



REPRODUCTIVE EQUITY NOW

How to Recognize a Crisis Pregnancy Center

What is a Crisis Pregnancy Center?

Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs) are anti-choice organizations that discourage pregnant individuals from having abortions. CPCs hide their anti-abortion agenda and do not provide fact-based counseling on all options. They often pose as full-spectrum reproductive health clinics when, in fact, they do not offer all reproductive health care services. People deserve unbiased, all-options counseling when facing an unintended pregnancy.

CPC Logos and Organizations

CPCs are also known as Pregnancy Care Centers, Pregnancy Resource Centers, or Pregnancy Help Centers. **Unfortunately, they can be hard to spot.** A Heartbeat International Logo is a clear sign of a CPC. Other organizations frequently associated with CPCs include Birthright International, Care Net, and the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA). The following logos are clear signs you are dealing with a CPC:



Common CPC Tactics

- Using fear-based language, such as “Pregnant and need help?” or “Pregnant, scared, and in need of help?”
- Linking abortion to infertility, breast cancer, depression, and mental health problems or talking about abortion as if it is a scary and dangerous procedure despite the fact that there is no scientific basis for such links¹

¹ See, Tong, Huazhang et al., *No association between abortion and risk of breast cancer among nulliparous women: Evidence from a meta-analysis*. 99 *Medicine* e20251 (2020), doi:10.1097/MD.00000000000020251; *The mental health impact of receiving vs. being denied a wanted abortion*, ANSIRH (July 2018), available at https://www.ansirh.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/mental_health_issue_brief_7-24-2018.pdf.



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- Having names with the words “choice,” or “choices,” “hope,” or “options”
- Offering abstinence-only sex education, post-abortion support, spiritual support, or bible study. While some people need and want post-abortion counseling, and may seek it through their faith leaders, there is no scientific evidence that abortion results in adverse mental health outcomes.²
- Discouraging you from seeking abortion or telling you that you “have plenty of time to make up your mind” instead of offering all-options counseling free from shame and stigma
- Talking about abortion reversal, something not supported by science³

Recognizing a CPC In Person

- **Check your clinic’s name carefully.** CPCs sometimes set up next to real healthcare clinics and medical providers.
- **Make sure you sign a HIPAA form.** Legitimate health care clinics will have you fill out a HIPAA form, which is a medical form that protects your private patient information. CPCs do not require this form and, as such, have no legal obligation to protect your personal, private medical information.
- **Look at the posters on the wall.** CPCs often make abortion seem scary or unsafe or have a message of “choose life” instead of offering unbiased all-options counseling.
- **Get your questions answered.** A real clinic will answer your questions before you make an appointment. CPCs often insist you make an appointment before confirming whether they offer abortion, STD testing, or contraceptives. CPCs may also shame you for being sexually active or seeking reproductive healthcare.
- **Trust your gut.** CPCs may lie to you about how far along you are in your pregnancy⁴—either to make you think you have more time than you do to make a decision or to make you think that the time to make a decision has already passed. Get a second opinion if what they say doesn’t sound right or make sense to you.
- **Get a physical copy of your results.** If a clinic refuses to give you a physical copy of your pregnancy test results or appears to unreasonably delay giving you the results (i.e. they say they will call you or mail them to you), you may be at a CPC. Testing for pregnancy can be done in a clinic, and you should get results within minutes.

² *The mental health impact of receiving vs. being denied a wanted abortion*, ANSIRH (July 2018), available at https://www.ansirh.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/mental_health_issue_brief_7-24-2018.pdf.

³ Facts Are Important: Medication Abortion "Reversal" Is Not Supported by Science, ACOG (n.d.), available at <https://www.acog.org/advocacy/facts-are-important/medication-abortion-reversal-is-not-supported-by-science>.

⁴ Amy G. Bryant and Jonas J. Swartz, *Why Crisis Pregnancy Centers Are Legal but Unethical*, 20 *AMA J Ethics* 269 (2018) doi: 10.1001/journalofethics.2018.20.3.pfor1-1803.



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- **Listen for language.** If the attendant only uses terms like “baby” and “child” and doesn’t respect the language you are using, including talking about the gestational age of the fetus or embryo, you may be in a CPC.
- **Make sure you have a choice.** If a pregnancy test comes back positive and the attendant speaks to you as if you have already made up your mind to carry the pregnancy to term, you may be in a CPC.
- **Watch out for offers.** CPCs may offer you baby clothes, food, accessories, or financial support if you don’t have an abortion. Real clinics will make no such offers. Providing people with postnatal support for wanted pregnancies is important but such support should not be used to coerce you into a reproductive health care choice you are not comfortable with.

The following offer resources to help find real abortion providers:

- [REN New England Abortion Care Guide](#)
- [INeedAnA.com](#)
- [National Federation](#)
- [Abortion Clinics Online Directory](#)
- [Bedsider](#)
- [Plan C](#)