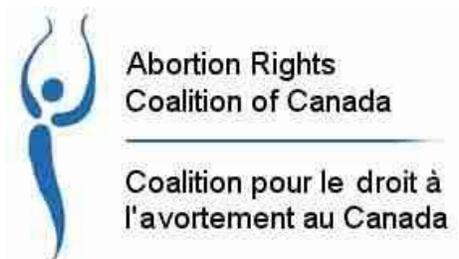


# REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA



## ABORTION RIGHTS COALITION OF CANADA

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## ABSTRACT

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“Crisis Pregnancy Centres” (CPCs) are anti-choice agencies that present themselves as unbiased medical clinics or counselling centres, and whose ostensible goal is to provide women with non-judgemental information on all their options when faced with an unintended pregnancy. However, CPCs are not medical facilities, most are Christian ministries, they generally will not refer clients for abortion or contraception, and many promote misinformation such as the existence of “Post-abortion Syndrome,” which is not a medically recognized condition. CPCs in Canada are not currently regulated.

This study by the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC) identified 180 CPCs across Canada. Of those, 166 had websites. As some CPCs shared the same websites, 100 unique websites were reviewed to determine what the centres were advertising online, and to look for misinformation or indications of deception. The findings reveal that a large majority of the 166 CPCs do one or both of the following on their websites: 1) spread misleading or inaccurate information about abortion, contraception, sexually-transmitted infections, sexual activity, or adoption; or 2) present themselves deceptively, such as by not disclosing that they won’t refer for abortion, or hiding their religious stance from prospective clients. We recommend that CPCs in Canada be regulated to require them to be transparent and medically accurate, with the goals of protecting public health and respecting the rights of patients seeking healthcare.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF RESULTS

Our evaluation of the websites of 166 CPCs found that:

1. 60% (99) did not have disclaimers that they don’t refer for abortion or contraception.
2. 5% (8) claimed a link between abortion and breast cancer, which has been scientifically rejected.
3. 9% (15) cited other medical risks of abortion that were exaggerated or not scientifically proven.
4. 48% (79) mentioned negative psychological consequences, primarily in the context of “Post-abortion Syndrome”, which is not medically recognized.
5. 7% (12) claimed that artificial contraception is unreliable, while 5% (8) gave false or misleading information about contraception or sexually-transmitted infections.
6. 24% (39) promoted sexual abstinence as the ideal solution for unwed women.
7. 28% (47) overemphasized adoption at the expense of other possible options.
8. 96% (159) revealed a religious affiliation or agenda, but only 24% (39) were transparent and upfront about it.
9. 33% (55) did not have disclaimers that they weren’t a medical facility and/or that clients should see a doctor for medical services.
10. At least 35% (59) offered a sex education program to youth or local schools and communities. Of those, at least 68% (40 of 59) were being offered to schools, including public schools.

Further, 68% of the 180 CPCs we identified (122) had charitable tax status.

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## INTRODUCTION

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### **Background: Abortion Politics In Canada**

Canada is the only country in the world that does not restrict abortion by law (except China). We did have a law, but it was struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1988 when it was deemed unconstitutional on the basis that it violates section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* because it infringes upon a woman’s right to life, liberty, and security of person. One might think that with no legal restrictions on abortion in Canada, it’s treated like “any other medical procedure” under the law, but the ongoing politicization of abortion makes access a big issue (Khandaker, 2013b).

Prince Edward Island has had no abortion access within the province for over 30 years (although that is finally due to change by the end of 2016). New Brunswick enforces an illegal regulation that limits funded abortions to hospitals (ARCC 2014), and only about 35 clinics provide surgical abortions in Canadian provinces and territories, mostly in larger cities (ARCC 2016b). Around 100 hospitals also provide abortions (Paperny 2015), but many of these are also in larger cities, meaning that women often have to travel for abortion services.

Since 1987, at least 46 anti-choice Private Member Bills and Motions have been introduced in the Canadian Parliament, with goals such as criminalizing abortion, including fetuses as persons with rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, or redefining “human being” to include fetuses under the Criminal Code. (ARCC 2016a)

While it may seem that abortion rights are safe due to the lack of a federal law in Canada, we should not be lulled into a false sense of security. Access to abortion in Canada is constantly under attack – whether due to Members of Parliament introducing anti-choice legislation, provincial governments refusing to provide sufficient access under the law, or CPCs spreading misinformation and impersonating medical clinics.

