



NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation

December 2005

Dear Texan:

NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation is pleased to present “*Crisis Pregnancy Centers: A Hidden Threat to Women’s Health?*” report. This report analyzes the disturbing, but growing influence of anti-abortion advocacy groups known as “crisis pregnancy centers” and how they undermine health care for women and children in Texas.

This report comes at a critical time: for the first time ever, anti-choice leaders in the Texas Legislature eliminated funding for preventative health screening and pregnancy prevention services in order to divert up to \$5 million for crisis pregnancy centers. As a result, the Texas Department of State Health Services estimates that almost 17,000 low-income women will lose access to preventative health care and family planning over the next two years.

Lawmakers made these cuts despite dismaying women’s health statistics in Texas.

Texas currently ranks:

- No. 46 in the country in the percentage of women who have had a pap smear in the past three years (pap smears help detect and prevent cervical cancer).
- No. 36 in deaths related to coronary heart disease and No. 38 in stroke-related deaths among women. Texas also has one of the nation’s highest rates of diabetes-related deaths among women.
- No. 50 in the percentage of women age 18-64 who have health insurance.
- No. 5 in teen pregnancies, and No. 2 in births to teenagers.

Low-income Texas women and families need access to basic health care and pregnancy prevention services, not access to biased counseling at crisis pregnancy centers. It is irresponsible to take scarce taxpayer dollars away from pregnancy prevention and health care and divert it to unlicensed, biased, non-medical counseling. We hope these materials help Texans better understand this hidden threat to the health needs of Texas women and families.

Sarah J. Wheat
Executive Director

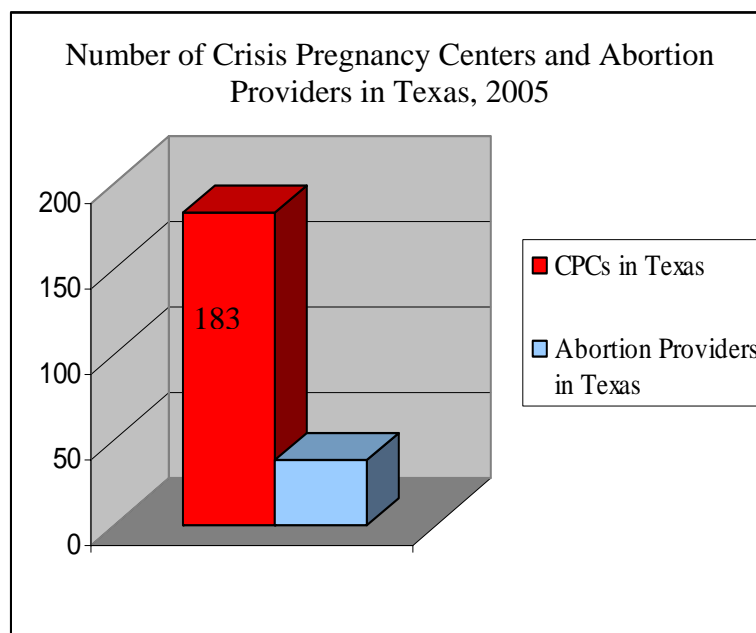
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Crisis Pregnancy Centers in Texas

- Texas' 183 crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) outnumber the 43 clinics that provide abortions by more than four to one.¹



- In an unprecedented political maneuver by anti-choice leaders in the Texas Legislature in 2005, the state for the first time is directly funding CPCs. It is doing so with funds previously allocated to preventative medical and pregnancy prevention services. A FY 2005-2006 budget rider shifts \$5 million dollars from preventative health screening and contraceptive services to unlicensed and unregulated CPCs. During this

¹ The 2005 resource guide published by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), "A Woman's Right to Know," lists 183 "pregnancy care centers." TDSHS cites "approximately 43" licensed abortion facilities existing in Texas as of 12/05 (www.dshs.state.tx.us).

two-year period, an estimated 16,668 low-income women will lose access to preventative health care and family planning services, according to the Department of State Health Services.²

