

July/August 2007

Care Net Report

www.care-net.org



Ministering the
POWER
of Christ



EVANGELISM

I like straight talkers. Sharing the Gospel calls for straight talk. We need to know what we believe and know how to articulate it. It also means that for me, I must confront my fears. The Scripture tells me that "Perfect love casts out fear." Am I ashamed of the Gospel? I don't think so. If I am honest, I am afraid of men, mostly, and what they think. Although not a Roman Catholic, I have a great deal of respect for the candor of leaders of that church, particularly when the issue is abortion. Archbishop Angelo Amato, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, denounced abortion as "terrorism with a human face." The Archbishop doesn't mince words, nor should he. In another straight-talking news item, Cardinal Renato Martino, head of the Pontifical Council on Peace and Justice, said Roman Catholics should not contribute to Amnesty International because it had adopted a new policy endorsing abortion.² How much more straightforward can you get? And refreshing for a change, especially during a presidential election season here in the States.

Our cover story this month features Kurt Entsminger, president of Care Net, discussing the role of evangelism in the local Care Net crisis pregnancy center. This is a preview of his keynote speech to be delivered at our national conference in Louisville this fall. (For more information about that, please log onto www.care-net.org). The Music Report features the work of the late tenor saxophonist John Coltrane, *A Love Supreme*. Coltrane, addicted to drugs and alcohol, had what might be described as a "born-again" experience, and subsequently produced one of the most remarkable jazz recordings ever. CNR is also pleased to report to you the state of our financial health. While this may sound rather dull, we feel obligated to let you know how we are spending your hard-earned resources. The good news is this: we are one of the very few pro-life organizations that are growing. Revenue is up 46 percent. In the other big pro-life organizations, revenue is down. We owe you a huge thank you. Know that we are humbled.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who participated in our CNR survey (see page 3). We are glad that you took the time to give us your feedback.

Matthew J. Waters
Editor, Care Net Report

(1) Gay Marriage Evil, Abortion Terrorism: Vatican," Reuters, 4/23/07.

(2) "Vatican City: Cardinal Wants Catholics to Halt Aid to Rights Group," Associated Press, 6/14/07.

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CARE NET REPORT, a bi-monthly publication, has a three-fold mission. We aim to notify and update supporters involved in the work and mission of Care Net. Secondly, we raise public awareness and provide factual information on the complex and often tragic issues surrounding crisis pregnancies. Finally, we seek to encourage Christians in their daily faith walk by reviewing music, literature, and other resources they may find valuable for the short journey here as "foreigners and exiles" (I Peter 2:11).

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CARE NET MISSION STATEMENT

Care Net is a Christian ministry assisting and promoting the evangelistic, pro-life work of pregnancy centers in North America.

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LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Your letters must include your name and address if intended for publication and may be edited for space or clarity.

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CARE NET REPORT READER SURVEY RESULTS

HOW THOROUGHLY DO YOU TYPICALLY READ EACH ISSUE OF CARE NET REPORT?

All of it	40%
Only items of interest	28%
Skim it	25%
I don't get to it	7%

DOES CARE NET REPORT HELP YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND THE MINISTRY OF CARE NET?

To a great extent	66%
To some extent	30%
Not at all	4%

WHICH TYPES OF FEATURES DO YOU FIND MOST INTERESTING?

Articles about Care Net	39%
News From the World	30%
Movie/Book Reports	13%
Cover Story	18%

IN GENERAL DO YOU THINK THE STORIES ARE:

Too long	4%
Too short	2%
Just right	94%

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR INTEREST IN (MARCH/APRIL 2007) ISSUE?

	Very Interesting	Somewhat Interesting	Not Interesting	Didn't Read
Cover Story	48%	38%	2%	12%
Editor's Report	31%	50%	4%	16%
Urban Report	37%	42%	4%	17%
Option Line Report	53%	32%	3%	12%
News	60%	28%	2%	10%
Book Report	39%	35%	6%	20%
Movie Report	39%	37%	8%	17%

I WANTED TO COMMENT you on your excellent editorial which I read in the May/June Care Net Report today. It was compelling, concise and convincing. May God continue to bless and expand your ministry.

— Greg Jevnikar, Galion, OH

I AM WONDERING if I can put the article that you have in the Care Net Report "Multiple Bills Introduced Aimed at Closing Pregnancy Centers" on page 8 of the May/June Care Net Report? Are we allowed at any time to use these articles to convey the same information to our donors?

— Robin Savard, Executive Director, Southern Tier Pregnancy Resource Center, Elmira, NY

REPLY: Yes, you may use the articles for donor communications.

I WROTE A FEW MONTHS AGO to complain on the tone of the Care Net Report and what I felt was a liberal bias in your movie review which detracted from the message Care Net is trying to convey. You probably get a lot of mail both pro and con, so it is only fair if I write to rake you over the coals that I should also write to commend you when a job is well done.

In my opinion, the most recent Report is extremely well written and to the point. I'm sure you will get mail from others saying "How dare you!" but thank you for correctly identifying what we face. It is evil and nothing less which seeks to destroy life, especially that of the innocent. Your "Axis of Evil" was right on target: a nation that cannot believe in the

reality of the source of evil must find other explanations for its presence in our lives, allowing it to continue to wield its power. Thanks for a job well done.

— Tom Wenneson, Pflugerville, TX

I WAS A BIT DISTURBED by the Option Line Report wherein the counselor "leads a girl to Christ" in five minutes (or even 25). I definitely approve of bringing one's faith into a discussion about life and pregnancy. But this kind of "commitment for Christ" (also reported in the Top 5) seems so shallow. "If you prayed that prayer...You're now a child of the King." Did Stacey really have any idea what she was praying about or to whom? Things like that need time, explanation, prayer, a recognition of what sin is, etc. I don't want to minimize the work of the phone consultants. I'm wondering what the first goal is when a girl/woman calls in.

— Elsie Palmer, Wayne, NJ

REPLY: There is always the danger of giving false assurance of salvation or an overly simplistic gospel presentation in the short amount of time our counselors have to speak with clients, and your concern is well-founded. Option Line counselors sometimes pray, or share the Gospel, depending on whether it seems relevant to the call or situation. Please see President Kurt Entsminger's inside this issue.



CONSIDER BECOMING A CARING

PARTNER TODAY.

LOG ON TO WWW.CARE-NET.ORG

TO LEARN MORE.

A CULTURE WAR is raging across America for the hearts, minds and bodies of the next generation. We live in a sex-saturated culture dominated by Hollywood, pop musicians, and others who promote easy sex and abortion on demand. Our young people are fed a steady diet of messages that grossly distort the truth about sex, marriage, and the sanctity of human life. As a result, sex and pregnancies outside of marriage are rampant, and nearly 3,000 unborn children are aborted every day.

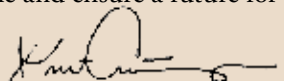
All would appear hopeless if we didn't believe in the God of all hope.

But we do. And the purpose of Care Net and our 1,090 pregnancy centers in North America is to bring hope to the next generation. More than 25,000 employees and volunteers serve within our network to offer compassionate support and share God's truth. As a result, young women facing unplanned pregnancies are being empowered to make positive choices. Teenagers are being taught about sexual purity. And women and men struggling with past abortions are finding God's healing and forgiveness.

