

HOW CAN I AFFORD TO PARENT?

It can be expensive to raise a child. In determining your financial readiness to be a parent, consider the following:

- Are you going to have enough income to cover the costs of living and raising a child?
- Do you have a job? Do you have the energy to handle a child and a job at the same time?
- Does your job offer a maternity leave "top up" or will you need to budget being on EI throughout your maternity leave?
- How flexible are your working hours?
- Is your partner going to be financially supportive?

There are government agencies and programs that can provide some financial support. It is important to get more information as not everyone is eligible for support, and there can be a lengthy application process.

//**Social assistance (Ontario)**
613-560-6000

//**LEAP** (for parents ages 16 - 21 to help them graduate from high school)
613-560-6000

//**Family Responsibility Office** (for questions about child support payments)
1-800-267-7263

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

You can talk to trusted friends and family for support if you feel comfortable, and you can always contact Planned Parenthood Ottawa for free, non-judgmental, pregnancy options counselling and/or post-abortion support. **You can reach our Options Line at 613-226-3234 ext:101.**

//**Association of Ontario Midwives** (to find a midwife in your area)
1-866-418-3773 and/or www.aom.on.ca

//**Better Beginnings Better Futures Program**
613-523-2223

//**Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa Carleton Birth Companion and Parent Companion Program**
613-728-1839 and/or
www.mothercraft.com/

//**Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres** (to find a health care centre in your area)
www.coalitionottawa.ca

//**Parent Resource Centre:**
613-565-2467 and/or
www.parentresource.on.ca

//**Ottawa Public Health Info Line**
613-724-4179

FOR MORE INFORMATION

//**Planned Parenthood Ottawa**
(613) 226-3234
www.ppottawa.ca
ppottawa@ppottawa.ca

PARENTING



Deciding whether or not to become a parent is not always easy. But knowing the facts and what to expect may help you decide what's right for you.

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AM I READY TO BE A PARENT?

Becoming a parent involves major lifestyle changes. Like any decision around your pregnancy, the decision to parent will also affect you for the rest of your life. In deciding whether or not you are ready to be a parent at this time in your life, you can ask yourself:

- What do I want out of life?
- How will having a child change my plans and goals?
- Am I willing to cut back on my personal life and social freedom?
- Do I like children, and will I enjoy doing the activities children do?
- Do I expect my child to make my life happy? Is this a fair expectation?
- Do I have the patience to deal with noise, confusion, and 24-hour-a-day responsibility?
- How will I relieve the stress I will feel at times?
- Will my partner be supportive and involved in this pregnancy and in parenting? Is this important or necessary for me to make this decision?
- Who else am I counting on for support? How much support can they give me?



WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

If you think that parenting is the right choice for you right now, some next steps for you might be:

- Talk to your partner if you want them to be involved in this decision.
- Decide whom to tell about your pregnancy and your decision, and when it is best for you to tell them. This may help you know what supports you have and how to access them.
- Get in touch with your doctor or contact a midwife to begin prenatal preparation and to ensure that your pregnancy is healthy.
- Begin the process of applying for financial aid if necessary.
- Connect with local resources, classes, and with friends who can help you with preparing for labor and birth, and help you with getting ready to parent.

WHO WE ARE

Planned Parenthood Ottawa is a pro-choice organization supporting informed sexual and reproductive health choice through education, counselling, information and referral services.

OPTIONS SUPPORT COUNSELLING

Planned Parenthood Ottawa offers Pregnancy Options Counselling that can provide you with information and support from trained volunteers. You can book an appointment by calling **613-226-3234 ext:101**. At the appointment, the support counsellor will discuss any questions and concerns you may have. This counselling service is free, confidential, non-judgmental and pro-choice. We are there for you, to support whatever choice is right for you at this time in your life.

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PARENTS

Choosing to parent while you are young can have its own challenges. Some resources and supports exist specifically for young parents (some for both mothers and fathers).

//Bethany Hope Centre (ages 14-25)
613-725-1733

//St. Mary's Home & Young Parent Outreach Centre (ages 13-24)
613-749-2491

//Youville Centre (education and childcare services ages 14-25)
613-231-5150