

Sidewalk Counseling Manual

*Courtesy of
Cheryl Sullenger and Anne Franczek*

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I. Why Sidewalk Counsel?

It's your duty!

Proverbs 24:11

“Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.”

Matthew 5:14

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.”

James 1:27

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

Psalms 82:3-4

“Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

James 2:14-17

“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

Luke 10:25-37

“Love your neighbor as yourself” – Story of the Good Samaritan

Matthew 25:41-45

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’”

It's your right!

You have a right to be on any public sidewalk outside of an abortion clinic. You can talk to the women and offer them literature without fear of arrest or harassment. If police or clinic staff try to bully you into leaving or convince you you're doing something unlawful, contact a lawyer. Sign-holders do not have to keep moving, but can stand in a stationary position, except during residential pickets in some areas.

It's for everyone!

Both men and women share an important role in sidewalk counseling. In fact, many longtime sidewalk counselors are men who have saved thousands of children from the death mills. Oftentimes seeing a godly man who is standing up for children will move the woman to change her mind or convict a cowardly man to stop the killing.

II. Preparing to Sidewalk Counsel

Know your subject

Memorize key facts:

- Development of child
- Abortion procedures
- Abortion complications
- Read and know the literature you distribute

How clinics work:

- They are for-profit, even if they claim otherwise
- Trained by marketing experts to sell abortions
- Paid commission for number of abortions
- Women enter in groups to be processed and set up in rooms
- Abortionists go room to room suctioning out babies in around 5 minutes
- Recovery room for 20 minutes or more
- Women in the clinic pre-abortion don't see post-abortion women

Call/Go undercover

Find out as much as possible:

- Name of abortionist
- Cost of abortion
- Times they perform abortions
- Type of procedures
- Entrances & Exits
- Protocol for counseling/pregnancy test/abortion

Get the "dirt" on clinic/killer:

- Lawsuits
- Deaths
- Failed Inspections
- Revoked license
- Sexual abuses
- Get address (for home protests)

Spend time in prayer and the Word

Before going to the clinic, get your attitude right. Pray for the hearts of women, wisdom and the words to say. Having daily devotions in the Word of God will help keep you in check and remind you to rely on God. Remember, this is a spiritual battle and you must be armed as such. "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (Ephesians 6:11-12)

Emotionally prepare

You are going to be outside a killing center. Two will enter the clinic, only one will leave. Women WILL lie to you constantly. They are doing the work of the devil by murdering their children and lying is his native tongue (John 8:44). Remember that many women are being coerced into their abortions, so they will feel extremely vulnerable. There will be joys and disappointments, but remember your reward is in heaven.

Use the Buddy System

For safety, encouragement, and increased effectiveness, do not go to the clinic alone. Different people have different gifts that will enable them to reach different women.

Leave Toddlers/Distractions at Home

Toddlers require constant supervision on the street for their safety. If your intention is to sidewalk counsel, your toddlers will hinder your efforts and distract your attention from the women you are trying to help. Also, don't answer unrelated phone calls or texts while outside clinic. You may miss an important opportunity and downplay the seriousness of what's happening inside.

Arrive Early

Sometimes women arrive before 7am. Do not risk missing them. Talk to other sidewalk counselors or use information gleaned from undercover work to know when to arrive. You should arrive to the clinic before women start arriving and prepare to be there for several hours.

Recommended Supplies

English Literature: this should include phone numbers of local crisis pregnancy centers. Bring enough to last the day. If you run out, you limit your ability to reach women.

Spanish Literature: Generally, you will need fewer of these than English, but it may depend on the clinic where you are counseling.

