

RTL at the Fair: The Testimony of a Child

Every year our fair volunteers experience moments that highlight the importance of Right to Life's presence at the Shelby County Fair and other events. During this year's fair, a nine-year old boy approached the booth and asked why there was a "Donations" jar. Our volunteer explained a little bit about RTL's mission and what the organization's financial needs were, noting that it costs money even to purchase exhibit space at the fair. Half an hour later, the boy returned and placed a one dollar bill in the jar.



This young man's contribution is testimony to his belief in the importance of pro-life witness. It's also a reminder to us at RTL to be good stewards of the resources that you've entrusted to us to promote the cause of respect for life. We don't know the boy's name, but we're grateful for his support and his example to all of us.

We're grateful to all of you as well, for your financial support and for your countless hours of service to the pro-life cause. A big thank you to Karen and Les Berning who organize the fair exhibit each year, and to the many volunteers who staff the booth during the week.

Mark your calendar

- Deadline for submissions to the September newsletter: August 22.
- Board meeting: August 6 , 7 p.m.
- National Life Chain: Sunday, October 6.
- Women's Center Banquets: October 9 or October 10.

Clothing center report

In June, 117 clients purchased items, 10 used certificates from classes, 40 received free items, and 3 were referred to the Women's Center.

Right to Life of Shelby County is a 501(c)(3) educational and service organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible.

Gov. Kasich Signs Budget De-funding Planned Parenthood

Governor John Kasich has signed what pro-life advocates in Ohio are calling the "most pro-life budget in history" thanks to the leadership of Speaker Bill Batchelder and Senate President Keith Faber in the legislature.

Governor Kasich approved the following five Ohio Right to Life-endorsed measures:

- Reprioritization of family planning funds away from Planned Parenthood
- Heartbeat informed consent requirement
- Establishment of new funding for pregnancy centers
- Ban on public hospitals from making transfer agreements with abortion clinics
- Strengthening of abortion clinic regulation

"Ohio Right to Life applauds Governor Kasich and the vast pro-life majorities in the House and Senate. Low-income pregnant women will now receive greater care and their unborn child will have a much greater opportunity to be born healthy. It took great compassion and courage for our Governor and pro-life legislature to stand up to the abortion industry that blatantly pressured them," said President of Ohio Right to Life Mike Gonidakis.

"It should come as no surprise that these laws received the General Assembly's and Governor's approval. The people of Ohio elected a pro-life legislature as well as a pro-life Governor. We should all take great comfort in knowing that the majority of our state leaders truly value precious human life as well as higher standards for women's health care," he added.

By Steven Ertelt, LifeNews.com, July 1, 2013. Edited for space.

Exceptional Pro-Life Conference Coming Up in Dayton

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The 10th annual LifeTech Conference: Current Perspectives on Pro-Life Science, Technology, and Bioethics will be held September 7, 2013. The conference always presents an excellent lineup of speakers and this year is no exception. Confirmed speakers include: Dr. Patrick Lee of Franciscan University of Steubenville; Joshua Danis, Family & Respect Life Coordinator for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati; Dr. Ashley Fernandes of the Wright State School of Medicine; Maureen McDaniel of the Ohio Medical Ultrasound Society; and well-known author Michael Rose.

The event takes place 9am to 4pm, September 7, at the Hope Hotel, Wright Patterson Air Force Base. The registration fee is \$50 or \$25 for students and includes lunch. To register or for more information: LifeTechConference.org; info@LifeTechConference.org; or 937-849-9140.

Membership Drive Update

Thanks to chair Connie McEldowney and many members and volunteers, Shelby County Right to Life's 2013 membership drive has enjoyed success. All existing members have been reminded to renew dues for 2013; nearly 150 non-members whose names were submitted by current members on their 2013 membership forms (thank you!) have been contacted and invited to join. Membership has been promoted at events including the candlelight vigil, the golf outing, and the fair booth. These efforts have resulted in the addition of around 20 new members (and counting) as well as a high renewal rate.

Please keep promoting membership in your churches and among your friends and family. Together we can make a difference.

New Study Finds "Strong" Link Between Abortion and Premature Birth

A new study found a "strong independent relationship" between a history of abortion and the risk of a subsequent preterm birth. For the pro-life community, this comes as a vindication of many years of work to draw attention to the link, despite a lack of attention from the medical community and outright denial from pro-abortion advocates.

However, the study authors attribute the risk to abortion methods now considered obsolete. According to the study published by open-source journal PLOS One, which analyzed data from Scotland, induced abortion was indeed linked with preterm birth, with the risk increasing in relation to the number of previous abortions. However, the study found that the association decreased over the study period between 1980 and 2008. The authors speculated that this could be due to the use of more modern abortion methods less likely to cause cervical trauma, particularly medication abortion. The authors conclude by recommending that the continued modernization of abortion methods "may be an effective long-term strategy to reduce global rates of preterm birth."

On the one hand, it's a surprising about-face: as recently as less than two weeks ago, Robin McMarty of RH Reality Check claimed, "There is no major medical group in the [US] that claims abortion causes preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies." This was a paraphrase of the same assertion previously made by Paige Johnson, vice president of external affairs for Planned Parenthood of Central North Carolina, and echoed by other pro-abortion groups.

