

CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

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Options United for Life Launches Northern California Pregnancy Center Collaborative Network

by Vicki Evans

The words *Planned Parenthood* conjure up the image of a vast umbrella operation that unifies a group of abortion providers. The words *prolife movement* don't necessarily summon such a unified vision. There has been little collaboration among pregnancy centers and no strategic marketing plan. Until now that is, with the October 1 launch of the *Options United for Life Northern California Pregnancy Resource Collaborative Network*. The plan is to build capacity, collaboration and community via digital marketing, while respecting the autonomy of each individual pregnancy center or clinic.

Using a model that has worked well in Southern California over the past several years, Thomas Rudkins, Executive Director of Options United, just expanded this program to the San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California, from Fresno to Santa Rosa. By running digital ads that will reach 23.3 million people daily, Options United can bring to the pro-life movement the same technology and marketing strategies as those used by major retailers, offering services that are otherwise unavailable or unaffordable to smaller organizations. The web-based ads directed toward callers, usually abortion-vulnerable women, to Options United's call center where trained staff assist them and refer them to the nearest available clinic or pregnancy center equipped to serve their needs. The percentage of women who actually call the helpline, keep their appointment at the recommended pregnancy center/clinic, and then choose life is remarkable.

The help line number for Option United 1-877-398-7734, launched in Northern California on October 2.

Visit www.optionsforpregnancy.com for additional information or to join forces.

Abortion Rate Drops 25% More Babies Saved From Abortions

Pro-life advocates have made a lot of progress changing hearts and minds for life. Between 2008 and 2014, the abortion rate dropped a full 25%, according to a new report in the American Journal of Public Health. Looking at data from the federal government and the Guttmacher Institute, the researchers found that abortions dropped from 19.4 abortions per 1,000 women of reproductive age (15 to 44) in 2008 to 14.6 per 1,000 in 2014.

The biggest decline was in the 15 to 19 age group, at 46 percent. The abortion rate also dropped for the first time in 20 years for the poorest women in America – the demographic with the highest abortion rate, according to the group. The teen birth rate has been declining, hitting an all-time low in 2014, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data.

The pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute admitted earlier this year that state pro-life laws and other efforts are making a difference. “(T)he wave of abortion restrictions passed at the state level over the last five years could also have contributed to the decline by making it more difficult for women to access needed services in highly restrictive states,” Guttmacher researchers said when they released a report on abortion numbers in January. The report found that abortion numbers dropped below 1 million in the United States for the first time in four decades.

The pro-abortion research group, considered to have the most comprehensive abortion numbers for the U.S., reported an estimated 926,200 abortions in 2014 and 958,700 in 2013. The abortion rate (the number of abortions per 1,000 women of childbearing age) also dropped to 14.6 per 1,000 in 2014, down 14 percent from 2011, according to the report.

Pro-lifers have been working hard to make abortion unthinkable by providing hope, assistance and information to mothers and their babies, from the educational efforts of California Right to Life Educational Fund, to the hands-on efforts of organizations like Birthright, the Pregnancy Centers and Gabriel Project.

Some of the state laws passed in recent years have helped to ensure that women are fully informed about their unborn baby's development as well as their options, including material assistance for parents, before having an abortion. Other states cracked down on abortion facilities that were operating in unsafe conditions and putting women's lives in jeopardy.

Grassroots efforts also have been instrumental in helping to save lives. These included more sidewalk counseling and outreach to women and babies through organizations like 40 Days for Life, and pregnancy centers' growing outreach to women and babies in need.

Data from the National Center for Health Statistics released in 2016 indicated similar abortion trends. The data found that both teen birth and teen abortion rates are declining to historic lows across the U.S.

Once again the research statistics are showing we are making a difference! Kudos to all who serve in the efforts to make abortion unthinkable, through education and assistance to mothers and their babies.

Rebuttals to Arguments in Favor of Abortion

By Cecelia Cody

Visitors to our Information Tables for Life, sometimes express various "reasons why abortion

should be legal." Perhaps you too have been presented with one or more of the following arguments in favor of abortion. Here are some ideas for a response. If you have experienced an "interesting perspective" by a member of our opposition, or have a rebuttal response you would like to share, let us know.

The fetus is not a human being/person

Remember S.L.E.D. - At the moment of fertilization, a unique being, a member of the genus Homo-Sapiens commonly referred to as human with a unique genetic code/DNA has been created. The fetus/baby will never be anything but a human, the only changes are SLED: **S**ize, **L**evel of **D**evelopment, **E**nvironment (in-utero or ex-utero), and **D**egree of **D**ependency.

