



Sample Op-Ed for Heartbeat Affiliates

Note: Before starting, consider upcoming events, special days, or historic moments that you might mention in your piece. Ideas include the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Respect Life Month in October, or even Mother's Day. Get creative--there's usually something happening in the world that ties in perfectly with your life-saving work. Time-sensitive or relevant topics like these often garner more interest from editors.

Make your point in the first or second sentence. You may have 500-700 words, but you want to fill most of those with hard facts, memorable points, and even personal client stories. Then, launch into the numbers, both for your local organization and for the national pregnancy help community.

Suggested Article Submission:

For the last 50 years, pregnancy help centers have poured out compassion for millions of women, men, and children, offering hope and support to those in the valley of despair.

Here in (city), (organization's name) does just that, providing [ultrasounds, pregnancy tests, parenting classes, diapers, and baby clothes] free of charge to women facing an unexpected pregnancy.

Help like this is critical when up to 45 percent of pregnancies are considered "unintended."

While our society is often quick to formulate an opinion about what a woman should do when faced with an unexpected pregnancy, pregnancy centers like ours are here to listen and help.

Whether considering parenting, adoption, or abortion, a woman deserves an open and honest conversation about the realities of each.

Last year alone, (center name) served (number) clients, providing support and resources to empower them in their hour of need.

Consider "Mia," who came to our center last year, sure that abortion was her only choice. As she opened up to one of our counselors, she shared that abortion was actually what her boyfriend wanted, not her. He'd given her an ultimatum—to choose him or the baby.

After seeing her baby jumping around on the ultrasound, everything changed for Mia. Her face finally broke into the first smile we'd seen since she came through our door.

Today, Mia's daughter "Harper" is just over a year-old and walking. Mia is a loving, hard-working mother who can't imagine life without her child.

Nationally, over 2,750 pregnancy help centers are serving families just like this in urban, rural, and suburban communities alike.



According to a recent report from the Charlotte Lozier Institute, pregnancy help centers served nearly 2 million people in 2017, with estimated community cost savings of at least \$161 million.

(Can omit if not a medical clinic) The bulk of those savings came from the 400,100 ultrasounds performed at pregnancy centers last year. Those services saved communities over \$100 million.

As of 2017, more than 7 in 10 (or 1,944) pregnancy centers offered limited ultrasound to diagnose a viable pregnancy, establish that the pregnancy is uterine, and determine the baby's gestational age. Approximately 7,500 medical volunteers devoted their time and talents to overseeing and providing medical services such as this.

But that's not all.

Last year, pregnancy help centers provided parenting and prenatal education programs to nearly 300,000 clients across the country, setting parents up for long-term success, through pregnancy and after birth.

Pregnancy help centers even offer support in the aftermath of an abortion. In 2017, more than 24,100 clients used post-abortion recovery programming at a pregnancy center. Such programming helps women and men to overcome the emotional trauma and spiritual issues experienced after an abortion. It can include retreats, workshops, one-on-one counseling, support groups, and Bible studies.

Client satisfaction surveys from two of the largest networks of pregnancy centers show the positive impact our centers have on the clients we serve. Heartbeat International and Care Net have reported client satisfaction rates of 91 and 97 percent respectively.

Clients aren't alone in their positive views of pregnancy help centers. An impressive 80 percent of Americans maintain a favorable view of them and overwhelmingly prefer them to abortion facilities, according to a 2014 national poll commissioned by the Charlotte Lozier Institute.

Resolutions honoring pregnancy centers have been passed in 18 states, and state health departments actively refer to pregnancy centers in at least 18 states as well.

Furthermore, most of their financial support—90 percent, in fact—comes via donations from local communities.

Ultimately, pregnancy centers like ours are striving to serve women and babies in need with the utmost compassion and professionalism. The numbers bear that out, but so do the stories of the thousands of babies alive today because of the care of a local pregnancy help center.