Last year, our affiliated crisis pregnancy centers helped more than 350,000 women in need. Ninety-five percent of pregnant women visiting Care Net centers decided to carry their babies to term in 2006. Over one million students heard messages about abstinence. And over 20,000 pregnancy center clients made

initial or renewed commitments of faith in Jesus Christ.

But we are not satisfied. With over 1,200,000 annual abortions happening in North America on our watch, we must redouble our efforts to confront the sexuality and abortion crisis in the U.S. and Canada. Believing our vision and work are compelling, I invite you to support us as we seek to restore hope to our young people and ensure a future for the unborn.



Kurt Entsminger, President

OUR HISTORY

Care Net was influenced by the evangelical leadership of former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop, and the late Christian apologist, Dr. Francis Schaeffer. The Christian Action Council was established in 1975 by Dr. Harold O. J. Brown and in 1993 changed its name to Care Net. Today, Care Net has grown to become the largest network of pregnancy centers in North America, serving over 350,000 women each year. The primary purpose of Care Net is to assist and promote the evangelistic, pro-life work of crisis pregnancy centers. As Care Net has grown, so has our mission. For the very first time Care Net is now ministering directly to women in crisis through our Option Line Call Center & Website featuring America Online's (AOL) Instant Messaging service, dubbed IM. The Call Center is open 24/7, and has over 30 trained phone consultants. The website is currently garnering over 20,000 unique visits each week, or over 1,000,000 each year. Phone calls to the center average over 15,000 a month, and emails and Instant Messages are both growing components of our pro-life outreach.

PROBLEMS

- There are 3 million unplanned pregnancies in the U.S. each year.
- Over 1.2 million unplanned pregnancies will end in abortion.
- Post-abortion stress affects millions of women every day in the U.S.
- In urban areas, abortion clinics outnumber pregnancy care centers by a ratio of 5 to 1 and the abortion rate is at epidemic proportions.
- Each year, 1 out of 4 sexually active teenagers will acquire an sexually transmitted disease.

SOLUTIONS

- Care Net is helping to stop abortion today.
- Last year our 1,100 pregnancy centers served over 350,000 women.
- 160,000 women who visited our centers were pregnant, and more than 95% of these women chose life.
- More than 20,000 women made the life-changing decision to follow Christ or renewed their commitment to Christ.
- Over 1,000,000 teenagers were given abstinence-only presentations.

HOW DOES CARE NET STACK UP AGAINST OTHER MINISTRIES?

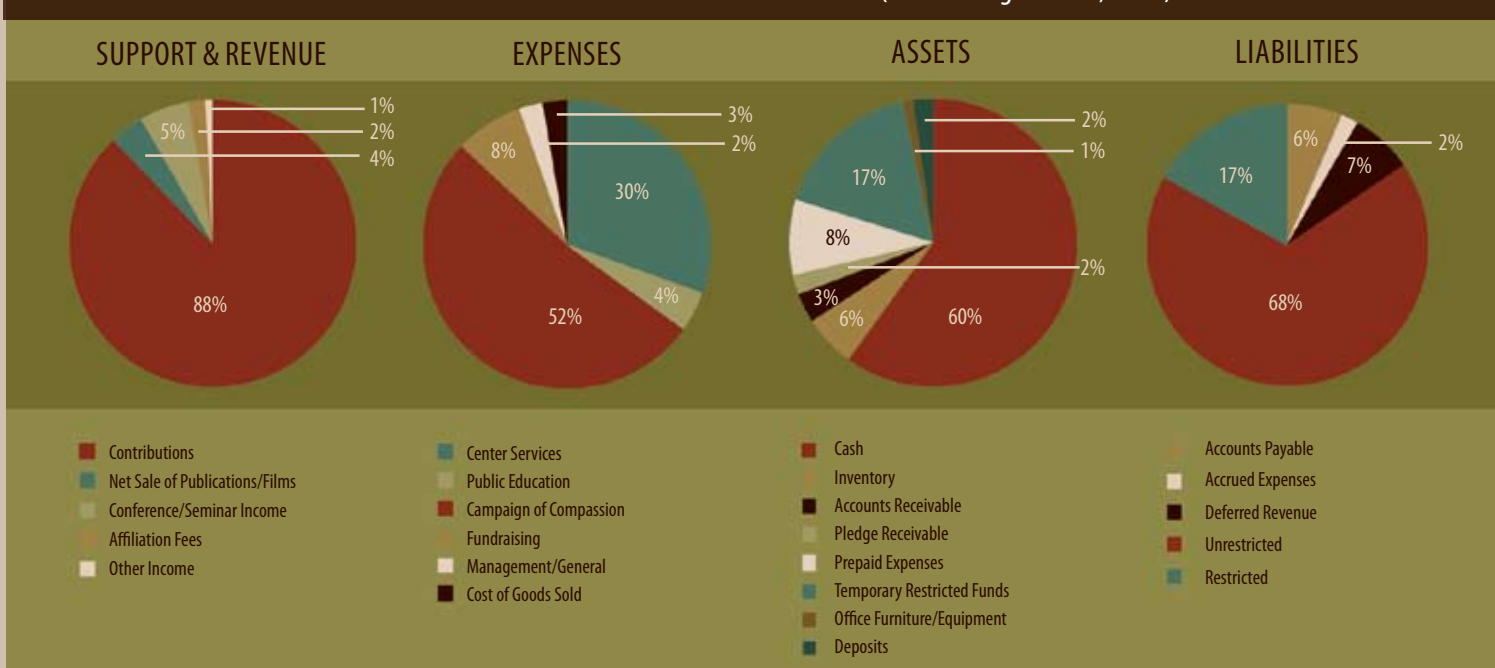
Charity Navigator, a non-profit watchdog organization, ranked Care Net as a top pro-life charity based on two broad areas of financial health, our organizational efficiency and our organizational capacity. Using financial ratios or performance categories to rate each of these two areas, CharityNavigator.com issues an overall rating that combines our performance in both areas.

ORGANIZATION	RATING
***Care Net	55.41
***Focus on the Family	51.78
***Family Research Council	50.09
**Human Life International	43.30
*American Life League	37.77
*National Right to Life	33.67
*Concerned Women for America	26.98



To view Care Net's complete annual report visit www.care-net.org

Care Net National Financial Statement of Activities* (Year ending June 30, 2006)



SUPPORT AND REVENUE	Balance Sheet (June 30, 2006)	LIABILITIES
Contributions	ASSETS	<i>Current Liabilities</i>
Net Sale of Publications/Films	<i>Current Assets</i>	Accounts Payable \$128,237
Conference/Seminar Income	Cash \$1,207,998	Accrued Expenses 38,520
Affiliation Fees	Inventory 122,693	Deferred Revenue 144,992
Other Income	Accounts Receivable 63,251	\$311,749
	Pledge Receivable 45,000	NET ASSETS
	Prepaid Expenses 170,408	Unrestricted \$1,363,054
	Temporary Restricted Funds 343,175	Restricted 343,175
	\$1,952,525	\$1,706,229
	<i>Property/Equipment</i>	TOTAL LIABILITIES \$2,017,978
	Office Furniture/Equipment \$19,154	
	<i>Other Assets</i>	
	Deposits \$46,299	
	Total Assets \$2,017,978	
		*The figures represented are found in Care Net's Independent Auditor's Report June 30, 2006 and include gifts-in-kind. The full report is available upon request from Care Net.
EXPENSES		
Program		
Center Services		
Public Education		
Campaign of Compassion		
Supporting Services		
Fundraising		
Management/General		
Cost of Goods Sold		

COLUMBUS, OH – The Option Line Call Center & website released first quarter 2007 numbers. The number of contacts, which include email, phone calls and Instant Messaging conversations, totaled 48,320 in the first three months of 2007, for an average of 525 interactions with women and men each day. The website received 225,150 visitors with 673,666 total page-views. Roughly 50% of the visitors found the client website through Care Net’s internet keyword advertising campaign taking place on search engines such as Yahoo! and Google.