Viability – This premise asserts that it is permissible to kill a fetus until the baby becomes viable and can survive independently from its mother. However this would justify infanticide, as a newborn can't survive on its own without continual care. One of the most plausible ways of understanding viability, conjoined twins and ICU patients are not viable, depending, as they do, on others' bodies and on machines for their survival. Fortunately for postpartum dependents, most of those who defend abortion by appeal to viability don't really believe that viability is morally significant

The child might be handicapped - Abortion is used to eliminate a handicapped child (over 90% of babies with Down Syndrome are aborted before birth.) Yet we cringe when we hear Dr. Peter Singer of Princeton University in his book Should the Baby Live? suggests that "a period of 28 days after birth might be allowed before an infant is accepted as having the same right to live as others." Sorry, Dr. Singer: in-utero or ex-utero, it's a baby!

The child will be born into poverty – Related to physical handicaps is the issue of social handicaps including being born into poverty, broken homes, troubled neighborhoods, stigma, or some other adversity. Even concerns about adoption, foster care, overpopulation, and exhausting the environment are thrown into the mix. Couldn't a case be made that being born into one of these situations are also sufficient reasons for infanticide in similar situations? Yet I doubt anyone will argue

that it would be just if poor or unwed mothers in deprived neighborhoods authorized maternity ward staffers to kill their newborns to save them from hardship, to control the population size, and to ease the strain on the environment. Nor would we condone killing a toddler just because the mother is unable to care for the child. So why permit killing of those we can't see, if we prohibit killing of those we can see?

Back Alley Abortions – I'm sure we have all heard of the horrible statistic of the thousands of women who died in back alley abortions before *Roe v Wade*. This pseudo-fact was much repeated by the media. The late Dr. Bernard Nathanson M.D., one of the co-founders of the National Abortion Rights Action League and the obstetrician / gynecologist who directed what was in the 1970s the world's largest abortion clinic, later revealed that leading abortion proponents knew this figure to be false but considered it "useful" in their public relations campaign. Even Planned Parenthood's own leading statisticians admitted that the official statistics on deaths resulting from illegal abortion were very accurately reported prior to 1973. In 1972, there were only 39 maternal deaths related to illegal abortion, not the thousands proclaimed by pro-abortionists.

"You pro-lifers only care about the unborn." When presented with this argument I like to give the person the 1-800-712-HELP card, and briefly explain some of the services as we try and address all the concerns of the mother: sonograms, maternity care, housing that welcome the newborn and mother to stay until she finds an apartment, as well as ongoing contact with the mothers for months and even years. 40-Days for Life campaigns have helped homeless families get housing, transportation and other essentials either through direct charity or referral to organizations dedicated to meeting the need, are just a couple of the examples of assistance often extending past the birth, thus proving this statement to be false.

"My Body, My Choice" or "The fetus is part of the woman" – First, the fetus is NOT part of the woman's body. Ironically, the claim that the fetus is literally a part of the mother undermines well-known abortion defenses. Some say that abortion remedies a fetal violation of the mother's bodily integrity. But if the fetus is a part of the mother,

then it can't violate her bodily integrity. Only something that isn't a part of her body can violate her bodily integrity. Other pro-abortion people argue that the fetus is a trespasser. But one's part cannot trespass upon oneself. The truth is that it doesn't matter whether the fetus is located within the mother's body. He or she is a separate individual member of the human family, with completely distinct DNA and organ systems. Basic facts from Biology 101! Second, "my body, my choice" only goes as far as it does not interfere with someone else's rights: in this case, the rights of the other human individual involved (the fetus).

Hanging out at the Mall

by Cecelia Cody, Administrative Director

The air in the Bay Area was very smoky on Friday the 13th of October due to numerous fires in the wine country. Schools were closed, so numerous students came to the mall and visited our Information Table for Life. They were joined by more pregnant Mommies than I'd ever seen before – probably also trying to get out of the smoky air and into the filtered air of the mall. Throughout the day groups of students would visit the table, asking lots of good questions, and taking literature, buttons, silicon bracelets, precious feet pins and the ever popular "precious preborn" 10-12 week model. The pregnant mommies were drawn to our fetal model display, and eagerly took literature and bookmarks so they could follow the development of their baby in the coming months. By the end of the day, our supplies were almost depleted. Your ongoing donations make it possible for us to do these outreach events and to replenish our supplies.

This table was greatly enhanced by the presence of a bi-lingual volunteer who was able to join us for a few hours. Having someone fluent in Spanish is a great resource for our efforts. We are always looking for more volunteers! Contact our office if you would like more information or to volunteer.

Calendar of Events

*For the latest updates of events see
www.calendarforlife.org*

Caring Not Killing Conference– November 18, 2017
Biola University, La Miranda CA – Protecting yourself,

your family and others. To register:
<https://app.mobilecause.com/form/At1zgg>
More info: info@schollbioethics.org 714.964.1284

WALK FOR LIFE – WEST COAST

San Francisco – Saturday, January 27, 2018

See: <http://www.walkforlifewc.com/>

**Students for Life – West Coast Conference – Sunday
January 28, 2018 – St. Mary Cathedral San
Francisco.** To register visit: <http://sflalive.org/>