Adoption IS an Option

LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES ROCKY MOUNTAINS
RENEE TEAGUE
Recommendations of CDC and the U.S. Office of Population Affairs

- Providing Quality Family Planning Services

  Counseling following a positive pregnancy test must include:
  - Prenatal care and delivery
  - Infant care, foster care, or adoption
  - Pregnancy termination
Decline in Unplanned Pregnancies

- Great news!! Teen Pregnancies are down
- Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive  LARC
- Education and resources
What Keeps Us From Bringing It Up?

- Lack of knowledge about adoption
- Afraid of offending the patient
- Make it part of your paperwork or interview process
Personal Experience

- My personal adoption experience is...

- How does this personal experience affect the way I think about adoption?

- How might my experiences affect my ability to bring up the adoption option with my patients/clients?
Professional Responsibilities

- Knowing the choices available
- Having basic implications of each choice
- Providing information on each choice
- Making referrals so clients can get the information needed to make an informed decision
- Give unbiased information
- Empower the expectant parent to her best decision.
Barriers

- The father of the baby wouldn’t agree
- My parents wouldn’t agree
- I haven’t decided yet
- I would never know where she is
- I don’t want to see a therapist or I can’t afford it.
Options counseling and placing for adoption has no age limit

Fathers have the same rights as the expectant mother

Safe Haven law

Relinquishment counseling is required

Expedited vs. Traditional relinquishment

Agency state
What About Dad?

- Fathers have the same rights as mothers, but can’t be a part-time dad
- All potential fathers need to be notified
- Options include:
  - Relinquishment counseling
  - Consent to the adoption
  - Parenting
  - Doing nothing at all
Open Adoption

- 85% of Birth Moms want an ongoing relationship with their child
- Openness is on a continuum
- Does not mean co-parenting
- Extended family can have a relationship
- Expectant parents can select a family
Role of the Pregnancy Counselor

- Meet expectant mother’s basic needs- Expectant Parent Fund
- Lower the anxiety-You have time
- Evaluate pros and cons of each option
- Work with the father
- Support expectant mother through the birth
- File the legal paperwork for relinquishment
- Be in her corner – Change of Heart
- Help her to turn her fear and anxiety into the hope
Influences

- Birth Mother
- Birth Father
- Family
- Church
- Nurse/Counselor
- Parents
- Job
Age, especially Adolescence

- Emotional maturity and brain development of teens
- Lack of a world view
- The effect of “influences” at different ages
Culture

- Cultural Humility and Cultural Competency

  - Be aware of your own cultural stance
  - Ask when you don’t understand
  - No assumptions
Referrals

- Vetting agencies Licensed through the State of Colorado
- Questions to ask
  - What happens if mom changes her mind at the hospital?
  - How do you handle inquiries about abortion?
  - Are you open to same sex couples, no religion affiliation etc.? ?
- Meet with pregnancy workers
LFS Pregnancy Services

- Trainings are available at your clinic statewide
- Call about questions
- Referral for support groups and other birth moms
- Set an appointment to meet at next appointment

CALL at 303-217-5840 or
24/7 at 720-838-5689
Questions?