- Family planning clinics provide comprehensive and preventive health care to women. NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation views the decision to cut funding for these health care providers to instead finance biased counseling centers that do not offer critical preventative health and pregnancy prevention services as reckless. Texas ranks No. 46 in the country in the percentage of women who have had a pap smear in the past three years. Texas ranks No. 50 in the percentage of women of childbearing age who have health insurance.³
- Under Texas' 2003 "Women's Right to Know Act," the State Department of Health Services provides women seeking abortions with a list of public and private agencies that provide pregnancy prevention counseling, medical referrals and that offer "alternatives to abortion." This list notably excludes agencies that provide abortions, abortion referrals or that are affiliated with organizations that provide these services. As a result, this "Right-to-Know" guide essentially is a list of CPCs.⁴ The guide also indicates that these CPCs or Pregnancy Care Centers are not licensed by the State of Texas.
- Many Texas CPCs have a religious, anti-choice mission. The Austin-based Heidi Group, for example, notes that "125 mothers came to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ" as a result of a visit to their CPC.⁵ The Corpus Christi Pregnancy Center (CCPC)'s overall mission is "to share God's gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ with women in crisis pregnancies. By ministering to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of these

² Lomi Kriel, "Family Planning Losing, Anti-Abortion Gaining," *San Antonio Express News*, May 19, 2005.

http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/stategov/stories/MYSA051905.8A.lege_abortion.28a6d164a.html

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, *Women's Health and Mortality Chartbook*, www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/chartbook.htm

⁴ Texas Health and Safety Code, Title II, Ch 171

⁵ The Heidi Group, "Outreach" 2002 http://www.heidigroup.org/about_us.php

women, the CCPC encourages them to consider God's purpose for their lives and that of their baby.”⁶

- In the past, Texas public officials monitored CPCs for compliance with state laws. The Texas Attorney General’s Office filed charges against CPCs in 1985 for deliberately deceiving consumers. That suit stopped CPCs from advertising themselves as abortion clinics in the telephone book. “Regardless of where one stands on the legality or morality of abortion,” Assistant Attorney General Stephen Gardner said, “the practices at issue here are about whether there is a right to lie to another human being.”⁷

⁶ <http://ccpregnancy.com>

⁷ Texas Assistant Attorney General Stephen Gardener, testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Regulation, Business Opportunities, and Energy, September 20, 1991.



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What are “Crisis Pregnancy Centers” (And Why Should You Be Worried About Them)?

Background on Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs):

- Crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) typically provide biased and oftentimes inaccurate “counseling” without any health care services. Their mission is to dissuade women from choosing abortion. As such they are anti-choice groups, not health care providers. Moreover, they provide no pregnancy prevention services.
- The first CPC was established in 1967 by Robert Pearson in response to Hawaii’s changing abortion laws. Estimates of the current number of CPCs nationwide range from 2,500 to 4,000.⁸
- Few CPCs are bonafide medical clinics. Most are staffed by volunteers, not medical professionals. CPCs often represent themselves as comprehensive reproductive health clinics by choosing medical-sounding names, locating near comprehensive women’s health clinics or by evading questions about what services they actually provide. Their primary purpose, however, is to advance an ideological, political, and religious agenda.⁹
- In contrast, comprehensive reproductive health care clinics offer women a full range of preventative medical services and are highly regulated. Because CPCs often have no medical professionals on staff, they are not licensed or regulated. Such facilities have no obligation to meet standards

⁸ Victoria Lin and Cynthia Dailard, “Crisis Pregnancy Centers Seek To Increase Political Clout, Secure Government Subsidy.” *The Guttmacher Report on Public Policy*, No. 2, 2002.

⁹ A number of states, including Texas, New York, California, Ohio, Missouri, and North Dakota, have investigated or sued CPCs under consumer protection laws for deliberately deceiving clients.

of care, provide full and medically accurate information or respect client confidentiality.

