

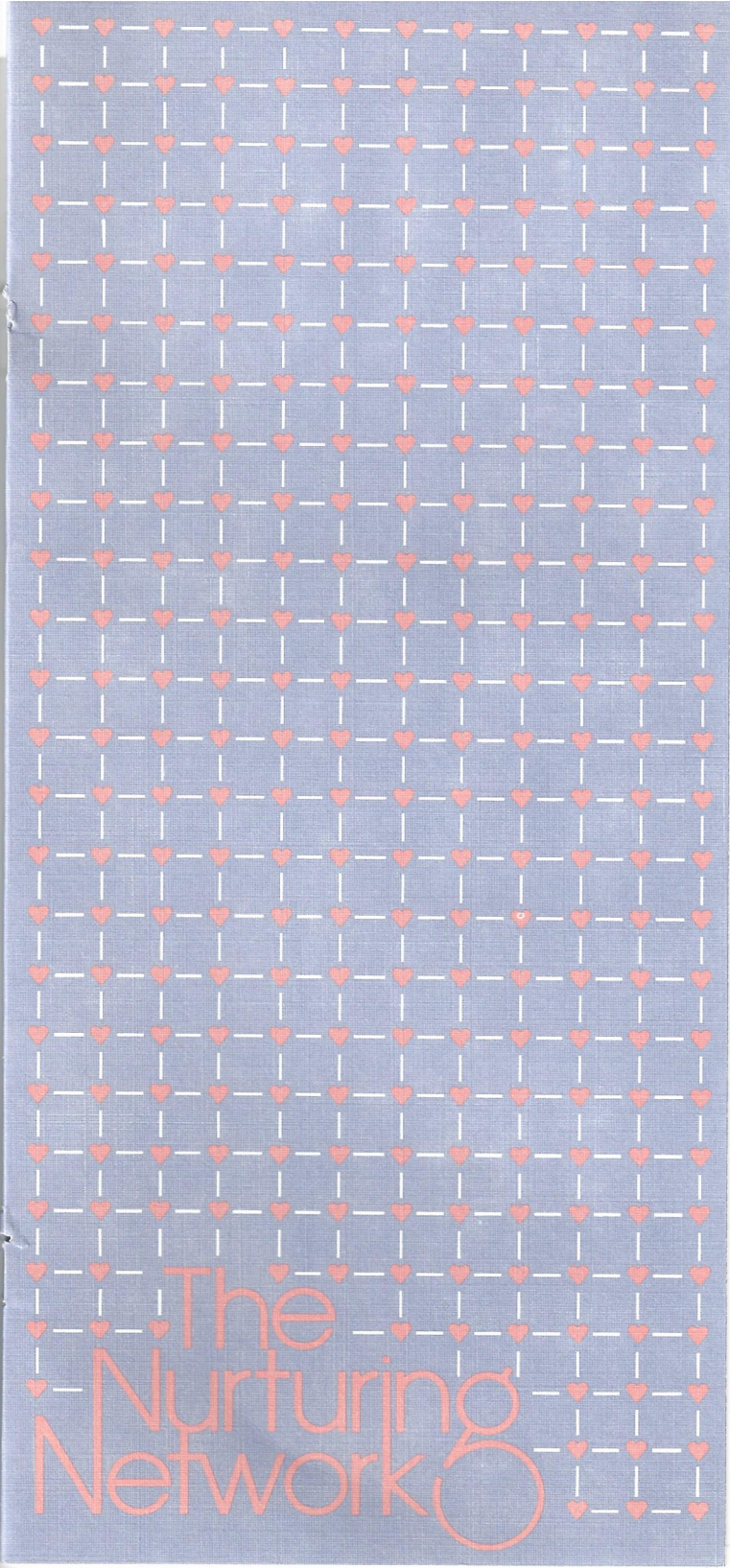


## nurture

**ˈnər-cher** ♥ v. **1.** to provide the vital elements needed to nourish life; **2.** to create an environment of care, protection and love that fosters growth.

