

Pregnancy Help Center

Agency History

History



The Pregnancy Help Center emerged from a conversation shared during a Sunday School class in 1981 in a coastal state church. A nurse anesthetologist had undergone four abortions, and lamented about the lack of options for pregnant women to receive care, as well as learn about their options. Out of this discussion, the church that housed that particular Sunday School class started the Pregnancy Help Center. It was initially staffed with volunteers, one of whom was asked to become the full time executive director in 1983, and remains in that position today. She was originally the only paid staff member during the beginnings of the clinic.

The purpose of the clinic is to administer aid to women in “crisis” pregnancies. They seek to provide alternative solutions particularly to women they term as “at risk” for getting an abortion. When a pregnant woman seeks help at the clinic, she initially undergoes an intake interview with a trained volunteer. Included in this interview are questions about her health background, sexual partners, and faith background. In the beginning, they were limited in the services they provided, but by 2005 they had become a certified medical clinic, not to mention one of a growing number of clinics that offered 3D and 4D ultrasounds, through which expectant mothers were able to view in more detail their unborn child. Their services have also expanded to include STD testing, as well as life skills classes for women and counseling services for men. Their network of support has also expanded from the church that initially opened the clinic, to a network churches throughout the state who regularly hold fundraisers, Walks for Life, and awareness campaigns.

In 2006, they expanded to a second location in an office that formerly housed an abortion clinic. To Sheila, the executive director, this was seen as divine intervention, as well as a source of pride that they were able to open a clinic that offered abortion alternatives in this particular location.

Since the clinic’s expansion, they have also formed several partnerships within the coastal state, most importantly with a County Department of Health and Human Services. They are a

part of a network of pregnancy aid clinics to which many local women, particularly low-income, are referred to in order to receive aid. In addition, the executive director has built connections with several faith-based pregnancy clinic associations that share the clinic's vision of providing abortion alternatives to expectant mothers, as well as state lawmakers that hold pro-life views.

They seek to establish long term, sustainable relationships of the women that seek aid at the clinic, and mark these relationships with photos of families of women who have been aided by the clinic throughout the years.

Timeline

1982 Pregnancy Help Center is established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

1983 New full-time executive director is hired.

2005 Clinic becomes medically certified. Sonograms offered by clinic.

2006 Second clinic opens in former abortion clinic. Sonograms are offered there as well.

Finances

The Pregnancy Help Center is funded by area churches and groups, grants, designated gifts, fundraising, and individuals. Their expenses ranged from over \$300K in 2005 to over \$400K in 2007. The majority of the expenses go toward pregnancy counseling and programs (80%) which are all offered to clients at no charge, and the rest is put toward administration and fundraising. The clinic partners with area churches through campaigns seeking to both raise awareness of the pro-life cause and offer congregation members a chance to be involved with and learn more about the clinic. Examples of these fundraising techniques include the Baby Bottle Campaign, in which churches fill up baby bottles with donations for the clinic, and the annual Walk for Life, where individuals sign up and seek sponsorship for walks to raise funds.



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