

**Inside this issue:**

Letter from the Executive Director	2
Volunteer Challenge	2
"Pro-Life" vs. "Pro-Choice"	3
NPCT Issues a Response to NPCA's Endorsement of Sen. Barack Obama	3
FindEC.org... Coming to a City Near You!	4
Announcing the <i>Healthy Women, Healthy Families</i> Campaign	4
Volunteer Spotlight	4

**You can support NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation (aka TARAL Education Fund) every time you shop at Randall's! Next time you go, request a Good Neighbor Program form at the customer service center and link your Remarkable Card to us. After that, each time you use your Remarkable Card, a percentage of your spending will be donated to NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation! Our Good Neighbor number is 9526**



NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation is a proud member of Community Shares of Texas. To learn more about donating to NPCT Foundation through workplace giving, visit [www.communitysharestx.org](http://www.communitysharestx.org) or call (800) TX-SHARE.

## NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation releases 2008 report *"Taxpayer-Funded Crisis Pregnancy Centers in Texas: A Hidden Threat to Women's Health"*

**"Taxpayer-Funded Crisis Pregnancy Centers in Texas: A Hidden Threat to Women's Health" provides an overview of what a crisis pregnancy center (CPC) is and what it isn't, why public funding for its services is controversial and detrimental to the health of Texas women, and why Texans should be seriously concerned about the lack of accountability and regulation in the use of millions of dollars of taxpayer money.**



On April 16, NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Foundation hosted a legislative briefing at the Texas Capitol to provide an overview of our new CPC report

This report examines and answers the following questions with regard to the taxpayer-funded "Alternatives to Abortion" program and its contractor, the Texas Pregnancy Care Network (TPCN):

**1. Does the TPCN meet self-identified goals?**

No.

A close look reveals the TPCN did not come close to reaching self-identified projected goals. For example, the TPCN failed to meet their projected goal of "clients served" by more than 35% in the first two fiscal years (FY 06 and FY 07) of the contract. Over the first two fiscal years, the entire statewide TPCN network served an average of 127 women per month at a cost of more than \$3 million. Assuming there are twenty workdays per month, the entire TPCN network reached about six women per day statewide.

**2. Is the TPCN an efficient public structure?**

No.

By any reasonable standard of service delivery competence, the TPCN contract is grossly inefficient and wasteful. Under the contract, the state of Texas is paying the TPCN almost \$1.4 million (44% of all funds) in administrative fees

and passing through almost \$1.8 million (56% of all funds) to service providers (pre-existing local organizations that were already providing services to women long before TPCN was created). For every \$1 that is passed

through the TPCN to a local service provider, Texas taxpayers are paying the TPCN over \$.44 – almost half - in overhead!

**3. Does the TPCN, acting as a public structure to assist pregnant women, offer recommended services to prepare Texas women for a healthy birth and raising healthy children?**

No.

In contrast to services recommended by mainstream, non-controversial organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and National Association of Social Workers, the TPCN does not offer, and is not required to offer, recommended services for pregnant women. These services include licensed medical services, licensed counseling and support, or (with the exception of maternity homes) significant material assistance, such as cash, housing, or transportation assistance.

**The Texas "Alternatives to Abortion" program fails to consistently deliver recommended services for pregnant women.**

**Texas women and families deserve a higher standard of care than the TPCN and its CPC partners are designed to provide.**

**Furthermore, hardworking Texas taxpayers deserve to know their multi-million dollar investment is justified by efficient and beneficial public structures.**



P.O. Box 684602  
 Austin, TX 78768  
 Phone: (512) 462-1661  
 Fax: (512) 462-2007  
 info@prochoicetexas.org  
 www.prochoicetexas.org  
 www.myspace.com/  
 naralprochoicetexas

**Executive Director**

Sara S. Cleveland

**Deputy Director**

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# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear friends,