Internet advertising remains the top contributor to our call volume at 60.8%. Yellow pages and television advertising round out the top three with 10.2% and 9.5%, respectively.

The following are actual reports of conversations Option Line consultants had in the past several months.

•A 14-year-old girl called in the middle of the night looking for the Morning-After Pill. After speaking with a consultant, she agreed to hold off on looking for it until she could speak with a pregnancy center the next morning. She IM’d us later the next day to let the consultant know that she’d decided not to take it and had decided to practice abstinence.

•An emailer, who only spoke Spanish, emailed the Option Line looking for pregnancy help. She wasn’t sure if what she and her boyfriend had done could result in a pregnancy. The Option Line was able to answer her back, in Spanish, with information on how pregnancy occurs, as well as refer her to a center in her area. She wrote us back thanking us and told us she was scheduled to take a pregnancy test the next day.

•A 45-year-old woman from Texas called us crying late at night because she was looking for someone to talk to about a past abortion. We were able to connect her with an after-abortion program provided through a center in her area.

CENTERS RECEIVING THE MOST REFERRALS

Name/location	Calls/Emails	Top Media
Atlanta Care Center, Inc. Atlanta, GA	463	TV
Capitol Hill PC Washington, D.C.	266	TV
Advice & Aid PC Hapeville, GA	166	TV
Greater Baltimore CPC Baltimore, MD	164	TV
Pregnancy Aid Detroit, MI	160	Yellow Pages

The Option Line Call Center & Website is a joint venture between Care Net and Heartbeat International. For more stories please visit our website: www.care-net.org.

of resources available on campuses to pregnant and parenting students.

Recognizing the growing need, this fall Care Net will launch the Campus Outreach and Pregnancy Support Initiative, a program to help local pregnancy centers meet the needs of pregnant students. This program will raise awareness of the need to support students desiring to carry their pregnancy to term and to continue their education. Many pregnancy centers are relocating and opening satellite locations near college campuses to ensure access to key services.

“You hear the word ‘choice’ thrown around on college campuses all the time, but too often pregnant students don’t have any other choice than the one that their administrators or peers think they should make,” said Molly Ford, Director of Campus Outreach and Development for Care Net.

“Students who want to carry their pregnancy to term often face the loss of scholarships, housing, relationships, friendships, parental assistance, and the support of their teachers and administrators. They are basically forced to choose between their child and their education,” Ford said. “This is a reason why you rarely see pregnant students on a college campus and why the abortion rate is so high among women in their early twenties.

“We hope that the NCAA’s decision will be part of a growing trend among organizations and institutions to determine how they can better support pregnant students.”

CARE NET APPLAUDS NCAA’S REVIEW OF POLICIES FOR PREGNANT STUDENT ATHLETES, ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF CAMPUS INITIATIVE

LANSLOWNE, VA. -- Care Net, a non-profit organization supporting a network of over 1,000 pregnancy centers across North America, issued a statement applauding NCAA President Myles Brand’s recent decision to review guidelines and policies for pregnant student athletes.

“We’re encouraged the NCAA recognizes that guidelines for pregnant students need to change. This critical issue deserves urgent attention,” said Kristin Hansen, Care Net’s Vice President of Communications. The NCAA’s decision follows an ESPN-U report that revealed numerous pregnant athletes feel pressured or coerced to seek abortions out of fear of losing scholarships. The ESPN report highlights a growing concern over the lack

CHINA

Harsh Birth Control Steps Fuel Violence in China

BEIJING — An intensive campaign to enforce strict population control measures, including forced abortions, prompted violent clashes between the police and local residents in southwestern China in recent days, witnesses said, describing the latest incident of rural unrest that has alarmed senior officials in Beijing.

Villagers and visitors to several counties of the Guangxi Autonomous Region in southwestern China said rioters smashed and burned government offices, overturned official vehicles, and clashed with the riot police officers in a series of confrontations over the past four days. They spoke on the condition of anonymity, fearing retribution.

They gave varying accounts of injuries and deaths, with some asserting that as many as five people had been killed, including three officials responsible for population-control work. A local government official in one of the counties affected confirmed the rioting in a telephone interview but denied reports of deaths or serious injuries.

The violence seemed to stem from a two-month crackdown in Guangxi to punish people who violated the country’s policy that sets legal limits on the number of children families are allowed to have.

According to accounts posted on the Internet by villagers and witnesses, officials in several parts of Guangxi mobilized their largest effort in years to roll back population growth by requiring mandatory health checks for women and forcing pregnant women who lacked approval to give birth to undergo abortions.

Coercive measures, including forced abortions and sterilizations, were common in the 1980’s, when the so-called one-child policy was first strictly enforced. More recently, many parts of China have been relying more on financial penalties and incentives to limit the growth of its population, which is 1.3 billion.

But local officials who fail to meet annual population control targets can still come under bureaucratic pressure to reduce births or face demotion or removal from office.

Several people said in the Internet accounts of the campaign in Guangxi that officials had issued fines starting at 500 yuan and ranging as high as 70,000 yuan, or \$65 to \$9,000, on families who had violated birth control measures at any time since 1980. The new tax, called a “social child-raising fee,” was collected even though most violators had already paid fines in the past, the people said.

According to an account on Longtan, a Web forum, officials in Bobai County in Guangxi boasted that they collected 7.8 million yuan in social child-raising fees from February through the end of April. Many families objected strongly to the fees and refused to pay.

Witnesses said that in such cases villagers were detained, their homes searched, and valuables, including electronic items and motorcycles, confiscated by the government.

“Worst of all, the gangsters used hammers and iron rods to destroy people’s homes, while threatening that the next time it would be with bulldozers,” said a peasant who identified himself as Nong Sheng and who faxed a letter complaining of the abuses to a reporter in Beijing.

Mr. Nong said the crackdown was widespread in several counties in Guangxi. He said local courts had declined to hear any cases brought by opponents of the policy, citing an edict from local officials.

Other villagers reached by phone described an escalating series of confrontations that began Thursday and continued through the weekend.

Several described in detail an assault on the government offices of Shapi Township, Bobai County, by thousands of peasants. They said villagers broke through a wall around the building, ransacked offices, smashed computers and destroyed documents, then set fire to the building. There were inconsistent reports of death and injuries during that clash and a later police crackdown.