## network

**ˈnet-wɜrk** ♥ n. **1.** a family of caring individuals; bonded together by common values, goals and beliefs; **2.** a team unified in their efforts to help a woman give her child a future – without giving up her own.



The  
Nurturing  
Network





## Who We Are

The Nurturing Network is a nationwide non-profit, equal opportunity organization whose primary concern is the woman experiencing an unplanned – and probably unwanted – pregnancy.

An unplanned pregnancy does not have to mean an unwanted baby. And yet abortion is often the only choice suggested to many women, especially those in the midst of a challenging education or successful career. Furthermore, while abortion services are readily available, resources in support of the birth option are comparatively scarce. Too often, there is little support for the woman wanting to give her child life.

That is why The Nurturing Network was created – to give a mother a *real* alternative, one which recognizes her unique values, needs and circumstances. Our Network is made up of dedicated, caring professionals who can offer the special support a woman needs to give her child life – *and to make the most of hers as well.*

## Why We Exist

Many remember when the option of carrying a pregnancy to term was a woman's only legal option. Today the existence of legalized abortion has supposedly given a woman greater freedom of choice. And yet, with the current lack of resources and support for the birth alternative, do most women with unplanned

pregnancies truly experience a choice? Or has the pendulum swung to the other extreme?

We believe it has. How many of an approximate 1.5 million reported abortions annually were really the result of an exercise of free choice? Studies indicate that most of these abortions were actually the desperate result of a futile search for life support. The Nurturing Network feels compelled to ask, "What choice exists when only one option is made readily available?"

This is why we exist – to let a woman know that an alternative to abortion can be hers if she chooses. We want the mother-to-be to experience the comfort and freedom of knowing that an abortion is *not* her only option when faced with the crisis of an unplanned pregnancy.

## Whom We Serve

The Nurturing Network is dedicated to helping any woman with an unplanned pregnancy continue the life of her unborn child.

While our concern is with *all* women facing an unplanned pregnancy, we are particularly dedicated to providing support for the woman most often overlooked. Sadly, there is an unspoken assumption that the college-educated or working woman knows how to avoid an unplanned pregnancy, that she is rarely, if ever, faced with one and if so, can take care of herself. The statistics, however, reveal just the opposite. The majority of women who have abortions have earned at least a high school diploma, are between the ages of 20 and 26 and are unmarried.

In the midst of her education or career and with a promising future ahead, this is the woman who most often feels she has "too much to lose" by continuing an unplanned pregnancy. The idea of interrupting future plans for nine months – let alone a lifetime – is for many, too much to handle. Yet ironically, these are the women for whom the least support has been available. This is the woman for whom the services of The Nurturing Network were especially designed, the woman who perhaps most typically requests our support in order to continue her pregnancy.

## What We Offer

Women faced with an unplanned pregnancy have needs that are immediate and vital. They require resources and support of the most practical kind. The Nurturing Network's goal is to assist in every facet of a pregnant woman's needs, from initial pregnancy testing to delivery of her baby and provision of information on parenting and adoption. Our Network offers the following:



## Guidance

When a woman learns of her unplanned pregnancy, she faces many difficult questions. She needs the sound advice on which she can rely and solid support from those who understand her situation and the assurance that what she says will go no further.

The members of The Nurturing Network staff understand these needs. Our staff has information about available resources and the experience to offer guidance with compassion. We do not seek to make decisions for any woman, but rather to encourage each Client to examine closely the resources available and to choose wisely.

## Counseling

An unplanned pregnancy can shatter the confidence and self-esteem of the strongest woman. Often left alone to face her crisis, she needs reliable information about the option she has chosen and unconditional support in carrying it out.

The licensed counselors, nurses and social workers of The Nurturing Network have the objectivity to offer her professional assistance.

The role of a family can be of vital importance to any woman faced with an unplanned pregnancy; our staff is prepared to work with each woman and her family to encourage understanding and strengthen relationships. As with all assistance offered by our Network, the underlying concern in Client services is each woman's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being during her pregnancy and thereafter.

## Nurturing Homes

Even the closest of families can experience difficulty accepting an unplanned pregnancy. When this happens, a woman may not find the supportive environment she needs at home.

