

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Contact: Emily Pudalov epudalov@feminist.org
310.556.2500

The Dangerous Masquerade of “Crisis Pregnancy Centers”

These fake medical centers try to fool college students in order to spread an anti-abortion message

A new study just released by the Feminist Majority Foundation (FMF) reveals nearly half of college health centers refer students seeking reproductive health care to so-called “crisis pregnancy” or “pregnancy resource” centers. These centers pose as comprehensive health clinics, luring women in with promises of “free” pregnancy tests and “options” counseling for unintended pregnancies.

In reality, many of these centers attempt to coerce and intimidate women out of considering abortion as an option, and prevent women from receiving neutral and comprehensive medical advice. They are typically run by anti-abortion volunteers who are not licensed medical professionals. Crisis pregnancy centers also often spread false information, such as the disproved and discredited claims that abortions increase the risk of breast cancer and frequently cause mental trauma.

Of the 398 campus health centers at four-year colleges that responded to FMF’s national survey – accounting for 34% of the total student population in the country attending four-year schools – 48 percent routinely refer women who might be pregnant to crisis pregnancy centers. “So-called crisis pregnancy centers are targeting young women by advertising in student newspapers and on billboards located on and near campuses. And most recently, these centers have started advertising on social networking sites popular with college students,” says FMF’s Nikki Border. “They urge campus health centers to include crisis pregnancy centers in student referral lists.”

“Any attempt to delay care and try and scare a woman into keeping an unwanted pregnancy only serves to put her at higher risk—especially if she has an ectopic pregnancy,” says Beth Jordan, M.D., a women’s health specialist and medical director of the FMF.

The Feminist Majority Foundation’s *CHOICES* Program (<http://www.feministcampus.org/>) helps student reproductive health activists launch campaigns on their campuses to warn students about these fake clinics.

Note to editors: CHOICES campus organizers are available for interviews