Recommended Literature for Sidewalk Counseling

All the following are available in English and Spanish

- "Before You Choose" – www.cherishca.com, 916-451-5660
- "Did You Know" – hayespub.tripod.com, 513-681-7559
- Graphic Photo Cards – www.lifedynamics.com
- "Post Abortion Syndrome: Are You at Risk?" – www.hh76.com, 1-800-858-3040, item # 970PA
- "Watch me grow!" – www.littleonepublishing.com, 443-799-3978
- "Just The Facts." – www.daytonlife.org, info@daytonlife.org
- "Birth Control Pills: How They Work" – www.prolifegear.com, 540-659-4171
- "Your Sexual Exposure" – www.hh76.com, 1-800-858-3040, item #922YS
- "Accepting Your Miracle" – www.prolifegear.com, 540-659-4171
- Most Current Human Life Alliance publication – www.humanlife.org, 651-484-1040

Sidewalk Counseling Binder: This useful tool can organize your presentation and visually impact the women you are communicating with. It keeps all your documentation at your fingertips.

Closest Crisis Pregnancy Center Details: Have a written phone number/address for the nearest CPC in the event a woman decides to leave the clinic. It is also helpful if you have previously visited the CPC in case you need to drive a woman to the center.

DVD Player and Pro-life DVDs: fetal sonogram DVDs or an abort73.com DVD can be helpful visual aids.

General Literature/Tracts for Passersby: Never underestimate the impact you can have on people walking by the clinic.

Fetal Models: This helps the women visualize their babies. They need to know that he/she is not a lump of tissue, but a real child.

Signs: These will communicate when you are not able to. They educate the public and prepare the women entering the clinic for your message. Try not to hold a sign if you are sidewalk counseling because they get in

Recommended Supplies *continued*

the way. Graphic photo signs are an important tool that can save a life. A picture is worth a thousand words.

Notebook and Pen: You may need to give a woman your phone number or take down hers. These items are also helpful for jotting down license plate numbers or descriptions of people who harass you.

Camera/Video Camera: This is for your protection. Aggressive people will almost always back down if you take their picture. It could also provide helpful evidence if you are ever falsely accused. If an ambulance arrives for a victim of a botched abortion, document it with pictures. They may be used to warn others of abortion's dangers.

Cell Phone: You may need to make calls on behalf of a woman you are trying to help, or in the rare event you may need to call police or an attorney.

Bottled Water and Sunscreen: You need to keep yourself on the street as long as necessary in order to give help. Be prepared for the weather. Bring a snack, if necessary.

Gasoline: Make sure you always have a full tank of gas before arriving to the clinic, in case you need to give a woman a ride home or follow an ambulance to the hospital.

Identification: In the event that an issue arises with the police, you should have valid ID.

III. At the Clinic

Women in Crisis

A crisis is a unique event or series of circumstances, which threatens our well-being and interferes with our routine of daily living. A crisis forces us to deal with new and untried methods to deal with tension in our lives. It represents a turning point, which has a bearing on our future and mental health.

As a woman comes out of her crisis, there will be three possible outcomes. She may reach a resolution that is destructive (e.g. abortion) and come out of the crisis with a lower level of coping. Or she may weather the crisis, in which case she comes out at the same level of coping as before. Finally, she may even grow emotionally and/or spiritually during the crisis and attain a higher level of coping.

A person must make a decision during a crisis. Crisis intervention involves helping that person to reach the best decision for them.

Steps to Crisis Intervention

- 1. Make contact:** Establish a rapport with the woman.
- 2. Reduce anxiety:** Allow the woman to express her feelings.
- 3. Focus on the issues:** Find out her situation and offer solutions.
- 4. Encourage actions:** Help her decide to leave the clinic area.
- 5. Continue to help:** Follow up when possible.