(Source: Excerpted from *The New York Times*, By JOSEPH KAHN, 5/22/07)

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL STUDY
New Findings Add Nuance to Discussion of Early Sex

Girls who have sex at an early age are at slightly greater risk than their peers for feeling depressed, a new study has found. But their self-esteem suffers only if the sex occurs outside a romantic relationship.

For boys, having sex at an early age does not increase depression or decrease self-esteem.



“I suspected that there might be negative effects of early sex for some groups,” said Ann M. Meier, the study’s author and an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Minnesota. “And that’s what I found — but only under very specific circumstances.”

The findings, the authors say, may have relevance for the abstinence education provision of the Welfare Reform Act of 1996. Programs that are financed through the legislation

must teach, among other elements of abstinence, that “sexual activity outside of the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects.”

This study, which appears in the May issue of *The American Journal of Sociology*, found mixed evidence for that assertion.

The average age at which teenagers have their first sexual experience steadily decreased during the 1990s, according to background information in the paper, and now almost half of American adolescents report that they have had sex by the time they graduate from high school.

Using data from a nationally representative study, Dr. Meier selected 8,563 adolescents in grades 7 through 12 who had not had sex at the time of an initial interview. They were reinterviewed one to two years later, answering questions about their emotional and mental health, family background and education, and social and romantic relationships. They also responded to depression and self-esteem questionnaires. By the time of the second interview, 1,265 of the teenagers had had their first sexual experience.

The average age at first sex varied with ethnicity, from 15.2 years to 17.5, with blacks having sex at the youngest ages and Asians at the oldest. Lower family income also predicted sex at an earlier age.

Dr. Meier divided the group who had had sex into those whose first sex was earlier than that of other teenagers, those who had sex at the average age, and those who had sex later than average. The study considered only heterosexual intercourse, and the depression scale, which measured only depressive symptoms, was not designed to diagnose clinical depression.

First sex was associated with a decrease in self-esteem, but only among

girls who were younger than the average age and not in a romantic relationship. Girls who had sex at the average age or later had no increased risk for depressive symptoms compared with those who had not had sex.

There was a significant increase in depressive symptoms among girls who were in short-term relationships that dissolved, and having had first sex in that relationship increased scores on the depression scale compared with girls in similar relationships that had ended without having sex.

Dr. Meier suggested that it was not so much chronological age that was significant in determining whether sex was psychologically harmful, but rather the deviation from the socially normal age.

Dr. Meier said that there were well-known negative effects of early sex, like early pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. “But over all,” she said, “there are very few effects on mental health, either negative or positive.”

Dr. Meier acknowledges that the study depends on self-reports, which may result in inaccuracies in the data, although the computer-based interviewing technique used is considered highly reliable.

Moreover, it was not possible to control for all variables, and the changes in mental health could be caused by factors other than sexual activity. Also, Dr. Meier warned against generalizing the results to populations not included in the study.

For example, the study did not cover those who had sex before the first interview, a younger group for whom the results might have been different.

(Source: Excerpted from *The New York Times*,
By NICHOLAS BAKALAR, 6/5/07)

NATIONAL STUDY

The Claim: Caffeine Can Increase the Risk of Miscarriage

With more than 80 percent of Americans consuming it in some form

or another every day, caffeine is easily the nation’s most popular drug, far ahead of nicotine and alcohol. So when studies first suggested decades ago that caffeine could increase the risk of miscarriage, it raised alarm. Why exactly it might pose such a risk remains unclear, but numerous studies in recent years have investigated the link.

One of the more unnerving studies was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2000. It looked at more than 1,000 pregnant Swedish women and found that those who drank the equivalent of one to three cups of coffee a day had a 30 percent increased risk of miscarriage, while those who had the equivalent of at least five cups had more than double the risk.

But a majority of studies have suggested that any risk might apply only to high levels of caffeine intake. One study carried out by the National Institutes of Health in 1999 looked closely at the blood levels of caffeine in tens of thousands of pregnant women and found that those who consumed



the equivalent of more than five cups of coffee a day did have an increased risk, while those who drank one or two cups did not. Other studies have had similar findings.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, there is

now general agreement that low caffeine intake during pregnancy — about 150 milligrams a day, or roughly 1.5 cups of coffee — is safe.

The bottom line: Low caffeine intake during pregnancy appears to be safe, while the risk of high intake is unclear.

(Source: Excerpted from *The New York Times*,
By ANABAD O’CONNOR, 6/5/07)

NATIONAL NEWS

A Move for Birth Certificates for Stillborn Babies

Last summer, three weeks before her due date, Sari Edber delivered a stillborn son, Jacob. “He was 5 pounds and 19 inches, absolutely beautiful, with my olive complexion, my husband’s curly hair, long fingers and toes, chubby cheeks and a perfect button nose,” she said.

The sudden shift from what she called “a perfectly wonderful healthy pregnancy” to delivering a dead infant was unfathomably painful, said Ms. Edber, 27, who lives in Los Angeles with her husband, Daniel.

“The experience of giving birth and death at the exact same time is something you don’t understand unless you’ve gone through it,” Ms. Edber said. “The day before I was released from the hospital, the doctor came in with the paperwork for a fetal death certificate, and said, ‘I’m sorry, but this is the only document you’ll receive.’ In my heart, it didn’t make sense. I was in labor. I pushed, I had stitches, my breast milk came in, just like any other mother. And we deserved more than a death certificate.”

So Ms. Edber joined with others who had experienced stillbirth to push California legislators to pass a bill allowing parents to receive a certificate of birth resulting in stillbirth.

In the last six years, 19 states, including New Jersey, have enacted laws allowing parents who have had

stillbirths to get such certificates. Similar legislation is under consideration in several more, among them New York. More than 25,000 pregnancies a year end in stillbirth, generally defined as a naturally occurring, unintentional intrauterine death after more than 20 weeks of gestation. A cause for the death is usually not determined.

To thousands of parents who have experienced stillbirth, getting a birth certificate is passionately important, albeit symbolic.

“It’s dignity and validation,” said Joanne Cacciatore, an Arizona woman who started the movement after her daughter, Cheyenne, was stillborn 13 years ago. “It’s the same reason why we want things like marriage licenses and baptismal certificates.”

But politically, the birth-certificate laws, often referred to as “Missing Angels” bills, occupy uncertain territory, skirting the abortion debate while implicitly raising the question of fetal personhood.

Many anti-abortion groups say the laws fill a need for parents. But some abortion rights supporters see the push for these laws as a barely disguised political move to undermine abortion rights.



In some states, local chapters of abortion rights groups have opposed the legislation. But at the national level, some abortion rights groups are comfortable with the laws, if they are drafted carefully to cover naturally occurring fetal death and not late-term abortion.

Last month, Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico vetoed legislation that would have granted stillborn birth certificates.

Mr. Richardson, a Democrat who is running for president, did not mention abortion, but said “confusion and potential fraud” could result from creating two documents — the fetal death certificate and the birth certificate resulting in stillbirth — for the same event.

Those who support the stillbirth certificates say fraud would be impossible because the certificates make clear that there is no living child.