On the other hand, this report and its recommendations manage to finally admit the existence of the link while attempting to further the pro-abortion cause: first, by fixing the blame squarely on outdated practices, and second, by advocating for increased use of more modern methods.

Underlying these findings is a highly disturbing reality: for decades, abortion techniques in routine use contributed significantly to the rate of preterm birth, which is associated with infant mortality and a wide range of health consequences that can impact the lifelong well-being of the child. The World Health Organization's fact sheet on preterm birth estimates that 1 million babies die annually due to complications of preterm birth. Continued on page 4

“We must never grow accustomed to evil. Never give way to discouragement.” —Pope Francis' homily on Palm Sunday
Please continue to pray for the success of all our RTL activities, especially that all receiving this newsletter will renew their membership if they have not already done so and that we will continue to enlist new members. Please share this newsletter with at least one other person this month. Thank you!



Warrior Mothers, Miracle Daughters: China's Battle for Life

For many Chinese women, keeping a daughter is a battle—and the stakes are unthinkable high.

A Chinese woman may not become pregnant without the government's permission. Under China's One-Child Policy, all couples must apply for a birth permit before starting a pregnancy. Nearly two-thirds of Chinese couples (more than 900 million people) may have only one child and will be issued only one birth permit in their lives. Pregnancy without a permit is illegal.

If an illegal pregnancy is discovered, the mother has two choices: abort the baby or pay an unbearable fine. Chinese data show that 13 million abortions are performed each year. Many of these abortions are performed on women who simply can't afford to stay pregnant. In Shanghai, where penalties are highest, the fine for an illegal pregnancy equals 25.8 years of average annual rural income.

A Chinese baby girl who escapes abortion is still in grave danger. Parents who desperately want sons and can't afford the fine for a second child sometimes discard their baby girl when her gender is discovered at birth. In China, girls are twice as likely to die in their first year of life as boys.

Poverty makes a huge impact on a mother's decision to keep her daughter. In fact, the death rate of girls in their first year of life is up to three times higher in rural, poorer areas than in urban, wealthier areas. Many poor Chinese families feel that they simply cannot afford a girl.

Chinese girls who manage to escape infanticide are often abandoned. The Chinese government's lack of transparency makes it difficult to know exactly how many girls are abandoned each year. However, we do know that fewer than half of China's orphans receive government subsidies and abandoned children are highly vulnerable to human trafficking.

Yet mothers who refuse to abort or kill their baby girl often feel that abandonment is their daughter's only hope. Illegally born girls who stay with their parents still face tremendous obstacles. Without a birth permit, a girl's parents cannot provide her with a hukou, the registration which gives Chinese citizens access to education, healthcare, marriage and even public transportation. Accepting such a fate for her child is an impossible thought for many Chinese mothers.

Together, these heartbreaking obstacles to life—abortion, infanticide, poverty, abandonment and government red tape—produce a devastating reality: China had 40 million more males than females in 2012. Millions of girls have simply disappeared.

In China today, each daughter who stays with her mother is a miracle. Each mother who chooses to keep her daughter is a warrior. But warriors cannot fight alone. At All Girls Allowed, we go where need is greatest, spreading hope and life to mothers who face the unthinkable choice of whether to keep their daughters. Each baby girl who lives is one more tiny step toward freedom and justice for women and girls in China.

By Sarah Elliott, LifeNews.com, July 10, 2013. Read more about how All Girls Allowed helps Chinese mothers fight for life at www.allgirlsallowed.org/story.



From the office manager... Thank you to all who brought in clothes hangers. Also thanks to those who remember us after their garage sales. We now have a healthy amount of clothing to start the fall and winter seasons. God bless all of you and keep spreading the news that we just love donations.



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Study Finds Link Between Abortion, Premature Birth Continued from page 2

Given the enormous impact of preterm birth on public health, the fact that the link to abortion is only being widely admitted now – after the methods being blamed are already obsolete – begs some serious questions. Is the continuing controversy around abortion having a chilling effect on researchers' willingness to study its negative side effects, their ability to secure funding to do so, and their ability to receive objective peer reviews? Is the principle driving medical recommendations "first, do no harm to the patient," or "first, do no harm to women's ability to access abortions?"

While it may be useful to identify the risks associated with an obsolete practice as a matter of trivia, medical research is most useful when it leads to the abandonment of risky practices while they are still causing harm. If this new study was the first to identify a link between induced abortion and preterm birth, we could fault the medical community for its lack of curiosity. But this study helpfully cites previous work that reveals the same trend – work that received more attention from the pro-life community than from anywhere else. Pro-life gynecologist Dr. Byron Calhoun wrote an excellent briefing paper for C-FAM revealing the ways medical journals long attempted to play down the link.

Perhaps it's time for some new recommendations: first, some much-needed introspection within the medical and academic communities with regard to how abortion politics impacts their ability to be objective and intellectually honest, and second, a call to revisit some of the other health risks associated with abortion – such as breast cancer – which the same people are still denying in precisely the same way as they denied the risk of preterm birth until a few days ago.

By Rebecca Oas, LifeNews.com, July 16, 2013. Note: Rebecca Oas writes for the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute. This article originally appeared in the pro-life group's Turtle Bay and Beyond blog. Edited for space.