Ever have one of those weeks? You know the kind... on Sunday the office water heater springs a leak, turning your workplace into the Atchafalaya swamp (complete with smell) and ruining technical equipment, boxes of reports, large-scale posters, reams of paper... On Tuesday, your phone lines go down, and on Wednesday the National office endorses one candidate over another, prompting many of your most steadfast supporters to threaten to withdraw their support because of a decision made in Washington, DC that your office didn't—and legally can't—have anything to do with. As if that weren't enough, on Thursday you learn that your neighbor to the north, Oklahoma, has passed a bill mandating that women receive compulsory vaginal ultrasounds prior to abortions (I cannot think of a more literal or offensive example of a few extreme lawmakers inserting themselves into decisions concerning women's bodies and lives), which paves the way for extreme legislators in Texas to try the same. Honestly, it's enough to beat a girl down.

Then it happens. You get one call, then another, then an email, then a fax. You start to hear back from your long-time supporters and you see the glimmer way back up there at ground level. When I started this position, I was fired up! I heard other women around me talk about how the years of fighting for our rights were wearing them down, and although I sympathized, I was still the hare, not the tortoise. Now, after a little over a year, I see that there's a lot to be said for being the tortoise. I've learned that there will be weeks, months, entire legislative sessions even, during which we will take two steps forward and one back. **However, this I'll proudly say: We are supporters of reproductive rights and if there's one thing we know how to do, it's pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, dust ourselves off, and continue to work hard for our cause.** I'm okay with the week I just had because I know that no one fights harder, for longer, or with more passion than our supporters, and no one can take a hit like we do and still keep swinging.

NARAL Pro-Choice Texas has taken a hit this week, and now, more than ever, we need your support. Our little office has some rebuilding to do and we can't do it without your help. If you haven't done so before, please consider joining Sarah's Circle, our monthly giving program. These funds are so critical to our day-to-day operations. Or consider sending a larger gift than before. We recognize that in election years, there are many hands out, but know that **no matter who is elected, we're here to stay, working hard to make the full range of reproductive options available to ALL Texas women.** We pledge to continue the fight day in and day out, but we need you to have our backs. You're our lifeblood of our organization... please, please help us through this one so we can fight another day! We will all reap the benefits.

Fight on,



Sara S. Cleveland  
 Executive Director

## NARAL Pro-Choice Texas Issues a Response to NARAL Pro-Choice America's Endorsement of Senator Barack Obama

As NARAL Pro-Choice Texas does not have a federal PAC, our state affiliate is only able to participate in statewide campaigns, not national ones (such as presidential or congressional races). NARAL Pro-Choice America's Political Action Committee is the only NARAL entity authorized to make federal endorsements. Following the decision to endorse, NARAL Pro-Choice America PAC is obligated to inform the 501(c)(4) board and other constituencies—including state affiliates such as NARAL Pro-Choice Texas. **There is no consultation role for the affiliate network in the federal endorsement process.**

If you have questions regarding NARAL Pro-Choice America PAC's endorsement of Sen. Barack Obama, please call (202) 530-4179.

To read the complete statement issued by NARAL Pro-Choice Texas on May 15, please visit [www.prochoicetexas.org/news/press.shtml](http://www.prochoicetexas.org/news/press.shtml)



# “Pro-Life” vs. “Pro-Choice”

By Jamie Doak, Intern

Until about a month before I started working as an intern at NARAL Pro-Choice Texas, I considered myself “pro-life.”

Like many Christian “pro-lifers” I had been raised to believe that the pro-choice movement was advocating using abortion as a contraceptive and that in order to preserve the life and health of women and children the only morally acceptable political affiliation was “pro-life.” However, I first began to question the refusal of the “pro-life” movement to support comprehensive sex education, then their aversion to helping women find accessible, affordable birth control. I became disgusted at the constant attempts to deceive and lie to women seeking abortions and the efforts to demonize women who had made the difficult decision to have one. I no longer wanted to be associated with being “pro-life” and decided it was time for something different.

