



A Better Choice Women's Center

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Introduction

Over the past 40 years a movement of women and men has created and sustained a vital service... for women [and families] facing unexpected pregnancies [These services have] blossomed into dynamic national and international networks of love in action.

The scope of these centers varies but their mission is single-hearted: to communicate to women and their families that their lives are valuable and that their needs - emotional, psychological, medical, spiritual and practical - can and will be met. With honesty and compassion, the global pregnancy resource movement now offers powerful community-based programs.

Service Summary

The array of [these community-based programs] and services provided by the nation's pregnancy resource/care movement is dynamic and diverse [and include, but not limited to:]

- Pregnancy Testing and limited ultrasound to diagnose a viable intrauterine pregnancy
- Education on the risks both emotional and physical of abortion and abortion procedures
- Education on sexually transmitted diseases and infections and avoidance of risky behaviors
- Educational incentive programs offering a full range of pregnancy related topics, parenting education and life skills learning
- Post Abortion Recovery Support Groups
- Material supplies such as diapers and formula, infant and toddler clothing, maternity clothing, and baby equipment and accessories

Center services are delivered at little or no cost to clients in an environment characterized by understanding and trust. The centers are nonjudgmental in approach, and, as thousands of client exit surveys confirm, the trust that women place in those who assist them is high and an indication of broad community acceptance.

Moreover, as the centers work increasingly with other community resources, they become vital members of the local service, volunteer, business and, oftentimes, medical community. All of this has been done while retaining the essential nature of the centers as predominantly privately funded community-oriented, faith-based, and volunteer-driven enterprises. ..

Conclusion

The hallmarks of pregnancy center operation are that funds are raised locally and spent locally, deployed to meet immediate needs, and devoted to basic services. Less than 10 percent of the income of the pregnancy centers derives from governmental sources, and more than 80 percent of the centers... receive no public funding at all. Pregnancy resource centers are models of faith-based and community-oriented service.

What centers seek and accomplish is the transforming and saving of human lives...

Every day in the United States pregnancy resource centers assist an average of 5,500 Americans, female and male, young and old, with sexuality-and-pregnancy-related concerns. The reach of America's pregnancy centers and the scope of their success continue to attract new attention. In January 2008, on the eve of the 35th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, Nancy Gibbs of *Time* magazine cited the "evidence that the quiet campaign for women's hearts and minds, conducted in thousands of crisis pregnancy centers around the country, on billboards, phone banks and websites, is having an effect" in reducing abortion rates, which are down by one third from their U.S. high.

Assisting women, counseling couples, providing goods and services, offering free and confidential pregnancy care... [pregnancy resource centers] are playing an indispensable role in the health of our families and communities.

(Above information adapted from *A Passion to Serve* and used by permission of Care Net National)

Therefore, in the best interest of promoting and protecting the health of adolescents in unexpected pregnancies, I am in favor of parental involvement laws that would make the consent for abortion from one or both parents/guardian mandatory.

Respectfully submitted,

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