Over the last year, NARAL Pro-Choice California conducted a comprehensive undercover investigation of crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) in California. Our investigators made 49 in-person visits to more than 25% of all CPCs in the state. Of those visited, an estimated 19 were licensed as community or free clinics by the California Department of Public Health and the rest are unlicensed centers. Although our investigators presented different scenarios and life circumstances – from wanting an abortion to not sure about what to do; from having a supportive family to living in an abusive situation; from wanting to stay in school to not having the resources to raise a family – the response was frightening in its consistency: You Should Have A Baby No Matter What. This constant pressure was never accompanied with suggestions to see a doctor in order to have a healthy pregnancy. The so-called counseling was completely biased in one direction and did not allow for women to weigh all of their options based on her circumstances.

These centers fraudulently present themselves as medical offices while their true intent is to lie to and shame women about their reproductive health options. CPCs use a wide array of deceptive tactics to push women to continue their pregnancies no matter what.

Our investigation documents the lies told to our investigators and the shaming tactics used to discourage women from considering all of their options. A recently released national report by NARAL Pro-Choice America, *Crisis Pregnancy Centers Lie: The Insidious Threat to Reproductive Health*, confirms that CPCs are a threat to women's reproductive health not only in California, but across the country.

CPCs Lie.

CPC workers are well-trained to lie to women about physical and mental health issues they claim are associated with abortion. At every visit, our investigator reported that CPC workers repeated a similar set of lies and myths, noting, “it was scary how they all said the same things, it was like it didn’t matter who I was, they only had one script.”

In 91 percent of the centers visited, this script included telling our investigator that having an abortion was linked to an increased risk of breast cancer, infertility, miscarriage, and/or the made-up “post-abortion depression” that results in suicide. These are blatant lies that have been disproved and rejected by the medical community.

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**Incidents of CPC Medical Lies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illogical Abortion Link</th>
<th>Post-Abortion Stress</th>
<th>Misleading Fetal Development</th>
<th>Infertility Abortion Link</th>
<th>Misleading Abortion Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46.51%</td>
<td>72.09%</td>
<td>23.26%</td>
<td>34.88%</td>
<td>65.12%</td>
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One common scare tactic focused on the ability of a woman to have a healthy pregnancy in the future if she accessed abortion care. “She told me that for some women, they dilate them too fast and they might become … not infertile, but in later cases … they might miscarry a lot because the cervix might not close up all the way. So I might have a lot of miscarriages if I aborted the baby.”

Timing is critical when making decisions about an unintended pregnancy and the CPCs we visited deliberately worked to delay those decisions. Accessing abortion care early in a pregnancy is safe, more easily accessible and more affordable. CPCs attempt to lull women into believing they have as much time as they want to make a decision. CPC workers tell women that they don’t need to make a decision because their pregnancy may terminate naturally, stating that the likelihood of a miscarriage is 30-50 percent. In fact, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists states that approximately 15 percent of pregnancies end in miscarriage.

For organizations that claim to offer pregnancy counseling, they know surprisingly little about pregnancy, abortion, and birth control. The use of birth control is intentionally confused with abortion at CPCs. Our investigation found that at 63% of centers visited, the investigator was given misinformation about birth control and Plan B, the morning after pill.
For more information about CPCs, visit www.CPLies.com