or agree to ANYTHING. Before you are ready and understand all of your options.
- Judge you for how you feel, what you have been through, or the decision you make.
- Make you feel guilty or ashamed. **We believe in your right to your body and to make decisions about it for yourself.**
- Send you back into an unsafe situation. If you need help or are in any danger we will make sure you are protected and connected with the resources you need.



ALL of Our Pregnancy Counseling, Assistance, Referrals and Birthparent Services are

100% Free and Confidential

We Provide you with...

- ★ 24/7 Availability and Support Before and After: You will have access to your pregnancy counselor. You won't be passed around to those who are available. The contact information you are given connects you directly via phone, email, text, and video with the counselor specifically assigned to your case.
- ★ A customized parenting plan that sets you up for success no matter what you decide.
- ★ Assistance designing your hospital and delivery plan.
- ★ Pregnancy related resources, community referrals, and financial assistance.

Thank you for taking the time to allow us to introduce ourselves and what we offer.

We hope that we made a good first impression.

For Any Other Needs, Please Feel Free to Contact Us:

Madison/Milwaukee/Southern Wisconsin Office

Toll Free: 888-982-3678

Office Phone: 414-332-1800 (M-F 8:30am to 4:30pm)

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Office Phone: 920-735-6750 (M-F 8:30am to 4:30pm)

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After Hours Phone: 414-333-8725 (Call or Text)

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Facebook Messenger is Available on our Website or on our page [@adoptionsservicesinc](#)

There is an Electronic "Contact Us" Form You can Complete and Submit on our Website

www.AdoptionServicesInc.com