### ABOUT ARCC AND THIS STUDY

The Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC) is the only nation-wide political pro-choice group dedicated to fighting for women’s reproductive freedom. ARCC’s primary mandate of undertaking political and educational work on this issue includes advocating for appropriate policies and regulations to protect these rights.

One threat to the reproductive autonomy of women and transgender people has been difficult to challenge – the deceptive practices and circulation of false information about abortion by anti-choice agencies, particularly anti-abortion counselling centres that are often referred to as “Crisis Pregnancy Centres” or “CPCs”. These agencies operate to prevent women from obtaining an abortion or accessing birth control (Kacere 2013). This contributes to abortion stigma and interferes with the ability to make a fully informed decision about an unwanted pregnancy.

In the United States, the number of CPCs is growing while the number of abortion clinics is shrinking (NAF 2006). Over 3,500 CPCs operate in the U.S. (NARAL Pro-Choice America 2015), compared to only

## REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA

413 abortion clinics as of early 2016 (Paquette 2016). In Canada, we identified 180 CPCs for this study, while 124 facilities provide abortions (Paperny 2015). However, in many smaller and rural communities, the CPC may be the only place available for women seeking help with their pregnancies.

The aim of this study was to determine the presence of any deception or misinformation on the websites of Canadian CPCs. Due to the relative dearth of research on CPCs in Canada, we felt it important to add to the body of knowledge on the topic as we seek out opportunities to regulate these organizations. We expected to find that CPC websites would reflect the same type of misinformation and/or deception that other studies and investigations have found that people encounter when patronizing CPCs. While we did find significant misinformation, our study also found that many websites present an unbiased appearance and tend to conceal their agenda or give only subtle indications of it, presumably to attract (and not repel) or even trick women considering abortion into using their services.

An important caveat of this study is that we examined only the websites of CPCs, which may not necessarily reflect their practices or counselling when they speak to clients in person or on the phone. However, past studies by others, many of which used undercover reporters or “spies” pretending to be women seeking an abortion, have shown that a large majority of CPCs in North America mislead women about abortion and engage in unprofessional counselling techniques.

Many U.S.-based studies or investigative reports have been done on American CPCs, and all have consistently exposed their tactics of misinformation and deception. A few key ones are listed in the References (City Attorney of San Francisco 2011; NAF 2006; NARAL 2015; SIECUS n.d.; VICE News 2014; Waxman 2006; Winter 2015a/b).

Only a small number of studies or investigative reports have been done on Canadian CPCs, but with similar results – all showing that CPCs tend to mislead and deceive, and sometimes put women’s health at risk. All known Canadian studies/reports, including media exposés, are listed below by date and are linked in the [References](#):

- *The Pretenders* (CTV 2000; W-Five).
- *Exposing Crisis Pregnancy Centres in BC* (Arthur 2009).
- *Deception Used in Counselling Women against Abortion* (Smith 2010a; Toronto Star).
- *Are Anti-Choice Crisis Pregnancy Centres Targeting Female Students on Ontario University Campuses?* (Tilley 2011).
- *Surrey charity gives dubious abortion advice: investigation* (Woodward 2012; CTV).
- *Phony Abortion Clinics In Canada Are Scaring Women with Lies* (Khandaker 2013a; VICE).
- *Enjeux éthiques de l’intervention auprès de femmes vivant une grossesse imprévue au Québec* (Gonin et al. 2014).
- *Mieux comprendre les ressources conseil grossesse anti-choix au Québec* (FQPN 2014).
- *Toll free but not judgment free: evaluating postabortion support services in Ontario* (Laroche and Foster 2015).

### WHAT ARE CPCs?

“Crisis Pregnancy Centres” (CPCs) are anti-abortion agencies that present themselves as unbiased medical clinics or counselling centres. They aim to be open and inviting to women seeking support for unwanted pregnancies, and advertise under the guise that they will provide information and help on all options available to pregnant women.

However, CPCs are not unbiased, non-judgemental, or medical clinics. Most are Christian ministries, and are morally opposed to some of the key choices that women make. In general, they will not refer clients for contraception or abortion, and many try to persuade women out of abortion, often through misinformation or scare-mongering. CPCs pose a significant threat to abortion access because they function as not only a physical barrier, but also as a cultural and psychological barrier by reinforcing abortion stigma, and often fostering feelings of guilt, fear, anxiety, and confusion in clients considering abortion.