What to Look For

Abortion Patients

- **Watch for vehicles with young women.** 52% of all U.S. woman obtaining abortions are younger than 25. They will rarely come for an abortion alone because they are required to have someone drive them home from the abortion. (On rare occasion they drive themselves anyway). Look for young couples, groups of young girls, mother/daughter pairs, or older couples escorting a young woman. Check the back seat for passengers. Also, watch for vehicles with Mexican plates. Those are almost always abortion patients.
- **Sweat pants or baggy clothing and wet hair.** When the woman makes an appointment for an abortion she is given instructions to prepare herself for the abortion. She is told to wear sweat pants or comfortable clothing and shower before she arrives for her appointment to help her relax. This is not always the case, though, since some women are having non-surgical abortions and still wear tight clothing.
- **Look for green paper work, white maps, or money orders.** As the woman enters notice what she is holding and what is around her in the car. FPA pre-abortion instructions are green, often stapled to a white map. Sometimes women will bring money orders. Generally speaking, abortion mills are the places that require payment at the time of medical services.
- **Body Language.** When a woman arrives with a group of people, you can sometimes tell if she is there for an abortion by observing her body language. She will usually be the quiet one who hesitates to look you in the face. She may seem uncomfortable, indifferent, despondent, or stressed out. If she comes out, others may engage you in conversation to distract you or keep you from zeroing in on her. Be mindful of small things!
- **Eating or drinking.** Women are told not to eat, drink, or smoke before their abortion. If a woman is eating or drinking she is not going to have an abortion that day. Sometimes she will smoke anyway, so that is not an indicator of whether she is abortion-minded or not.

Post-abortive Women

A woman who has had an abortion is generally easy to spot. She may walk slowly, gingerly, or slightly hunched over. She will have a band-aid on the back of her hand where the IV was inserted (or sometimes under the elbow, or on her wrist). She may be carrying white paperwork or a prescription bottle or envelope.

People Entering for Other Services

Other offices may be open so watch out for people entering for other services. Home health care nurses usually have a green bag or a stack of file folders. Folks getting blood drawn from the lab will usually have white multiple form paperwork. It is still beneficial to offer generic literature to these people. Learn to recognize these people so that you can build relationships with them in order to be an effective witness to them as well, and remind them that they work in a building where innocent blood is shed.

Talk to Everyone Coming and Going

Regardless of whether or not you think the person is going in for an abortion, or leaving from an abortion, talk to her! If you see a single male, talk to him - he may be there to pick up his girlfriend, or for support. You never know, and you shouldn't take the risk.

What to Say and How to Say It

As you gain experience, you will develop your own unique style of approaching women at the clinic. Here are some tips to help you:

- When approaching a vehicle or woman at the abortion clinic remember to smile, make eye contact, and be friendly. This will put her at ease and help her to trust you.
- Only one at a time should speak. When too many try to talk the woman cannot hear all that is being said. This often makes her feel frightened or harassed. Do not interrupt!
- **Opening lines:** "We have help for you," "This is important information to protect you," "Read this before you make this decision," "There are other options."
- **If she won't stop:** Get literature into her hands. Don't ask if she wants it, just offer. Make sure the graphic signs are visible as she walks inside.
- **If she does stop:** Use your literature or sidewalk counseling binder. Open the literature up for her and point out the facts you wish to emphasize. Hand women considering abortion the fetal model. Point out the phone numbers of organizations in the area that offer free help to pregnant women.
- **Continue the conversation as long as possible:** "Abortion isn't safe," "I'm here because I care about you," "They only want your money," "Please don't kill your baby," "This will haunt you the rest of your life," "Look how perfect these tiny feet are," or "You can see that this baby is a boy." Ask the woman questions that do not require "yes" or "no" answers. Try to ascertain her situation and find out what she needs to help her through this crisis time in her life. Point out the resources that are available to her that will help meet those needs. Suggest adoption, if appropriate. Offer to be her friend but be careful not to make promises you can't keep. During this time you can share personal stories about an abortion, family and/or crisis pregnancy.
- **Do not ignore the husband or boyfriend:** Often he is the key to turning her around. Include him in the conversation and explain his responsibilities as the man of the family. Make him an ally, if possible. If you can convince him, frequently the woman will gladly follow. Appeal to his pride as a man. Remind him that it is his child too. If the man is hostile, focus your attention on the woman as it is ultimately her decision.