Generally, the bills are retroactive, so parents can get a certificate even for long-ago stillbirths. Parents who request certificates must pay a small fee and can record a name or leave the name line blank.

Some counselors who work with grieving parents say the legislation would be unnecessary if hospitals did more to recognize the loss, through informal “memory certificates.”

“Parents want some kind of certificate, something they can frame that physically acknowledges the birth,” said Perry-Lynn Moffit, a counselor with the Pregnancy Loss Support Program of the National Council of Jewish Women in New York City. Ms. Moffit said she was troubled by the term “Missing Angels,” with its religious overtones suggesting that stillborn babies become “cherubs in heaven.”

Prodded by Ms. Cacciatore, Arizona was the first state to provide birth certificates for stillbirth. Ms. Cacciatore also founded the M.I.S.S. Foundation, a nonprofit group that coordinates the campaign for these certificates and also advocates for increased research to help prevent stillbirth and infant death.

“I thought about suicide every day after Cheyenne’s birth,” Ms. Cacciatore said. “I loved this baby; I went through all the physical pain of delivering her. I had her baby book prepared, with the place for her birth certificate.”

When the state office of vital records mailed a death certificate instead, she said, “I literally dropped it.” She added, “When I called and asked for my daughter’s birth certificate, the woman asked how she died, and when I told her, she said I didn’t have a baby, I had a fetus, and I couldn’t get a birth certificate.”

Frustrated, Ms. Cacciatore began a support group for mourning parents. She said she received 250 e-mail messages a day through the group, and her foundation has 27 online support groups with 25,000 members.

Yet, the concept of birth certificates for stillbirth raises complicated questions. In heated Web discussions, some people cite the parents' deep need for validation while others say birth certificates are legal documents, not memory trinkets or prizes for enduring birthing.

"Any way that acknowledges the child is important," said Catherine Shandler, of Montclair, N.J., who lost her daughter, Emma, three years ago, two weeks before the due date. Emma remains part of the family, Ms. Shandler said, a presence she will someday discuss with her son, Benjamin, 20 months old, and a daughter, India, born Saturday.

It is often hard to know what to say, she said.

"When you say you had a stillbirth, some people can't wrap their head around the fact that there was a baby," said Ms. Shandler, who said she supports abortion rights. When people ask if she has children, she said, sometimes she mentions Emma, and sometimes she does not. But, she added, "I want to acknowledge that Emma existed."

(Source: Excerpted from *The New York Times*,

By TAMAR LEWIN, 5/22/07)

ALABAMA

Pro-Life Advocates Cited as Terrorists

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Homeland Security included pro-life organizations, as well as homosexual activist groups, on a website listing of potential terrorist groups, or groups that might spawn terrorists. The site has since been removed to modify the content after complaints.

Department director Jim Walker said the site was taken down after his agency received a string of calls and e-mails from concerned individuals who complained the list was unfairly targeting certain groups on the basis of their beliefs.

Pro-life organizations were included in a section of the list describing "single-issue" terrorists, who were identified as "people who feel they are trying to create a better world."

"Single-issue extremists often focus on issues that are important to all of us. However, they have no problem crossing the line between legal protest and... illegal acts, to include even murder, to succeed in their goals," the site read.

Eric Johnston, president of the Alabama Pro Life Coalition, said he was concerned over the assumption that people doing social justice work may use terrorism to achieve their goals.

"Our group's main mission is educational. The thought that we would somehow be harboring terrorists escapes me," he said.

Other groups in the list included anti-war, animal rights and environmental organizations. Walker said the site will go back up without mentioning specific types of groups.

(Excerpted from *LifeSiteNews.com*,

By GUDRUN SCHULTZ, 5/29/07)

MICHIGAN

Federal Appeals Court Rejects Michigan's Ban on a Controversial Method of Abortion

The State of Michigan's third attempt in a decade to ban a procedure known among anti-abortion activists as partial-birth abortion was declared unconstitutional by a federal appeals court, less than two months after the Supreme Court narrowly upheld a federal law banning the method.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit said the Michigan statute, the Legal Birth Definition Act, was worded so broadly that in addition

to banning the procedure, it would also prohibit other legal abortion methods.

The court said the Legislature took a "dragnet approach" to regulating partial-birth abortion, which involves removing the baby intact rather than dismembering the baby in the uterus. The law "showed no meaningful attempt to comply with the constitutional limitations articulated by federal courts in the area of abortion law," Judge Boyce F. Martin Jr. wrote for the court.

The law did not on its own terms ban any specific type of abortion procedure, Judge Boyce wrote. Instead, it created a protected legal status for a partly delivered fetus that it termed a "perinate."

The decision upheld a 2005 ruling by a federal district judge in Detroit that found the law unconstitutional because it placed "an undue burden" on a woman's right to have an abortion by also prohibiting a more common abortion procedure used in the second trimester of pregnancy, known as "dilation and evacuation." The District Court also found that the term "perinate" was not a commonly used definition in the medical profession and added to the law's vague language.

The Sixth Circuit decision comes on the heels of a Supreme Court decision in April, *Gonzales v. Carhart*, upholding a 2003 federal law, the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, which prohibits the dilation and extraction procedure.

Seven years ago, in *Stenberg v. Carhart*, the Supreme Court rejected a Nebraska abortion law banning the procedure involving the intact fetus, saying it unconstitutionally prohibited the more common dilation and evacuation procedure. The court said the restriction placed "an undue burden" on a woman's right to have an abortion.

Michigan's law also contained provisions that would have prohibited abortion procedures beyond the partial-birth procedure, the appeals court said. Though Michigan's attorney general issued an opinion shortly after the law was challenged in court in 2005 to clarify the scope of the law and make clear that the Legislature's intent was

only to prohibit partial-birth abortion, the appeals court said that the opinion was not binding and did not carry the weight of legal precedent and that the statute's language remained confusing.

Federal courts have rejected Michigan lawmakers' attempts to regulate the procedure twice before, in 1997 and 2001, for laws passed in 1996 and 1999, respectively.

Michigan's governor, Jennifer M. Granholm, a Democrat, vetoed the legislation in 2003. More than 400,000 supporters of the bill signed a petition allowing the law to pass without the governor's signature, and the Republican-dominated Legislature quickly passed an identical bill that became law in June 2004.

Though legislators in Michigan's neighboring state of Ohio passed a ban on the procedure in 2003 that has so far passed muster with the courts and provides clear guidance, the appeals court said, Michigan lawmakers did not follow their example. Instead, they "opted to use statutory language that pushed almost every boundary that the Supreme Court has imposed for these types of laws," Judge Martin said.

(Source: Excerpted from *The New York Times*, By LIBBY SANDER, 6/5/07)

OHIO

Planned Parenthood Looked the Other Way, Rape Victim Says

CINCINNATI – It was one of the worst cases of child abuse Warren County Prosecutor Rachel Hutzel has ever seen - and she has seen a few.

"I thought I would get held in contempt of court because I argued it so vigorously in court," she said, still outraged by the case eight months later. "The father was basically treating his daughter like she was his wife."