The language used in advertising for CPCs (such as on buses and billboards) is purposefully vague, for example: “Pregnant? Need help?” or “Offering non-judgemental support” (Ritchie 2016). In reading these advertisements, one would not automatically think that these organizations are tied to a particular religious ideology. This strategy is deliberate – CPCs do not want the general Canadian public to know that they are anti-abortion, as this may turn away potential clients, given that the majority of Canadians are pro-choice (Kennedy 2012).

CPCs’ deception in order to attract unsuspecting and vulnerable women to use their services is well documented. Misrepresenting their services and mandate is not only evident in the language that they use in their advertising, but also through other tactics such as “co-locating” next to abortion clinics, or setting up their centres to look like medical facilities when they are not (NARAL 2015; NAF 2016; Murphy 2011). In addition to masquerading as medical clinics, many CPCs use ethically questionable and emotionally distressing counselling methods, and engage in such dangerous behaviour as distributing false information about abortion procedures, the effectiveness of birth control, and delaying access to medical professionals who may perform abortions or help patients understand their options (Laroche et al. 2015; Arthur 2009). All of these tactics can lead to physical and psychological health risks.

CPCs are also known for religious proselytizing. An umbrella group for many CPCs in Canada, the Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services, says that “[We] are committed to sharing the love of Christ to those with issues related to sexuality and unplanned pregnancies.” (CAPSS 2015)

## METHODS

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We compiled a list of all known “Crisis Pregnancy Centres” (CPCs) in Canada that were operational as of August 2014, including their website addresses (Appendix 1). Operations were verified via Internet searches and some phone calls. CPCs with websites were again verified as operational between May and August 2015, and many again in early 2016.

Homes for pregnant women, adoption agencies, post-abortion counselling agencies, political anti-choice and right-to-life groups, and crisis pregnancy centre hotlines were not included in our analysis unless their websites explicitly said they offered pregnancy options counselling. One chain of CPCs is called Birthright, and 56 centres in Canada were included on the list.

A majority of the CPCs on the list had websites: 166 out of 180. The 14 CPCs without websites (or websites with virtually no content) were eliminated from our review. Some CPCs shared the same websites, so only 100 unique websites were reviewed:

- 55 of the 180 CPCs (30.6%) were Birthright centres that shared a single website. (Birthright is an international anti-abortion organization that acts as an umbrella to hundreds of Birthright CPCs across North America.)
- Of the non-Birthright centres, 9 websites were shared by 2 CPCs each, while one website was shared by 4 CPCs.
- Therefore, 77 CPCs out of 166 (46.4%) were sharing a website, including 55 Birthrights and 22 non-Birthrights.
- In our analysis, the 77 CPCs that shared websites were treated as individual CPCs – i.e., results were rendered based on 166 CPCs with websites.

A Review Worksheet (Appendix 2) was created that contained nine Yes/No questions to evaluate information on each CPC website. Information from the websites that was pertinent to the nine questions was also captured and excerpted into the Review Worksheet.

Other items evaluated included charity status (whether the CPC was a registered charity in good standing with the Canada Revenue Agency as of July 2015), and whether the CPC was a member of CAPSS (the Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services). We also reviewed the CPC websites to determine if they offered a sex education program to youth or local schools and communities.

The Yes/No answers from the Review Worksheets were entered into a master spreadsheet where CPCs were numbered and organized alphabetically by province and then city. To further quantify the data, we were able to break down most of the nine questions (except for #3 and #9) into additional categories of information (“Groups”) that reflected emerging patterns and themes found in the data captured from the websites. Appendix 3 describes the Groups for each question and their criteria.

Bar charts were created to display the data for all Y/N questions and the Groups. The answers to the nine Yes/No questions from the Review Worksheets were counted and rendered as a percentage for each answer. An Answer Key was created (Appendix 4) to help guide the research team on what the Y/N answers meant – i.e., what we were looking for according to our hypothesis. On the bar charts, the 55

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Birthrights sharing a single website were shown in a different shade of blue to distinguish them from the rest of the CPCs with the same Yes or No answer.

An Excel spreadsheet showing all the individual answers and some additional data for each CPC is available at this link: [www.arcc-cdac.ca/CPC-study/excel-raw-data.xlsx](http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/CPC-study/excel-raw-data.xlsx).