CPC Controversies:

- The Corpus Christi Pregnancy Center, a CPC that receives state funding to provide abstinence-only education to Texas schoolchildren, promotes the view that condoms are unreliable in preventing the transmission of HIV and that having sex outside of marriage is physically and psychologically harmful. Their website's "Resource Library" includes medically inaccurate materials that claim "abortion is the most serious problem a woman will ever incur," causing "post abortion syndrome" and physical problems like sterility.¹⁰ The Center's mission is "to share God's gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ with women in crisis pregnancies."¹¹
- Hope Pregnancy Centers of Texas, one of 183 CPCs promoted by the Texas State Department of Health Services in its "Women's Right to Know Resource Directory" alludes to the mythical "post abortion syndrome," incorrectly calling it a type of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder like that suffered by war veterans and victims of rape and torture.¹² "Post abortion syndrome" is not recognized by the professional medical community; even President Reagan's anti-choice Surgeon General C. Everett Koop found no evidence of psychological problems following an abortion.¹³ In fact, documented incidents of mental illness and hospitalization are greater after childbirth than after abortion.¹⁴
- The Causeway Medical Clinic, a comprehensive women's health clinic, joined seven women plaintiffs in suing William Graham, who ran the "Causeway Center for Women," a CPC in New Orleans. The plaintiffs alleged fraud and false advertising after Graham chose a name similar to that of the nearby clinic and advertised under "Abortion Services" in the

¹⁰ Corpus Christi Pregnancy Center at <http://ccpregnancy.com/resouces.php>.

¹¹ <http://ccpregnancy.com/mission.php>

¹² <http://www.hopepc.com>

¹³ C. Everett Koop as quoted in, David HP. "Comment: post-abortion trauma." *Abortion Review Incorporating Abortion Research Notes*, Spring, 1996, 59: 1-3.

¹⁴ Stotland N. "The myth of the abortion trauma syndrome." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1992, 268(15): 2078-2079.

telephone book. Graham told women callers that he would arrange an abortion with a private physician. But he then strung them along for weeks or months, often until it was too late to obtain a legal abortion. Graham told women that the longer they waited the safer an abortion would be, and that they could obtain an abortion until the 30th week of pregnancy.¹⁵ These statements were false and misleading. Five of the women suing Graham were forced to carry pregnancies to term against their will. “I don’t understand why he does this to people,” one victim said, “what right does he have?”¹⁶

- Neka Washington sued a Milwaukee, Wisconsin CPC for emotional and physical injuries after one of its “counselors” scratched her, held her down, and pulled her hair. Ms. Washington was also shown a video of “dead and disfigured babies,” and told that she was a “sinner” with “the devil inside her.”¹⁷
- In 2002, the New York State Attorney General’s office initiated an investigation of several CPCs after receiving complaints from women who said they had been misled about their services and received improper medical advice. One woman complained that the CPC called her father, employer, and pastor and told them that she was pregnant.¹⁸
- A Florida CPC exploited a middle school career day to promote its pregnancy counseling by setting up a booth featuring plastic models of fetuses and Bible quotations at the school.¹⁹

¹⁵ *Choice, Inc. of Texas, et al. v. William A. Graham*, Civil Action No. 04-1581, USDC, ED LA (June 3, 2005); Center for Reproductive Rights, “Louisiana Man Sued for Faking Abortion Services,” June 7, 2004, <http://www.crlp.org>; Shaila K. Dewan, “Lawsuit Says Women Were Misled to Delay Abortions,” *The New York Times*, August 5, 2004, A12.

¹⁶ Dewan, “Lawsuit Says,” *The New York Times*, August 5, 2004.

¹⁷ Tom Kertscher, “Woman Sues Pregnancy Help Center,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, May 4, 2002, 3B.

¹⁸ Alan Cooperman, “Abortion Battle: Prenatal Care or Pressure Tactics?: ‘Crisis Pregnancy Centers’ Expand and Draw Criticism,” *The Washington Post*, February 21, 2002, A1.

¹⁹ Editorial, “Pregnancy Center’s End Run at Career Day a Poor Tactic,” *Clearwater Times*, February 6, 2005, 2.

Public Funds Without Public Accountability:

- In recent years, CPCs have increased their efforts to obtain state and federal funding as they position themselves as alternatives to traditional family-planning and health care providers.
- NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation considers it irresponsible public policy to fund religious and political advocacy organizations that offer biased and inaccurate “counseling” instead of funding safe, affordable, preventative medical care and pregnancy prevention services. CPCs have the right to promote their particular political viewpoints, but should not be funded with scarce public dollars taken from preventative health and pregnancy prevention services.