John Blanks, Jr. of Mason, Ohio was sentenced to five years – one year in prison for every year he molested his daughter, beginning when she was 13. "She had to get up out of his bed in the morning and go to school, if you can imagine what that was like," Hutzel said.

In May 2006, the victim told a Mason High School official what was going on. "She finally decided she wasn't going to take it anymore and she didn't want her sibling to become a victim," Hutzel said.

Now the girl says in a lawsuit that the abuse could have been stopped earlier. In November 2004, when she was 16, the girl was forced by her father to have an abortion. She reported the abuse to Planned Parenthood in Cincinnati, her lawyer says.

"She tried to put an end to this abuse," said attorney Brian Hurley, "by informing a Planned Parenthood employee that she has been forced to have sex and to do things she did not want to do. Tragically for her, Planned Parenthood's 'don't ask, don't tell' policy was in full force."

State law requires teachers, clinic workers and others to report suspected abuse to police. But Planned Parenthood "completely ignored her cry for help," Hurley said, and his client was "raped on many occasions over the next one and one-half years."

Becki Brenner, president of Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio, said: "I won't speak on individual patients. We do not have a 'don't ask, don't tell' policy."

Hurley also represents "Jane Roe," a victim of sexual abuse by her soccer coach at age 14. She was taken by the abuser to Planned Parenthood in the fall of 2004 for an abortion. Although she used a junior-high school I.D. and the coach, 21, paid with a credit card and driver's license, Planned Parenthood failed to report the abuse.

Planned Parenthood officials said they were misled and did not know the man who gave permission and paid for the abortion was the abuser.

That case is still in court. An appeals court hearing is expected on Judge Patrick Dinkelacker's order for Planned Parenthood to turn over records of underage abortions to Hurley. As in similar cases in Indiana and Kansas, Planned Parenthood has invoked patient privacy. Even if names and addresses are deleted, Planned Parenthood

attorney Daniel Buckley argued there are "profound and significant privacy issues."

But based on records obtained so far, Hurley said, "My guess is that this is just the tip of the iceberg, and that is why Planned Parenthood will do anything to prevent us from seeing its records."

In the Roe case, a Planned Parenthood "Documentation Form for Suspected Sexual or Child Abuse Report" says: "Patient reports pregnancy is a result of sexual assault by a stranger."

"After consultation with (Planned Parenthood) attorney, report of a crime to the police was not made; due to physician-patient privilege, we are prohibited from reporting as no severe bodily injury was reported."

Hurley said prosecutors in four local counties know of no such exception to reporting requirements. Hutzel agreed. If evidence of severe injury were required, "there would be no reports in the vast majority of situations," Hurley said.

Hutzel said she is "keeping the door open" for possible criminal prosecution depending on what is revealed in the civil case.

"By failing to report it and giving her an abortion and birth-control pills, they sent her home with him and he abused her for another year and a half," she said. "That had to have been one of the darkest days of her life. She has just had an abortion, now she has to get back in the car and go home with him."

Hurley also found a note in Planned Parenthood files about sexual abuse that mentions "don't ask, don't tell."

(Source: Excerpted from *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, By PETER BRONSON, 5/10/07)

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Democrat Controlled Legislature Repeals Parental Notification Law

CONCORD – New Hampshire will become the first state to repeal a law requiring teenage girls to notify their parents before having an abortion, under a bill that won final passage in the state Senate.

Gov. John Lynch has said he would sign the measure. The vote in the Senate was 15 to 9. The House vote, in March, was 217 to 141.

The parental notification law was the strictest in the nation when it was passed in 2003. The vote to repeal it reflects, in part, a sea change in New Hampshire politics since the 2006 elections, which swept a Democratic majority into the legislature for the first time in over a century.

“Having this Democratic legislature and Democratic governor for the first time really does change the playing field,” said Dean Spiliotes, director of research at the New Hampshire Institute of Politics at St. Anselm College. “However, New Hampshire has always been a little bit of an outlier, somewhat libertarian and increasingly kind of moderate, with less of a focus on these social issues where you have government getting involved.”

Soon after the law passed, it was challenged by Planned Parenthood of Northern New England and other groups, which argued that it was unconstitutional

because it did not allow an exemption from parental notification if the girl’s health was in danger. The law’s supporters had intentionally omitted such a medical exception, saying that it could be used as a loophole to allow many girls to skip telling their parents.

Just before the law was supposed to take effect, Judge Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr. of Federal District Court in Concord, N.H., struck it down. The United States Supreme Court heard the case and ruled unanimously last year that an exception for medical emergencies had to be included. The justices sent the law back to Judge DiClerico, instructing him to see if it could be retooled to include a medical exception or if it needed to be thrown out altogether.

Soon after the November election, Democrats began an effort to repeal the law, and Judge DiClerico delayed his decision. If the repeal passed, the court case would be moot; if it failed, the judge would decide the law’s fate.

That gave repeal advocates an edge in lobbying lawmakers — they were able to persuade even some legislators who favored parental notification that it would be better to remove the matter from the courts.

“Our opponents said, ‘If you vote for repeal, you’re voting against parental notification,’ ” said Dawn Touzin, vice president for public policy and governmental affairs at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. “We said, ‘No, you’re not.’ The issue is, do you want to leave it in the hands of the judge or shouldn’t it be something that’s decided by the legislature?”

State Senator Joseph A. Foster, the majority leader, said he favored a law similar to those in Maine and Connecticut, which do not require parental notification, but require abortion providers to counsel girls to consider involving a parent or a trusted

adult in their decision. He said he did not believe the 2003 law should be retrofitted: “I think we ought to wipe the slate clean, start from scratch.”

Repeal opponents said they would push for a notification law when the legislature reconvenes in January.

“We’re not going to give up on this,” said State Representative Fran Wendelboe, a Republican. “I’ve had teenagers. My kids are grown and they were boys, but I know if they did something they were ashamed of, if they could figure out a way to cover it up, they’d do it.”

State Senator Robert J. Letourneau, a Republican, said: “You can’t get your daughter or son’s ears pierced under the age of 17 without parental consent; you can’t get a tattoo without parental consent. To me it’s unconscionable that you can’t give an aspirin to a child in school without parental consent, but they can have major surgery without parental

notification.”

A spokesman for Mr. Lynch, Colin Manning, said the governor “would like to see parents involved if possible” and “is open to having a discussion” about a law like Maine’s and Connecticut’s.

But anything more restrictive seems unlikely to succeed, said Dante Scala, a political science professor at the University of New Hampshire.

“I think it’s going to take a Republican resurgence to get that put back on the front burner,” he said.

(Source: Excerpted from *The New York Times*, By PAM BELLUCK, 6/8/07)

CORRECTION: The May/June edition of Care Net Report erroneously reported that Care Net held a rally in Salem OR on 4/25/07 to support CPC’s. In fact, the National Institutes of Family Life Advocates (NIFLA) planned and held this rally with financial and other support from Care Net and with attendance by many local Care Net pregnancy center representatives.