### *Caveats:*

- The CPC list includes only one Birthright in cities where two were listed, with the assumption that it was a result of moving/closure. It is also possible that some Birthrights not registered as charities were not in operation as they could not all be confirmed via Internet searches or phone calls.
- Data gathered from websites reflect the sites' content from between May and July 2015, and content may have changed since then. (A minority of sites were checked and results updated between then and April 2016).
- During the reviews and data analysis, three of the CPCs from the original compiled list were deleted due to inclusion errors (such as accidental duplication) and one that was missed was added later. Because permanent numbers were assigned to each CPC, the tables accompanying this report seem to show 182 CPCs, but our study looked at only 180 (166 with websites, 14 without).

## RESULTS

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This section provides the answers to the questions from the Review Worksheets that evaluated each CPC website. Though the questions from the study are presented in order, some closely related questions are grouped together for clarity. Most questions also have categories (“Groups”) of further analysis, which are included in their respective sections. See Appendix 3 for an explanation of the Groups.

Overall, the results showed that there is no consensus among the CPC websites as to how they try to attract clients, in terms of offering a truthful accounting of their organization or the risks and benefits of abortion. The Discussion section of this report explains in more detail how a CPC website may not be an accurate reflection of what the CPC tells clients in person or on the phone. Instead, the website may present a deceptive and benign front in order to attract clients. Nevertheless, many CPC websites did provide misinformation on abortion or contraception.

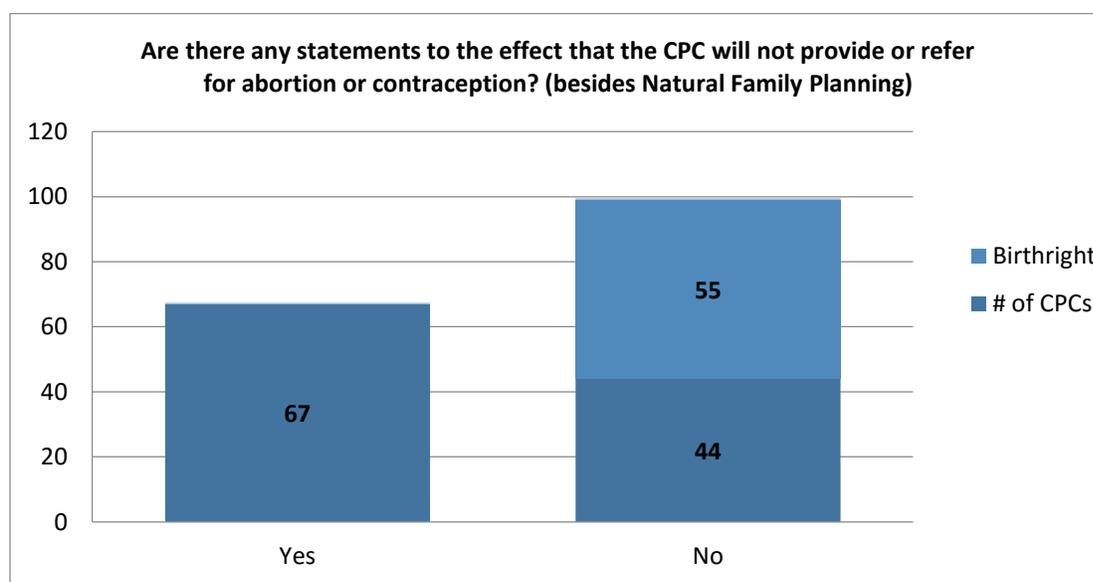
*Notes:*

- The Discussion section contains details and references to refute the misinformation found on the websites.
- An Excel spreadsheet showing all the individual answers and some additional data for each CPC is available at this link: [www.arcc-cdac.ca/CPC-study/excel-raw-data.xlsx](http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/CPC-study/excel-raw-data.xlsx)

QUESTION 1

Question 1 asked the researchers to determine whether a centre makes explicit comment on its website that they do not refer for abortions or birth control. In total, 40% sites stated that they do not refer patients for abortion or contraception, while 60% did *not* tell potential clients that they do not perform or provide referrals for abortion services (**Fig 1**).