I applied for an internship at NARAL Pro-Choice Texas hoping to learn more about the pro-choice movement, gain experience working with a non-profit and work on reproductive health issues. If every Christian “pro-lifer” had the opportunity to experience my internship, there wouldn’t be so many Christian “pro-lifers.” Political talking heads have done an amazing job at demonizing the pro-choice movement. Good Christian girls and boys can’t even go near it without the fear of

earning a one-way ticket to hell. That fear breeds the ignorance that makes up the “pro-life” movement: ignorance of the true goals of the pro-choice movement, ignorance of sex, ignorance of prevention, ignorance of choices, ignorance of the complexities surrounding reproductive health issues.

If Christian “pro-lifers” knew that the pro-choice movement was making birth control and contraception more affordable, accessible and available; if they knew that the pro-choice movement was supporting comprehensive sex education in public schools and reducing the teen pregnancy and STI rates; if they knew that the pro-choice movement was lobbying for affordable daycare centers, better pre- and post-natal care and other tangible ways to help apprehensive mothers have their children; if they knew that the pro-choice movement was fighting to keep abortion legal to save women from illegal, dangerous, life-threatening procedures; if they knew that the pro-choice movement was supporting women, children and their health holistically, using effective methods to prevent unintended pregnancy, offering viable alternatives to abortion and thereby more successfully decreasing the number of abortions than the “pro-life” movement, there would be more pro-choice Christians.

I’m so glad that I had the opportunity to intern for NARAL Pro-Choice Texas and learn what being pro-choice really means. Now, if only Pat Robertson could have interned for NARAL Pro-Choice Texas as a teenager...

## Causes In Common

**NARAL Pro-Choice Texas is a member of Causes In Common, a coalition created to explore and emphasize the interconnectedness of reproductive justice and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights and issues.**

**According to the CIC pledge of commitment, coalition members “believe that reproduction and sexuality are profoundly and intimately related aspects of human experience. Reproduction is a choice that evolves out of sexuality, not an unavoidable consequence of sexuality. We affirm that individual human autonomy in the conduct of our sexual lives is integral to our liberty. Therefore, we are committed to the following principles:**

- **The right to individual autonomy in all matters related to adult consensual sexuality, gender expression and reproduction.**
- **The right of individuals to have control over their own bodies and the right to engage in intimate behavior with members of one’s own sex are fundamental to the liberation of LGBT people.**
- **The right of all women to safe and affordable abortions and the right of all people to access safe and affordable reproductive technologies and assistance.**
- **Social change for the purpose of eradicating all forms of homophobia and transphobia, and for the full attainment of the right to choose to reproduce.**

**In 2007, NARAL Pro-Choice Texas joined reproductive justice and LGBTQ organizations from across the country in becoming a member of Causes In Common.**

## VOLUNTEER CHALLENGE

Each month, we post a new Volunteer Challenge on our website ([www.prochoicetexas.org](http://www.prochoicetexas.org)). Volunteer Challenges are a quick, easy way to join in the struggle for reproductive freedom and make a real impact no matter where you live in Texas. Here are the 3 most recent Challenges:

### MARCH

**Back Up Your Birth Control Day was March 25. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper letting women over 18 know that they can now buy emergency contraception (the “morning-after pill”) over the counter without a prescription. For tips on writing letters to the editor, visit [www.prochoicetexas.org/news/editor.shtml](http://www.prochoicetexas.org/news/editor.shtml)**

### APRIL

**This spring, we’re expanding [www.FindEC.org](http://www.FindEC.org) to include El Paso and San Antonio. But we need your help to find out which pharmacies in these two cities sell emergency contraception. We’ll provide you with everything you need. If you have an hour or two to help us survey pharmacies by phone, please call (512) 462-1661 or email [info@prochoicetexas.org](mailto:info@prochoicetexas.org)**

### MAY

**As part of our upcoming *Healthy Women, Healthy Families* campaign, we’re partnering with groups across Texas to collect stories about women’s health. Do you work or volunteer with a group that might be interested in joining? Let us know and we’ll tell you more about the project! And in June, check out our website for lots of exciting project updates!**