YOUR WALK

MUSIC REPORT

A SUPREME LOVE WINS

By Matthew Waters

In 1956 tenor saxophonist John Coltrane lost his highly coveted job with the Miles Davis Quartet because of drugs. He fell into a dark depression and his drug use grew worse. But a year later something remarkable happened. Coltrane had what he described as a “spiritual awakening.” According to jazz historian Emmett Price, “After a couple of days of intense meditation and prayer, Coltrane decided that a change had to be made and soon. Within a week, he relinquished his drinking, smoking and drug habits. These dramatic changes symbolized his rededication to God—the God who he had learned to trust and obey as a young child.”

In 1964, seven years after his turn-around, Coltrane returned to his roots - his Christian roots - and recorded what National Public Radio called “one of the most important musical works of the 20th century”: *A Love Supreme*.

In the weeks leading up to its recording session, Coltrane would often go into an unoccupied room in his house to think about the music he had heard. On one occasion when Coltrane came out of the secluded room, his wife, the late Alice Coltrane, remarked, “It was like Moses coming down from the mountain, it was so beautiful. When he walked down and there was that joy, that peace in his face, tranquility. So I said, ‘Tell me everything, we didn’t see you really for four or five days.’ He said, ‘This is the first time that I have received all of the music for what I want to record, in a suite. This is the first time I have everything, everything ready.’”

Three months later *A Love Supreme* was recorded. Coltrane said of the LP, “I feel this has been granted through His grace.” In the original liner notes there appears a letter from Coltrane to the listener (and which is reprinted in the CD) which says, “All Praise Be To God To Whom All Praise Is Due. Let us pursue Him in the righteous path. Yes it is true; ‘Seek and ye shall find.’”

A Love Supreme is a short 32-minute LP that is broken into four parts: “Acknowledgment,” “Resolution,” “Pursuance,” and “Psalm.” The quartet was made up of Coltrane on saxophone, Elvin Jones on drums, Jimmy Garrison on bass, and McCoy Tyner on piano. The album was recorded one December evening in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey and Tyner recalled, “Rudy [Van Gelder] dimmed the lights in his studio. I’d never seen him do that and it sort of set the atmosphere. There was something very, very special about that particular session.”



Westminster Theological Seminary professor William Edgar, writing in *Modern Reformation* (Jan./Feb. 2006), said, “John Coltrane’s music shakes up our agnosticism and rationalism. Though his statement of fundamental beliefs is not as clear as evangelicals would wish, his conversion was clearly Christian.”

Says Price, “Christianity is based on the idea of the Trinity, encompassing The Father (God), The Son (Jesus), and The Holy Spirit. I believe that this doctrine was, more than any, the basis of the spirituality behind the triplet. (A triplet is three notes in the place of two. It is indicated by a 3 placed over the notes, often accompanied with a bracket appearing above the three notes.) It is this doctrine that Coltrane built upon in his work, *A Love Supreme*. Coltrane makes many references to the Christian idea of God in the text to *A Love Supreme*.”

“‘Acknowledgment’ starts out with a gong, a signal that something important is going to be revealed. Slowly, there is a build-up with the bass—the foundation—entering, speaking ‘A Love Supreme.’...the tone of his horn is that of a minister anointed by the Spirit of God to relay a heaven-sent message... ‘Pursuance’ symbolizes Coltrane’s fight with evil, his struggle to stay on the right path...The music is full of references to struggle, especially the drum solo in the beginning, with its various rhythmic and pulse changes signaling different degrees of intensity. The section of the suite entitled ‘Psalm’ is one in which Coltrane reveals the final product of his search,” says Price.

“Much of his music was now directly religious,” says Edgar, referring to Coltrane’s music after his spiritual experience. “He composed songs about prayer, wisdom, and praise, often drawing from the Negro spirituals he knew as a youth...Trane was a wonderful example of the gospel set to jazz music.”

Ashley Kahn, author of *A Love Supreme: The Story of John Coltrane’s Signature Album*, said, “It’s an unusually complete vision of one man’s spirituality expressed through his art. Coltrane used the tools he had available and that he knew: a saxophone, a well-practiced quartet – even his own voice – to create music worthy of his Creator.”

A Love Supreme is available wherever music is sold.

Care Net Welcomes New Affiliate Pregnancy Centers

APRIL

- Carson City, NV
- Frankfort, KY
- Baltimore, MD (welcome back to very 1st Care Net affiliate!)
- Baltimore, MD- Satellite
- Toledo, OH
- Lewisburg, TN
- Brevard, NC
- Stillwater, OK
- Bowie, TX
- Port Hadlock, WA

MAY

- Leasburg, MO
- Doraville, GA
- Escondido, CA
- Madera, CA
- Big Rapids, MI
- Danville, VA
- Sparta, NC
- Hood River, OR

MINISTERING THE POWER of Christ

As pro-life Christians serving in pregnancy centers, we sometimes have difficulty defining our real mission. Are we here first and foremost to minister the compassion of Christ, or are we here first and foremost to stop abortions? I believe the proper way to resolve this question is to recognize that we have both a mission and a mission field which together embrace our duality.

What is our mission? Our mission is the same as every other Christian missionary who has ever lived – to share Jesus Christ with the hurting and broken people we encounter in our mission field. In pregnancy center ministry, sharing Jesus Christ means far more than explaining God’s plan for salvation to sinners. It means being the hands of Christ that reach out to embrace and comfort women who are scared, lonely and confused. It means speaking God’s truth into situations where people have been deceived by the lies of the world. It means helping to restore believers who have stumbled into a wayward lifestyle. And most importantly, it means being willing to come alongside needy people and to love them unconditionally just as Christ loved us.

So what then is our mission field? Traditionally, Christians think of a mission field as a geographical location in a foreign country. However, for pregnancy centers, our mission field is not a designated place. It is instead the arena of special issues that arise in our own communities from a particular social evil. Our mission field encompasses abortion, sexual brokenness, and all of the problems which flow from these issues.

In recent years, many influential people within our movement have issued a much needed call for pregnancy centers to become more effective in reaching abortion-minded clients. Today, our 1,090 Care Net pregnancy centers are reaching and helping more pregnant women than ever before. In 2006, our Care Net centers served more than 160,000 pregnant clients of which well over 90% chose life for their babies. However, with more than 1.2 million annual abortions in the United States,



we recognize that we must continue to step up our efforts and to expand our outreach so we may reach many more abortion-minded women in the future.

When we aim to reach more abortion-minded women, we are ensuring that our ministry is well-placed in the desired mission field. But, in all of this, we must be very careful not to confuse the critical needs of our mission field with our initial mission. While reaching more abortion-minded women is a laudable goal, we must remember that reducing abortion is not our ultimate mission. Sharing the love of Christ is our ultimate mission. The very moment that somebody defines saving the lives of babies as the most important thing that a pregnancy center does, they have inevitably placed Jesus Christ into a secondary role.

One story may help to illustrate the point. In 1855, Emma Robarts and a group of Christian women began a new ministry in London to reach out to young women. Mrs. Robarts and her friends were concerned about the horrible conditions to which young women were exposed. London was filled with squalor, labor abuses, and an estimated one out of every fifteen women engaged in prostitution. The purpose of this new ministry was to share Christ within this mission field of brokenness.