- **Encourage her to leave the clinic area:** Invite her to a nearby restaurant for breakfast or coffee, so that you can talk comfortably. (If she eats, she cannot have an abortion that day.) Invite her to your home if you live nearby. Offer to drive or escort her to a nearby crisis pregnancy center. Ask her to go home and think about it some more. Only one out of four women who leave the clinic will ever return, according to Planned Parenthood’s own numbers. Getting her away from the abortion mill should be your primary goal.
- **If a woman does decide to leave the clinic:** Encourage and praise her for making the right decision and offer to pray for her. It is important to exchange names and phone numbers so you can follow up with her if she desires. Sometimes she may feel uncomfortable giving you her number, so give her yours and encourage her to call you later.
- **If a woman decides to enter the clinic anyway:** Keep talking until the door closes behind her. You never know if those last words will be the ones to prick her heart and cause her to come out. Pray for her once she is inside that God would convict her and help her to change her mind. If undercover work has revealed that women can still hear when inside, continue preaching the truth. Speak to a friend that has brought her and ask that person to go in and bring her out. He or she brought her to the mill and now shares part of the responsibility of trying to change her mind. Use them to help you, if you can.
- **You must be aggressive:** You are the last line of defense for the unborn child. Do not worry about hurting anyone’s feelings. You can apologize later. Your popularity is not worth a child’s life. Remember that the people entering the abortion mill are on their way to kill their baby. They need to feel bad about that. Be sensitive to the situation, but do all that you can to save the child’s life.

Confrontation

At the clinic we must tell women the truth. Confrontation is an important skill the counselor must master and use. It is “tough love” to confront someone for their wrong-doing -- but love none the less!

Four Aspects of Confrontation:

- 1. The Motive is Love:** The motive behind the confrontation must be genuine love for the woman. “Open rebuke is better than secret love” (Proverbs 27:5). If anger, frustration, scorn, or assertiveness motivates the sidewalk counselor, the woman will feel punished or rejected.
- 2. The Goal is to Benefit:** The purpose of confrontation is to benefit the woman, not condemn her. As she turns from destructive behavior and accepts the truth of her situation, she can live as God created and commanded her to.
- 3. The Context is Trust:** Confrontation can succeed only when love has been demonstrated and trust has grown. This can actually take place in only a few moments. By your actions, the woman will know that you are speaking out of love and concern for her and will appreciate your concern, even though she may disagree.
- 4. The Nature Should be Specific:** You should face the woman with the truth about her particular behavior or attitude. Unless confrontation is clearly focused, it can be confusing. If criticism is too general, the woman may feel defensive or even condemned.

These are the ideals. Not every woman will form a trusting bond with the sidewalk counselor. In that case, the truth must continue to be told even it makes her feel guilty or angry. It is not your job as a sidewalk counselor to make a woman feel good about aborting her baby. If she decides to go through with it, she should feel bad. “Godly sorrow leads to repentance” (See 2 Corinthians 7:9-11).

Proverbs 15:1 says, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” However, gentle does NOT necessarily mean a quiet voice or “feel good” statement. One definition of gentle is delicate. Delicate means using discrimination in dealing with something or someone. Use wisdom and tact, but do not be afraid to confront people with the harsh truth.

Dealing with Difficult People

Angry Responses

Some people will take offense to your message and become angry with you. You need to use wisdom in deciding who to attempt to communicate with and who to ignore.

Proverbs 26:4-5 states, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.” Proverbs 15:1 says, “A soft answer turns away wrath.”

Most people who respond angrily were involved in an abortion decision at some point in time. Sometimes they can be calmed down, reasoned with, and ministered to.

Other times, the more reasoning that is attempted, the angrier the person gets. It is best to just ignore that person – they will usually tire of venting and eventually leave. Try to keep from becoming angry with them and lashing out. This is a very big temptation, but it is important not to give in to it. Do not let an argumentative person occupy your time or distract you from ministering to the women entering the abortion clinic.