Further, 45% of the centres provided information that was vague enough to make a client unsure of whether the centre would speak to them about their entire range of choices or refer them to an abortion or contraception provider, while 7% of centres appeared to bury their anti-abortion philosophy and/or disclaimer in privacy statements or in small print at the bottom of a page (**Fig 1.1, Groups**)



**Figure 1: 40.4% (n=67) of CPC websites stated that they do not make referrals for abortion or contraception. 59.6% (n=99) failed to provide this information.**

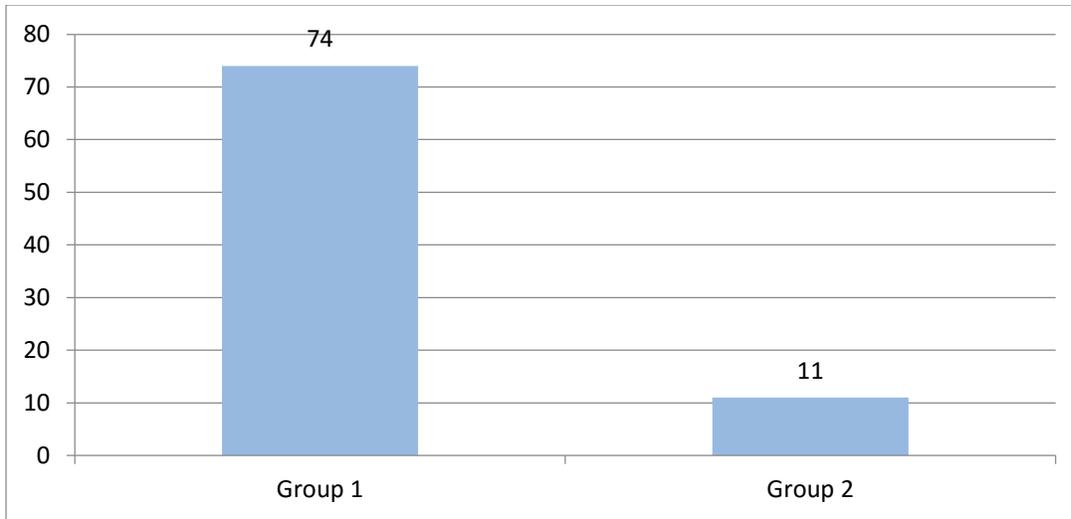
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**Example:** Birthright International has no disclaimer on their website (shared by 55 CPCs\*) that they won’t refer for abortion. However, they say: “We are here to help you in making a decision about your pregnancy. ... We want you to know the many options available to you.” These assurances are prominently displayed in a box on every page titled “[We Can Help You.](#)” but they could easily mislead potential clients into assuming they can get an abortion referral.

(\*We identified 56 Birthrights in Canada but only Birthright Ottawa had their own website).

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## REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA



**Figure 1.1: Group 1: 44.6% (n=74) of sites made vague statements about whether they will refer for abortion or contraception (only 4 of those sites also had disclaimers that they don't provide/refer).**

**Group 2: 6.6% (n=11) buried anti-abortion philosophy in privacy statements or small print at the bottom of a page.**

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**Example:** The website of Monica Place (#152) in Waterloo, Ontario has no disclaimer that they don't refer for abortion or contraception, but their FAQ could easily lead clients to believe they could get such a referral. The [question and answer](#) reads: *“Are you able to refer me to other services? Yes, we are able to make referrals to most services to which you may need access.”*

Some clients might be able to put two and two together, but only if they also look at the [Counselling Services](#) page, which lists one of their services as *“Suggesting and supporting alternatives to abortion.”*

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QUESTIONS 2 AND 3

Question 2 asked the researchers to discover whether any centre mentioned that abortion carries an increased risk of breast cancer, and Question 3 asked about any mentions of other medical complications from the procedure. While just 5% of CPC sites claimed a link between abortion and breast cancer (**Fig. 2**), 9% of sites cited other medical risks associated with abortion that were either not scientifically proven or exaggerated (**Fig. 3**). (See Discussion for critiques of these alleged risks.)

In regards to breast cancer, 1% of centres did not mention a connection but directly linked to other websites that did, 4% mentioned the connection and claimed it was a controversial issue that doctors are not sure of, and 2% mentioned the connection and claimed that since pregnancy reduces the risk of breast cancer, abortion would therefore increase their risk (**Fig. 2.1, Groups**).