Mrs. Robarts initiated Bible studies and prayer groups for young women all across London. Intercessory prayer became a critical component of this new ministry as prayer warriors vigorously prayed for women’s physical and spiritual safety. Mrs. Robarts and her friends even went into the factories of London to read from Scripture and to sing hymns. As a result of this outreach, thousands of women were introduced to Jesus Christ, and thousands were delivered from lifestyles of debauchery. Between 1855 and 1872, more than 100 new chapters of this ministry were established in other cities across the world, including many cities in the United States.

But over time, something happened. As new leaders took control, they began to focus more on the practical needs of women rather than upon their need for Christ. Eventually, a decision was made by this organization to remove Christian ministry as a focus all together. Today, the YWCA (Young Women’s Christian Association) proudly declares: “We were founded by Christian women but our work is no longer faith based.” Not only has the YWCA openly abandoned its initial Christian mission, its official positions, including its strong support of abortion rights, are directly antithetical to Christian belief.

The legitimate call for pregnancy centers to reach more abortion-minded women must never lessen our need to remain Christ-centered. For this very reason, a Christian pregnancy center that is committed to serving people within the mission field of abortion, unplanned pregnancy, and sexual brokenness should not subordinate the needs of some clients just because they are deemed to be less “at risk” for abortion than others.

Jesus commands us to love everyone that we encounter in our mission field. The teenager who has already made the courageous decision to carry her baby to term is just as deserving of our compassionate support as the woman still considering abortion. The new mother struggling to make ends meet who comes for free formula and other material help should not be turned away. And the thirty year old woman distraught over her past abortions should be invited to learn more about the love

and forgiveness of Christ. For pregnancy centers committed to sharing Christ, serving “at-risk” clients ultimately means helping women find Jesus at their point of greatest need. This point of need varies with every woman in crisis.

At Care Net, we prioritize evangelism because it is the bedrock upon which the success of our ministry rests. Listening to a woman’s story, responding with accurate medical information, offering compassionate support, and yes, sharing the Good News of Jesus, is the most effective way to transform lives so that more

babies can be spared from abortion. Our clients are hungry for love, and God is love. When we focus our mission on sharing God’s love with our clients instead of saving the unborn, we empower more women, and we ultimately save more babies.

Pregnancy centers that add medical services are particularly wise to heed this advice. The use of ultrasound machines has proven to be a very effective tool in reaching more abortion-minded women and helping them choose life for their unborn babies. For this reason, Care Net supports the current trend of more and more centers adding ultrasound services.

And we commend and appreciate the work of other organizations that have committed to making ultrasound services and trainings more widely available to our Care Net affiliates.

Yet, adding ultrasound services should not alter the mission of a pregnancy center. It is Jesus and not the ultrasound machine that must remain at the core of pregnancy center ministry. An ultrasound machine may produce a powerful picture that will help persuade a woman to choose life for her baby. For this, we should rejoice. But what every client still needs most is to choose the everlasting and transforming life available in Jesus Christ.

OUR CLIENTS ARE HUNGRY FOR LOVE, AND GOD IS LOVE.



Kurt Entsminger, president of Care Net, became a Christian at the age of 33. Prior to entering full-time ministry, he served two stints as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and 18 years as a trial attorney. Kurt and his wife Susan have been married for 28 years and have three children.

HEART CHECK

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” (Matt. 28:19)

“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.” (1 Tim. 4:2)

“Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress...” (James 1:27)

MILLENNIALS KNOCKED UP

By Matthew Waters

Knocked Up, the new film by Judd Apatow (*The 40-Year Old Virgin*) is a crude, albeit enlightening, social commentary on the generation known as Millennials (those born between 1977-1995) according to several critics. The film's premise, a couple facing unplanned pregnancy who chooses life, has also raised the curiosity of many pro-lifers.

But, according to Marc Newman of MovieMinistry.com, curiosity is the only thing it should raise. Says Newman:

"Identification of this 'pro-life' angle in *Knocked Up* should in no way be considered an endorsement for the film. Sure, there is a redemptive aspect to the movie, but you have to slog through an awful lot of garbage to get to it. Do not go to see it – is that clear enough? But, that said, millions of people will go see it, laugh, and throughout the film view compelling images of an unborn baby."

World Magazine's Megan Basham says that although there is a "surprisingly pro-life underbelly...none of it is enough to overcome the film's lax attitude toward sex nor its dim view of marriage."

So, a number of critics recommend not seeing *Knocked Up*. (I have not seen it.) That being said, what could Christians possibly glean from the views presented in it?

The New York Times film critic A.O. Scott made several interesting observations about *Knocked Up*, some of which give us insight about how Christians can minister to Millennials.

Scott says, "It may be a bit, um, premature to say so, but Judd Apatow's *Knocked Up* strikes me as an instant classic, a comedy that captures the sexual confusion and moral ambivalence of our moment without straining, pandering or preaching. Like *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, Mr. Apatow's earlier film, it attaches dirty humor to a basically upright premise." Later he comments, "The wonder of *Knocked Up* is that it never scolds or sneers. It is sharp but not mean, sweet but not soft, and for all its rowdy obscenity it rarely feels coarse or crude."

So, according to Scott, *Knocked Up* preaches without being preachy. It communicates using humor, but it is biting. What can we learn from this? To be relevant, to be heard, to be effective communicators, we need to be extremely aware of how the Millennials are communicating (myspace.com, facebook.com, IM, texts), what and who they are talking about, how to answer their questions, the need to be honest about life's realities rather than overly saccharine, and perhaps



how to inject some humor into our interaction with them.

Scott's other key insight is that regarding the film's target audience.

"Mr. Apatow's critique of contemporary mores is easy to miss — it is obscured as much by geniality as by profanity — but it is nonetheless severe and directed at the young men who make up the core of this film's likely audience. The culture of sexual entitlement and compulsive consumption encourages men to remain boys, for whom women serve as bedmates and babysitters. Resistance requires the kind of quixotic heroism Steve Carell showed in *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* or a life-changing accident, like Alison's serendipitous pregnancy."

Commonly called the "Peter Pan" principle, sadly many Millennials, Christian and non alike, have never had a father or role model to teach them how to grow up. As CNR has asserted before in this space, the greatest problem facing young women today may in fact be the dearth of courageous, virtuous and visionary young men. This is not a problem easily remedied by pregnancy centers, but by parents and secondarily, churches. May we in the life movement take to heart this cry whether it comes from a laudable, Christian source or a common, worldly one.

"No rationale is given in the film for her decision to keep her baby, but certainly seeing the evidence of her child's beating heart must have played some role. Images of children in utero can help to overcome our culture's irrational idea that the physical fact and moral worth of the human person that is in a woman's womb from the moment of conception should be determined solely on the basis of whether or not she is happy about her pregnancy at the time. Sure, Alison cries at this first, conclusive evidence of her untimely pregnancy. But it is not long after that she commits to carry her baby. "Knocked Up" is an outstanding argument for the need for women to see what is going on inside their bodies when they are pregnant. If your local pro-life pregnancy counseling center is not equipped with an ultrasound machine and a licensed technician to run it – help them get both – quick!" – Mark Newman, "A Diamond in the Raunch: Pro-Life Positions Emerge in "Knocked Up" and "Waitress"; MinistryMovies.com.