



Reproaction

TAKING BOLD ACTION AGAINST
CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS

www.reproaction.org
October 2017

TIME TO GET TO WORK

Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs) are anti-abortion fake clinics that trade in harassing, misleading, and shaming people seeking abortions. There are more than 2,500 CPCs in the U.S. and it's long past time for all of them to be held accountable for failing to truly support the women and babies they claim to care so much about – often while using public dollars.

You may have seen our recent Act and Learn Webinar: *Bye, Bye, Fake Clinics: Using Direct Action to Target CPCs in Your Community* which provided information and tools to help you take on Crisis Pregnancy Centers where you live. A recording is available [here](#). In this toolkit, we've compiled some more resources and best practices for taking non-violent direct action and getting the win!

Recently, we took direct action with SisterSong to target the [#CuraFakeClinic](#) run by Human Coalition during Netroots Nation 2017. We also participated in the [#ExposeFakeClinics](#) week of action with Lady Parts Justice, NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri, and some other rad partners, and we're hoping you join us as we continue that work to hold anti-abortion zealots accountable for their deception, coercion, and predatory tactics targeting women around the country.

Now is the time to accelerate and escalate our action to speak truth to the alternative facts spread by Human Coalition and other CPC networks. But we need your help! We've created this activist toolkit to equip you with the knowledge, action logistics, and planning help you'll need to amplify this work and reveal what CPCs really are: fake clinics that deceive and shame women to prevent them from accessing abortion care.



But first, a quick refresher:

WHAT IS a CPC ?

And why are they harmful to women?

Crisis pregnancy centers are shady anti-abortion fake clinics that exist to talk women out of having abortions. They spread misinformation about abortion and shame the people who have them. There are at least 2,500 of them in the United States and many run on federal and/or state funding. (Don't know if yours does? [Call your state representative and ask!](#)) Some college campuses house fake clinics or refer to them, and some fake clinics set up right next to real ones.

They use a variety of techniques to dissuade women from abortions, both inside the center and outside their walls. CPCs have been known to:

- o Give women incorrect information about their own pregnancy and gestational age (how far along the pregnancy is)
- o Lie to women about what is involved in the abortion procedure and what its side effects could be, some even pose as medical professionals when they actually have no training or education
- o Shame women for sexual history, drug use, decision to abort
- o Tell women not to worry about carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term because miscarriage rates are high
- o Harass women after they've left the center by calling them incessantly
- o Promise help and services to a woman who carries a pregnancy to term, then fail to follow through after the birth
- o Use geolocation and targeted advertising to reach women seeking abortion clinics, then redirect their internet searches to CPC sites

IT GETS WORSE

Follow the money... if you can!

That's bad enough, but CPCs are unregulated in most states, which means their sources and uses of funding are mostly unknown and unlimited. This is particularly shady because many states provide them millions in funding yearly.

Seven states – Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas – fund CPCs with TANF money. That's Temporary Assistance For Needy Families grants, sometimes called welfare. So tax dollars that should be feeding hungry children are going to unaccountable fake clinics so they can lie to women and shame them out of seeking abortion care. If people in your networks didn't want to take action before, they will after hearing about how their taxes are being wasted – maybe misused, who knows when they don't get audited?! – on fake clinics!

For more information on CPC lies, funding, deception, and where women can get real help during pregnancies and after, check out our series on the Reproaction blog!

[Blog: How are Crisis Pregnancy Centers robbing taxpayers?](#)

[Blog: Alternatives to visiting a Crisis Pregnancy Center](#)

[Blog: What Is a Crisis Pregnancy Center? How Do They Push Alternative Facts?](#)

**MORE TO LEARN AT THE REPROACTION
BLOG [HTTPS://REPROACTION.ORG/CATEGORY/BLOG/](https://reproaction.org/category/blog/)**

Claim your power with direct action!

Now that you're up to speed and ready to expose Crisis Pregnancy Centers, here's how we take our message to decision-makers through non-violent direct action (NVDA):

What is direct action?