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Funding Falsehoods: State and Federal Money

Texas Funding for CPCs:

- In an unprecedented political maneuver by anti-choice leaders in the Texas Legislature in 2005, the state for the first time is directly funding crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs). It is doing so with funds previously allocated to preventative medical services. In FY 2005-2006, \$5 million dollars that would have previously gone to preventative health screening and contraceptive services is being shifted to unlicensed and unregulated CPCs. As a result, an estimated 16,668 low-income women will lose access to preventative health care and family planning services.²⁰
- CPCs have sought state funding for years. Since 1999, the legislature has considered bills to issue “Choose Life” license plates and earmark the proceeds for CPCs.²¹
- Texas CPCs are currently eligible to receive state funds for “abstinence-only” programs. The Corpus Christi Pregnancy Center, for example, provides abstinence-only programs under a Department of State Health Services contract. This center provides “lifestyle counseling based upon God’s Holy Word.”²² It promotes the view that sex outside of marriage is physically and psychologically, and condoms are unreliable in preventing the transmission of HIV.²³

Funding for CPCs in Other States:

²⁰ Lomi Kriel, “Family Planning Losing, Anti-Abortion Gaining,” *San Antonio Express News*, May 19, 2005.

http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/stategov/stories/MYSA051905.8A.lege_abortion.28a6d164a.html

²¹ See SB 1900, 76(R); HB 1257, 77(R)

²² <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/abstain/awarcon.shtm> and <http://ccpregnancy.com>.

²³ <http://ccpregnancy.com/mission.php>

- Other states that fund CPCs do so through revenue from “Choose Life” license plate sales. The extra fee for these specialty plates either is earmarked directly for CPCs or is restricted to specifically exclude organizations that counsel women on all their reproductive health options, including abortion. As of August 2005, 11 states had “Choose Life” license plates, with seven of these state laws structured to directly fund CPCs or anti-choice organizations. Courts have struck down these funding programs in three states on constitutional grounds.²⁴
- Some states are using tax exemptions to support CPCs. Virginia exempts CPCs from its state sales tax, and the Missouri Legislature has considered legislation that would offer tax deductions for donations to CPCs.²⁵
- Pennsylvania, Missouri, Delaware, Michigan, Kansas and Louisiana all have directly funded CPCs with state money.²⁶ Michigan appropriated additional funds in 2004 for CPCs to purchase ultrasound machines.²⁷
- Pennsylvania spends the same amount of state funds on its “Project Women in Need” (WIN) as it does on family planning services (more than \$4 million dollars in 2002). WIN, which funds CPCs, provides pregnant women with “chastity education” and information about food pantries and temporary shelter. It does not provide any preventative or prenatal medical care.²⁸
- A Florida bill initially proposed spending \$4 million to create a statewide hotline to refer women to anti-abortion service providers. As amended, the Legislature approved \$2 million for “crisis counseling” centers that do not provide abortion care or referrals. No one applied for these funds, however, so the Governor’s Office is considering awarding the funds through a no-bid contract.²⁹

²⁴ Guttmacher Institute, “‘Choose Life’ License Plates,” *State Policies in Brief as of August 1, 2005*, http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_CLLP.pdf

²⁵ Lin and Daliard, “Crisis Pregnancy Centers,” 2002.

²⁶http://www.prochoice.org/pubs_research/publications/downloads/public_policy/state_bill_report_2003.pdf and http://www.prochoice.org/pubs_research/publications/downloads/public_policy/state_bill_report_2004.pdf

²⁷ MCL 333.9141

²⁸ Lin and Daliard, “Crisis Pregnancy Centers,” 2002

²⁹ Dara Karn, “No Bids Received for Anti-Abortion State Counseling,” *The Palm Beach Post*, September 27, 2005.