Whether a woman remains in her community or temporarily relocates, we offer the opportunity to live with a nurturing family who is available to open their home and warmly welcome a mother-to-be.



Each family has been carefully selected and is committed to providing the support and love needed at this sensitive time. Each has offered to help the Client gain complete access to the full services of The Nurturing Network.

## Medical Assistance

Pregnancy introduces an entirely new set of physical and medical needs. The importance of having the continuing care of competent doctors and nurses cannot be over-emphasized.

Our Client services staff will help each woman find qualified medical advice on which she can rely to protect her health and that of her baby. Among the members of our Network are dedicated doctors, nurses, and

birthing coaches. These professionals have been selected because of their abilities and commitment to protect and nurture life. Each is prepared to assist our Clients in planning a balanced program of nutrition, exercise and good health.

## Financial Assistance

We believe that the financial cost of supporting a mother-to-be during a pregnancy is small when compared to the emotional price of a woman not having this opportunity.

With this in mind, the Network offers its Clients a coordinated approach to affording the many expenses associated with a pregnancy. Through privately donated funds, public assistance, employment opportunities and loan programs, The Nurturing Network will make every effort to ensure that money will not be a major concern.

## Educational Programs

There is usually no need for a healthy pregnancy to limit a woman's educational opportunities. If a woman wishes to protect the confidentiality of her pregnancy and is uncomfortable in her present academic environment, we can arrange for a temporary transfer to a college of comparable academic standing through our network of participating colleges and universities. By

doing so, a woman can continue her pregnancy while protecting the quality and continuity of her education.

## Employment

Clients in need of temporary or permanent employment are offered job opportunities with member employers. A healthy pregnancy need not require the termination of employment, though sometimes a change in certain responsibilities may become necessary. Because of confidentiality, peer pressure or prejudice, a woman may need assistance with employment during her pregnancy. Employers across the country who understand a working woman's needs at this particular time have offered to consider our Clients' resumes with the highest priority.

If a woman chooses to relocate, our Network will assist in providing a home with a nurturing family, medical care and other available supportive services she may need in that area.

## Adoption Counseling

Our staff approaches the adoption question with the basic philosophy that no one, no matter how much they care, can make this decision for a mother. We believe that a woman's ability to make a thoughtful choice about her child's upbringing will make the difference between later regret and future growth.

The Nurturing Network offers objective information and encourages professional counseling for each woman considering the adoption alternative. Each staff member believes in a mother's need to be informed and her sole right to decide in an environment free of vested interests.

If a woman chooses adoption for her child, our Client services staff will explain in detail the approaches available to her. As with each of our services, the mother's needs will continue to be our highest priority.

## Preparation for Parenthood

The Nurturing Network encourages each woman preparing to raise her child to start planning for parenthood during her pregnancy. We can introduce our Clients to classes and workshops in parenting and child care that provide practical information on the responsibilities in raising a child. Issues concerning housing, employment and day care can be examined realistically to better prepare a woman for her role as a mother.

## How You Can Help:

The members of The Nurturing Network believe that as extensive as our Network is, more must be done.

We invite you to join us by becoming a member of the Network. You can participate by:

- ♥ Offering your professional time and experience;
- ♥ Contributing financial support to our organization;
- ♥ Opening your home to a mother in need;
- ♥ Providing employment for a qualified woman;
- ♥ Encouraging your college or university to join our consortium;
- ♥ Helping to develop resources in your own community;
- ♥ Providing an introduction to a foundation whose mission affirms ours;
- ♥ Facilitating a college scholarship;
- ♥ Approaching a hospital board on our behalf about donating services for a Client;
- ♥ Spreading the word to others who might need help or wish to offer help.





**A**s you consider our Network's challenge, we ask only this: that you put aside the polarizing rhetoric of pro-life and pro-choice positions and discover the vast common ground that can nurture the seeds of mutual understanding.

Those who support "choice" can hardly dispute the value of creating another choice; those who support "life" can hardly reject an alternative made real.

We believe it is time to shift our efforts from theoretical debate to humane action. Will you join us?