## FindEC.org... Coming to a City Near You!

By Morgan Lidey, Intern

Last fall, NPCT Foundation teamed up with 40 women and men across Texas to launch an investigation of access to emergency contraception, birth control taken after sex. Volunteers contacted nearly 800 Houston pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals to publicize the fact that despite FDA approval, women continue to face challenges in Plan B® access similar to those faced before its approval. Challenges faced by women include:

- lack of knowledge about EC and its effectiveness
- price barriers
- locations of stores that stock EC
- political interference by extremists who oppose birth control, including pharmacists who refuse to dispense EC, even to survivors of sexual assault

Based on the data collected for Houston, NPCT Foundation launched the website [www.FindEC.org](http://www.FindEC.org) that allows any woman in the Houston or Austin area to type in her address and find the closest pharmacy that distributes EC, along with the price and that pharmacy's distribution policies.

**With the website receiving over 800 hits per day NARAL has decided to extend this project to San Antonio and El Paso. We are inviting new and former volunteers to join the NARAL team to extend this website resource to women in the San Antonio and El Paso areas.**

If you are interested in helping us call pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals in San Antonio and El Paso, please contact Morgan at [morgan@prochoicetexas.org](mailto:morgan@prochoicetexas.org).

## Announcing the *Healthy Women, Healthy Families* Campaign

By Shane Trawick, Intern

The reproductive rights movement has long been a political one, striving for success on both electoral and legislative fronts. However, our successes should not blind us to one of the challenges facing the movement for reproductive rights: too often, the stories of real women are lost in the political mire. The launch of the *Healthy Women, Healthy Families (HWHF)* coalition project is our response to this challenge.

*HWHF* is a collaborative storytelling project. The project is designed to assess the reproductive health needs of Texas women while also highlighting the personal stories of women seeking reproductive healthcare and social services. Coalition partners across Texas will survey their members and collect stories from women about their healthcare experiences. Survey results will be presented as a comprehensive report to legislators, media, and the public articulating public policy requests for reproductive healthcare. *HWHF* encourages participation from a diverse array of coalition partners. The project strives to bridge the gap between advocacy groups, service providers, and organizations working with women whose voices are most often overlooked, underrepresented, or silenced.

In less than 6 months, we will have the opportunity to address women's reproductive health needs in Texas during the 2009 legislative session – where lawmakers hold the key to women's reproductive health services. In preparation, we are asking you to share with us what you and your family need so we can share those needs with our legislators. Given the real needs of Texas women and our families, we hope our lawmakers will put the most controversial aspects of women's health on the back burner and start focusing on delivering commonsense, common-ground services to the sisters, mothers and daughters of Texas! The survey will be available on the NPCT website starting in June and we hope you will take this opportunity to share your story with us.



## Volunteer Spotlight: Leashya

By Sarah Godner, Intern

35-year-old Leashya is a writer who lives in Austin with her husband and teenage daughter. Leashya moved to Austin from northern Nevada about two years ago, and she really appreciates the supportive artistic community that exists in our capital city.

Leashya first got involved with NPCT when she volunteered to work at our booth at the Travis County Democratic Convention. At the convention, Leashya "really enjoyed the supportive attitudes of the people who visited the booth [and] the diversity of the supporters." She also remarked on "the number of men who visited the booth and even purchased t-shirts for themselves!"

For Leashya, reproductive freedom is immensely important because she believes that "without reproductive freedom, women are slaves." NPCT's work has a personal dimension for Leashya: "I became a mother at the age of sixteen.

My daughter is now eighteen and we are both pro-choice." She continues, "A person's right to control what happens to their own body is one that should never be compromised. I was raised in a fundamentalist religion, which taught that women are here on earth to breed, essentially. I know that women have much more to offer than just incubatory wombs."



*It's easy to become a NARAL Pro-Choice Texas volunteer... just visit [www.prochoicetexas.org](http://www.prochoicetexas.org) and click on the "Get Involved" link!*