Federal Funding for CPCs:

- Most federal funding of CPCs is through abstinence-only program funds allocated under the Marriage and Healthy Family Development Initiative. CPCs got an estimated \$3 million of the \$20 million distributed under this program in FY 2001.³⁰
- President George W. Bush cited CPCs as ideal candidates for funding from his White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. “This whole faith-based initiative really ties into a larger cultural issue that we’re working on,” President Bush said, “because when you’re talking about welcoming people of faith to help people who are disadvantaged and are unable to defend themselves, the logical step is also those babies.”³¹
- Federal lawmakers have repeatedly sought direct funding for CPCs. Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA) introduced a 1999 bill that would have established an annual grant of \$85 million dollars for “alternatives-to-abortion services.” The bill provided for state partnerships with community groups that promoted childbirth over abortion and did not provide abortions or contraception or refer women to providers of these services.³² Congressman Bob Schaffer (R-CO) introduced a 2001 House Resolution expressing support for CPCs and advocating increased funding.³³ Congress has not enacted either of these proposals.
- More recent efforts seek federal funding to equip CPCs with sonogram machines. Congressman Cliff Stearns (R-FL) and Senator Jim Bunning (R-KY) introduced companion bills in 2005 to provide \$3 million to help CPCs toward this end.³⁴ Upon introduction of that same bill in 2003, Congressman Stearns repeatedly said ultrasounds can help “health

³⁰ Victoria Lin and Cynthia Dailard, “Crisis Pregnancy Centers Seek to Increase Political Clout, Secure Government Subsidy.” *The Guttmacher Report on Public Policy*, No. 2, 2002.

³¹ “Bush Ties Faith-Based Plan to Anti-abortion Effort,” *Kaiser Daily Reproductive Health Report*, February 1, 2001.

³² S. 1605 (106th Congress)

³³ H. Res. 302 (107th Congress)

³⁴ H.R. 216/S. 755 (109th Congress) These bills were previously introduced by the same sponsors in 2003 as H.R. 195/S. 340 (108th Congress)

clinics” detect birth defects.³⁵ However, this bill was purposefully written in such a way so as to specifically exclude legitimate medical clinics from eligibility for this funding.³⁶ After failing in the 108th Congress, this legislation is pending in the 109th Congress.

- CPCs believe that early ultrasound images are an effective way to dissuade women from having abortions. They are aggressively pursuing government and private funding for this equipment. Physicians generally perform ultrasounds after the 15th week of pregnancy in order to evaluate a fetus’ development and check for health problems and defects. CPCs generally perform sonograms well before 15 weeks to give a woman a “picture” of her fetus early on.³⁷

³⁵ 147 Cong. Rec. H112 (February 5, 2002) (Introduction of Ultrasound Legislation)

³⁶ NARAL Pro-Choice America, “Congress Should Not Legitimize Deceptive ‘Crisis Pregnancy Centers’ or Fund Campaigns to Mislead Women.” January 1, 2005. www.prochoiceamerica.org

³⁷ Mark Stricherz, “Saved By Sonogram,” *Christianity Today*, posted February 24, 2003; David Crary, “Abortion Foes Hope to Sway Pregnant Women with Ultrasound.” AP, February 2, 2002. *See also*, Neela Banerjee, “Church Groups Turn to Sonogram to Turn Women From Abortions,” *The New York Times*, February 2, 2005.



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Comprehensive Women's Health Clinics vs. Crisis Pregnancy Centers Regulation and Oversight

Advocacy groups that advertise themselves as abortion alternatives are not required to present women with all of their safe, legal options when facing an unintended pregnancy. In fact, they are not subject to any state regulations. In contrast, clinics that provide abortion services are highly regulated in Texas. For example:

Comprehensive Women's Health Clinics:

- Must have a licensed physician on staff.¹
- Are subject to inspection by the Texas Department of State Health Services.²
- Must meet health and safety standards for hygiene, employee qualification and supervision, and quality of care.³
- Cannot reveal a patient's identity without her consent. Violations are subject to injunctions and fines.⁴
- Must get written permission before releasing health information for marketing purposes.⁵

Crisis Pregnancy Centers:

- No such requirement exists.
- No such requirement exists.
- No such requirement exists.
- No such requirement exists.
- No such requirement exists.⁶

¹ Texas Health and Safety Code, Title II, Ch. 171

² Texas Health and Safety Code, Title IV, Ch. 245

³ Texas Health and Safety Code, Title IV, Ch. 245

⁴ Texas Health and Safety Code, Title II, Ch. 181

⁵ Texas Health and Safety Code, Title II, Ch. 181

⁶ See <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wrtk/pdf/directoryupdate805.pdf>



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Who Do You Trust: CPCs or Respected Medical Professionals?