"Direct action means that we take collective action to change our circumstances, without handing our power to a middle person." – from www.beautifultrouble.org, a resource for non-violent direct action movements

What is our theory of change?

Reproaction believes that when we take bold action, including direct action, in service of our mission to increase access to abortion and advance reproductive justice, our allies will grow stronger in their positions and our opponents will grow weaker.

Remember: Non-violent is not the same as "peaceful." We aim to be loud and be heard in a non-violent way, which sometimes includes disruption and usually involves noise!

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You found your not-so-friendly neighborhood Crisis Pregnancy Center. Now What?

For more resources on the theory and practice of direct action and how to plan one, check out Reproaction's Act & Learn Webinar: [DIY Action Planning for Activists](#).

o **Hold a protest outside their fake clinic:** CPCs operate largely through deception, so they lose power when we expose them for what they truly are. Some do not want people to know they oppose abortion – they just want people to come in the door. Regardless of whether they own their stance on abortion, it's important to let people know about the deception and shaming that occurs inside their walls. Some CPCs have misleading signs, are located close to or in the same building as real abortion clinics, and they lose power when you peel back the curtain and let the public, especially their neighbors and potential clients, know that they're not actually providing prenatal and postpartum care. If a fake clinic is located near an actual abortion clinic, check with staff at the real clinic to find an amenable protest location: some clinics don't want protesters, even supportive ones, out of concern for the comfort and privacy of their patients.

o **Write a petition, letter to the editor, or opinion editorial:** This could also serve to unveil the true motives of your local CPC, or bring to light issues of taxpayer dollars the center uses to prey on women in your area. Check out our post, "How are Crisis Pregnancy Centers Robbing Taxpayers?" linked on the previous page to learn more about public funding for CPCs and which states are implicated the worst. Tip: It's particularly powerful to research what public dollars may be flowing to crisis pregnancy centers in your state, and call for investigation into their use of taxpayer funds.

o **Host a speak-out/teach-in:** If you have a CPC in your area, you probably won't have to look far for someone who has been duped by them. If you can find multiple people, form a group and speak out about the fake clinic's alternative facts and predatory tactics! It's ok if you don't know anyone or they aren't comfortable speaking—hosting a community meeting, town hall, or another event to educate your community about CPCs can help galvanize, build power, share resources, and generate ideas to tackle the fake clinics in your area.



NVDA Tips:

o **Engage the opposition sparingly, and with discretion.** These people do not want to be revealed for their true selves, and they can become violent or otherwise aggressive to you and your fellow activists. To keep all members of your community safe — being mindful of the needs of people of color, queer people, women, and people with disabilities — limit confrontation with the opposition. They want your reaction, they want to see you sweat, and they want to take pictures or video of you not at your best. Don't let them! Direct action is about taking power, maintaining it, and building it. Keep doing what you're doing and like minds will join you. Haters have nothing to add to your action, and can take you off message while putting others at risk.

o **Engage the media frequently, but don't cry wolf.** If you're calling on local media to publicize an action, you need to start by building a relationship with friendly, trustworthy press figures, and prove your trust and friendship can be earned in return. Alert them to stories they may want to cover, but don't pepper with updates or false promises about your group or action. Have a clear message and set achievable expectations for your action's media relevance. For example, if the media asks you how many people are going to be there, do not give them an exact number, but also don't inflate expectations. Give an expected range and if you're pleasantly surprised, great! If turnout isn't so hot, you didn't call a busy reporter out on false premises (which would lose their trust quickly!) For more on press strategies, check our Reproaction's Act & Learn Webinar: [Awesome Communication for Activists](#).



