
Give your baby a chance.

Kelli's Story

My name is Kelli and I found out I was pregnant when I was a freshman in high school. I was so scared that I hid my pregnancy from my family and friends. I worried that people would reject me or be angry with me if they found out I was pregnant. I was wrong.

I delivered my baby by myself. Because I was still too frightened to talk to anyone and ask for help, I made a terrible mistake that I can never take back. I left my newborn on a neighbor's porch. My baby died there, and my life will never be the same. I don't want the same thing to happen to you and your baby.

Please, if you are pregnant, talk to a parent, a teacher, a parent of your friend or other adult that you trust. I know that talking about your pregnancy is difficult, but there are people who can help you.

If you are unable to keep your child, please give him or her a chance to grow up. The law in Illinois allows you to leave your unharmed newborn baby, up to 30 days old, at a staffed police or fire station, hospital or emergency care facility. Your baby will be given a health exam and medical care, and then adopted by a loving family.

For confidential information or help, please call 1-888-510-2229

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1-888-510-2229 (Toll-free)

or visit the Save Abandoned Babies Foundation at:

www.SaveAbandonedBabies.org

For information about adoption, contact:

**Illinois Adoption Registry
Toll-Free • 1-877-323-5299**

<http://dph.illinois.gov/adoption/brochure.pdf>

How you can help

- Do an awareness project for your school community service requirement.
- Encourage your organization, school, or club to write a story about the law.
- Health classes are now required to teach this law. See if your school is in compliance.
- Check that your police, fire and hospitals display the required Safe Haven sign.
- Have an idea to help? Want to volunteer? Contact info@SaveAbandonedBabies.org.
- After you read this brochure, pass it on.

**Tell a friend. Talk about it.
You might save a life.**



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No Shame. No Blame. No Names.



Illinois has a safe place for your newborn.

*No one knew you were pregnant.
No one knows about your baby.
You can't take care of your baby.
What are you going to do?*

An unwanted pregnancy can be a traumatic experience. You may have overwhelming feelings of isolation, fear, or shame that could lead to irrational thoughts or acts, such as unsafely abandoning your baby.

Each year in Illinois, there are disturbing reports of newborn babies found in dumpsters and other unsafe places. Under the Illinois Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act, unharmed infants **30 days old or younger** can be handed to staff at a safe haven. No questions asked. You don't have to give your name. The police will not be called. Your baby will get medical care and be adopted.

A link to the entire act can be found at www.DCFS.illinois.gov. Click on *Safe Kids* and then on *Baby Safe Haven Law Information*.

Where are safe havens?

In Illinois, safe havens for newborns are:



- Staffed fire stations
- Staffed police stations
- Hospitals
- Emergency care facilities

Look for this sign to identify safe havens in your community.

What does the law do?

The law is intended to provide an alternative to the parents of newborn infants to relinquish their unharmed infants to staff in safe havens while remaining anonymous and avoiding civil or criminal liability. It is recognized that establishing a traditional adoption plan through a private or public adoption agency or choosing to parent the child is a preferable parenting plan to abandonment or relinquishment of an infant. However, the purpose of this law is to reduce the risk of harm to a newborn by a parent who may be under undue stress.

What happens at a safe haven?

Newborns can be handed to personnel at a hospital, emergency care facility, staffed police station or staffed fire station. Staff members at emergency care facilities, fire stations and police stations will make arrangements for transportation of the infant to the nearest hospital.

Hospital personnel will conduct a physical examination of the newborn infant and provide any needed medical care. The hospital is deemed to have temporary protective custody of the newborn until the infant is discharged to an adoption agency.

If you wish, you can fill out forms to provide medical information about your newborn that will help healthcare workers taking care of your baby.

The forms may be filled out at the safe haven location, or you can take the forms with you and return them by mail. You can also download the forms from www.saveabandonedbabies.org or www.DCFS.illinois.gov. Click on *Safe Kids* and then on *Baby Safe Haven Law Information*. All of the information that you provide remains confidential. You do not need to give your name.

Parental rights

There is a presumption that by relinquishing a newborn infant at a safe haven, the infant's parent consents to the termination of his or her parental rights with respect to the infant.

Consider adoption

Every child deserves a safe, loving, permanent home. You can help provide this by making an adoption plan, even before giving birth. Several public and private agencies in Illinois provide services to those who choose to allow their child to be adopted. Agency staff carefully interview and check the backgrounds of prospective adoptive parents to make sure that they:

- Have no criminal or child abuse history
- Have room in their home for a child
- Can support the child financially
- Can provide a loving, safe home

For information about adoption, please call the Illinois Adoption Registry: 1-877-323-5299 (toll-free in Illinois) or <http://dph.illinois.gov/adoption/brochure.pdf>