Propaganda by CPCs:	Respected Medical Professionals:
Abortion kills four times as many women as childbirth. ⁷	The risk of death from an abortion is one-tenth the risk of death from childbirth. ⁸
Women who have abortions double their risk of breast cancer. ⁹	The National Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society, and the World Health Organization have found no link between abortion and breast cancer. ¹⁰
Abortion decreases the ability to get pregnant in the future, and causes sterility. ¹¹	There is no evidence of fertility problems among women who have had the most common form of abortion within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. ¹²
Half of all women who have abortions will suffer from emotional and psychological problems including depression, nightmares, substance abuse, eating disorders, and suicide. ¹³ CPCs often refer to this as "Post-Abortion Syndrome."	No type of "Post-Abortion Syndrome" has been recognized by any mainstream mental health organization. A special panel appointed by the American Psychological Association concluded that the predominant emotion women experience following an abortion is relief. ¹⁴

⁷ David C. Reardon, Ph. D. "Abortion Is Four Times Deadlier Than Childbirth," *The Post-Abortion Review*, 8(2), April-June 2000.

⁸ The Alan Guttmacher Institute, <http://www.agi-usa.org/in-the-know/index.html>

⁹ "Abortion Risks." Materials distributed by Lewiston CareNet Pregnancy Center. http://www.lcpregnancy.org/abortion_risks.htm

¹⁰ NCI 2002, ACS 1999, WHO 2000.

¹¹ "Abortion Risks." http://www.lcpregnancy.org/abortion_risks.htm

¹² AGI, "Abortion and Women's Health: A Turning Point for America?" New York: AGI, 1990, p.30.

¹³ "Abortion Risks." http://www.lcpregnancy.org/abortion_risks.htm; David Reardon, Ph.D, "Abortion Risks," <http://www.troubledwith.com>

¹⁴ Cooper, Cynthia L. "Abortion Under Attack," *Ms. Magazine* August 2001, Russo, NF. "Psychological Aspects of Unwanted Pregnancy and Its Resolution." In J.D. Butler and D.F. Walbert (eds.), *Abortion, Medicine, and the Law* (4th Ed., pp. 593-626). New York: Facts on File, 1992; Stotland, N. "The Myth of the Abortion Trauma Syndrome." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1992, 268(15): 2078-2079;

David, HP. "Comment: Post-Abortion Trauma." *Abortion Review Incorporating Abortion Research Notes*, Spring, 1996, 59: 1-3.



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Comprehensive Women's Health Clinics vs. Crisis Pregnancy Centers: Pregnancy Prevention and Medical Services Provided

Comprehensive Women's Health Clinic¹⁵

- Annual gynecological exams
- Pap tests and basic lab tests
- Family planning and contraception
- STD testing and treatment
- HIV testing and counseling
- Pregnancy counseling and testing (both blood and urine)
- Abortion services
- Adoption referrals
- Treatment of urinary-tract infections
- Prenatal care
- Vasectomies
- Essure and tubal ligation
- Emergency contraception
- Colposcopy and cryotherapy
- Clinical research
- Counseling

Crisis Pregnancy Center¹⁶

- Limited pregnancy testing (urine only)
- Biased options counseling by anti-choice activists
- So-called "post-abortion stress" counseling
- Limited information about community resources

¹⁵ Examples: Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas, Inc, available online at: www.pphouston.org; Whole Woman's Health, available online at:

<http://www.wholewomanshealth.com>. Not all services are available at all clinics.

¹⁶ Example: Life Care Pregnancy Services. Available online at: <http://austinflifecare.com>