

38.6.19

Single Expectant Parents

Church members who are single and pregnant are encouraged to meet with their bishop. In the United States and Canada, Family Services is available for:

- Consultation with Church leaders.
- Counseling with single expectant parents and their families.

No bishop's referral is needed for this service. There is no charge. See 31.2.6 for Family Services contact information.

In other areas, leaders may contact Family Services staff or the welfare and self-reliance manager in the area office for consultation.

Guidance for counseling single expectant parents is also provided at “Unwed Pregnancy” (Gospel Topics, [topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://topics.churchofjesuschrist.org)).

38.6.20

Suicide

Mortal life is a precious gift from God—a gift that should be valued and protected. The Church strongly supports the prevention of suicide. For information about how to help someone who is suicidal or someone who has been affected by suicide, see [suicide.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://suicide.churchofjesuschrist.org).

Most people who have thought about suicide want to find relief from physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual pain. Such individuals need love, help, and support from family, Church leaders, and qualified professionals.

The bishop provides ecclesiastical support if a member is considering suicide or has attempted it. He also immediately helps the member obtain professional help. He encourages those close to the person to seek professional help as needed.

Despite the best efforts of loved ones, leaders, and professionals, suicide is not always preventable. It leaves behind deep heartbreak, emotional upheaval, and unanswered questions for loved ones and others. Leaders should counsel and console the family. They provide nurturing and support. The family may also need professional support and counseling.

It is not right for a person to take his or her own life. However, only God is able to judge the person's thoughts, actions, and level of accountability (see 1 Samuel 16:7; Doctrine and Covenants 137:9).

The family, in consultation with the bishop, determines the place and nature of a funeral service for the person. The family may choose to use Church facilities. If the person was endowed in life, he or she may be buried or cremated in temple clothing.

Those who have lost a loved one to suicide can find hope and healing in Jesus Christ and His Atonement.

For information about suicide prevention and ministering, see suicide.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

38.6.21

Surgical Sterilization (Including Vasectomy)

See 38.6.4.

38.6.22

Surrogate Motherhood

The pattern of a husband and wife providing bodies for God’s spirit children is divinely appointed (see 2.1.3). For this reason, the Church discourages surrogate motherhood. However, this is a personal matter that is ultimately left to the judgment and prayerful consideration of the husband and wife.

Children who are born to a surrogate mother are not born in the covenant. Following their birth, they may be sealed to parents only with the approval of the First Presidency (see 38.4.2.7).

38.6.23

Transgender Individuals

Transgender individuals face complex challenges. Members and nonmembers who identify as transgender—and their family and friends—should be treated with sensitivity, kindness, compassion, and an abundance of Christlike love. All are welcome to attend sacrament meeting, other Sunday meetings, and social events of the Church (see 38.1.1).

Gender is an essential characteristic of Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness. The intended meaning of *gender* in the family proclamation is *biological sex at birth*. Some people experience feelings of incongruence between their biological sex and their gender identity. As a result, they may identify as transgender. The Church does not take a position on the causes of people identifying themselves as transgender.

Most Church participation and some priesthood ordinances are gender neutral. Transgender persons may be baptized and confirmed as outlined in 38.2.3.14. They may also partake of the sacrament and receive priesthood blessings. However, priesthood ordination and temple ordinances are received according to biological sex at birth.

Church leaders counsel against elective medical or surgical intervention for the purpose of attempting to transition to the opposite gender of a person’s biological sex at birth (“sex reassignment”). Leaders advise that taking these actions will be cause for Church membership restrictions.

Leaders also counsel against social transitioning. A social transition includes changing dress or grooming, or changing a name or pronouns, to present oneself as other than his or her biological sex at birth. Leaders advise that those who socially transition will experience some Church membership restrictions for the