If someone threatens or inflicts physical harm, call 911. **Never** strike the first blow but be prepared to protect yourself and others. The camera can come in handy here. Most threatening people will run away when they see that their picture is being taken. If you or someone you are with is ever attacked, you have the right to place that person under citizen’s arrest. Take pictures of the offender. Write down a description of the person, his vehicle, and his license plate number. You have the right to be on the street without being assaulted or battered. This situation rarely happens, but if it does you will be thankful you were prepared.

Abortion Clinic Staff

Occasionally you may see abortion clinic staff or even the abortionist entering or leaving the clinic. Clinic workers will often come outside on their breaks to smoke. This is a great time to witness to them. You may offer to help them find a job that doesn’t require baby-killing, many abortion clinic personnel and security guards have been led to Christ this way, including Norma McCorvey (Jane Roe in the Roe v. Wade decision). Today Norma is pro-life and works full-time to end abortion because of the faithful testimonies of pro-life Christians. Clinic escorts (“Deathscorts”) will try to hinder you from reaching women by quickly dragging the woman inside. Remind the woman that this is supposed to be her “choice” and she can stop and talk to you. Make sure you witness to the “deathscorts” when no abortion-bound women are present.

Post-Abortive Women

Women leaving the clinic are often not in the mood to talk. They are frequently emotionally distraught and guilt-ridden. Since you stand against the very sin they have just committed, they may be distrustful or fearful of you. Sometimes they are suffering from physical pain and just cannot deal with speaking to you. Be sensitive to each woman’s attitude and condition and minister to them accordingly. Do not upbraid them for killing their child. It is over and cannot be undone. Often it will be best to simply hand them post-abortion literature and not engage them in conversation. If possible, give them the Gospel. Some are at a low point in their lives and willing to talk, but this is rare.

Sidewalk Counseling | Resources

Sidewalk Counseling

Preparation

- “No Greater Joy,” a video series by Pro-life Action League - www.prolifeaction.org/sidewalk
- “The Use of Graphic Images in the Public Forum” - www.operationrescue.org/files/useofgraphicsigns
- www.abortiondocs.org
- www.attwn.org

Literature

Most of the following are available in English and Spanish

- “Before You Choose” – www.cherishca.org
- “Did You Know” – hayespub.tripod.com
- Graphic Photo Cards – www.lifedynamics.com
- “Post Abortion Syndrome: Are You at Risk?” – www.hh76.com, item # 970PA
- “Watch me grow!” – www.littleonepublishing.com
- “Just The Facts.” – www.daytonlife.org
- “Birth Control Pills: How They Work” – www.prolifegear.com, item # YU26
- “Your Sexual Exposure” – www.hh76.com, item # 922YS
- Human Life Alliance Street Magazine – www.humanlife.org

Support for Women in Crisis Pregnancy

(free pregnancy testing, counseling, and othe forms of assistance)

- **OptionLine** - (800) 712-HELP, www.optionline.org
- **Pregnancy Hotline** - (800) 848-LOVE(5683), www.1stwaylifecenter.com
- **Sisters of Life** - (877) 777-1277, www.sistersoflife.org
- **Birthright** – (800) 550-4900, www.birthright.org

Adoption

- **Bethany Christian Services Adoption Agency** – (800) 238-4269, www.bethany.org
- **National Christian Adoption Fellowship** – www.adoptionfellowship.org
- **Adoption Services** – (800) 943-0400, www.adoptionservices.org

Post-Abortion

Organizations

- **Silent No More Awareness** – www.silentnomoreawareness.org
- **Rachel’s Vineyard** – www.rachelsvineyard.org
- **Project Rachel** – www.hopeafterabortion.com
- **National Office of Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing** – 800-5WE-CARE, www.noparh.org
- **Sisters of Life** – www.sistersoflife.org
- **Elliot Institute**: www.afterabortion.org

Books

- *Recall Abortion* by Janet Morana
- *Forbidden Grief: The Unspoken Pain of Abortion* by Theresa Burke
- *Redeeming a Father’s Heart* by Kevin Burke
- *Aborted Women: Silent No More* by David Reardon
- *Forgiven and Set Free* by Linda Cochran