After-Action

o **Follow up** — it's not just about the protest: Applaud great actions from your group or partners in the movement, thank your press contacts, and keep the momentum going afterwards! It's easy to get activist burnout, especially when you're working against as entrenched and doggedly focused an opposition as abortion opponents. Thank those that helped and let your group celebrate your successes.

o **Always amplify your work on social media!** "Pics or it didn't happen" is true for a lot of things, and especially successful direct actions. You can prove your show of power (the opposition probably will try to diminish the event anyway) and shareable content like photos, videos, and livestreams can continue momentum for next time.



WHEN I NEED PREGNANCY OR ABORTION HELP, I EXPECT:

- A) LIES ABOUT MY BODY
- B) SHAMING & STIGMATIZING
- C) NO DOCTORS ON STAFF
- D) NONE OF THE ABOVE

THEN WHY GO TO A CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTER? Reproaction



NOW IS THE TIME TO EXPOSE THE TRUTH ABOUT CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS.

Enough is enough.
We're standing up to deception and shaming at fake clinics.
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Sample Tweets

- o **CPCs use tax \$ to lie to women about abortion & shame them for having sex #reproaction #ExposeFakeClinics**
- o **Crisis Pregnancy Centers don't want you to know what they really are. Get the facts from #reproaction to take on fake clinics! <https://reproaction.org/resources/>**
- o **We're taking direct action against the [CPC name] fake clinic in [your city] #reproaction #ExposeFakeClinics**
- o **[Clinic Name] is an anti-abortion fake clinic. Take action at <https://reproaction.org/resources/> #reproaction #ExposeFakeClinics**
- o **Join me to get fake clinics out of [your city]! <https://reproaction.org/resources/> #reproaction #ExposeFakeClinics**

Sample Letter to the Editor

The below was written by a concerned resident in *The Columbia Missourian* [here](#).

By: Aime Guinn

October 10, 2016

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Missouri's crisis pregnancy centers mislead women
As a Missourian, I know all too well the state of poverty and hunger in states like mine. And as a low-income woman, I have felt the real-life consequences of misplaced priorities on myself and others.

A recent report showed that Missouri funnels a whopping \$4.3 million of welfare money into crisis pregnancy centers. As a mother of two, I know the importance of these dollars and how they could better be spent in our state. When I got pregnant with my third child, I realized that continuing the pregnancy was not an option for my family due to the very lack of resources we had available and decided that abortion was the best option for me.

Crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) have a long history of targeting women like me. They employ misinformation and fear in order to persuade people into keeping their child or choosing adoption. But choice is the operative word here.

By giving medically false information and not presenting the full range of options to pregnant patients, CPCs are doing a disservice to the very people they are supposed to help, and parading their values as fact. Everyone deserves to have all of the information and facts they need in order to make an informed decision.

What's worse is that these dollars could be spent on increasing TANF and SNAP services and other programs that could potentially help lift low-income Missouri families out of poverty, therefore helping low-income pregnant who choose to continue their pregnancies.

This year, Missouri became the second hungriest state in the country, and 15 percent of all Missourians are living in poverty. Instead of obsessing about further restricting access to abortion, it is time Missouri legislators get their priorities straight.

Aime Guinn is a Columbia resident.

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Contact: YOUR FULL NAME, EMAIL, PHONE #]

[YOUR CITY] — On [DATE], reproductive rights activists held a protest in front of [NAME OF FAKE CLINIC], one of [NUMBER, IF KNOWN] unregulated crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) in [YOUR STATE]. (If your state funds CPCs with TANF dollars, "Choose Life" license plates, or other state/federal grants, add that here!)

[Insert a sentence about who your group is]

[1-2 quotes from organizers or attendees about why you're taking action, why now – what's your main motivation? Why are you fed up enough to take to the streets?]

[Conclude with how people can find out more about your action and your group]

Hopefully you now feel more equipped to take your work in the movement to the next level. We'll see you in the streets and on the tweets!

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Reproaction is a direct action group formed to increase access to abortion and advance reproductive justice. We are building power, holding abortion opponents accountable, and giving abortion a permanent seat at the progressive table. Join us at

www.reproaction.org.