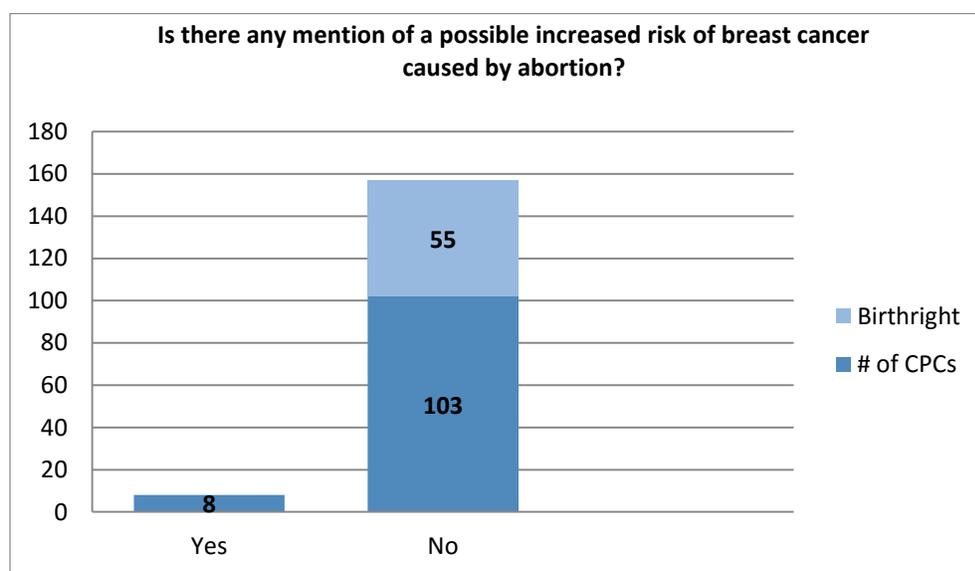


Figure 2: 4.8% (n=8) of sites claimed an explicit link between abortion and breast cancer.

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**Example:** An online CPC in Quebec called “[Enceinte et Inquiète?](#)” (#166) says: “Medical experts continue to debate the association between abortion and breast cancer. ... Despite the controversy surrounding this issue, it is important that women know what some experts say: a number of reliable studies have demonstrated a link between abortion and subsequent development of breast cancer.” (translated from French)

But there are no reliable studies showing that abortion increases the risk of breast cancer (see Discussion), and there is no longer any controversy or debate except in the minds of anti-choice people. Some of the references supposedly backing up this claim (and other alleged abortion risks on the same page) are from anti-choice “researchers.”

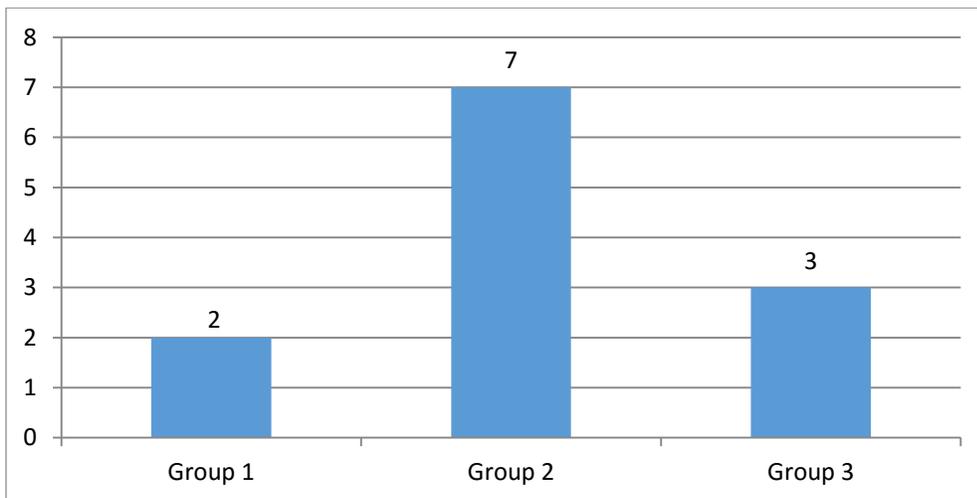
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**Example:** The Life Centre in Goderich, Ontario (#93) has detailed information on their [“Abortion” page](#) asserting a proven link to breast cancer – despite the medical consensus that there is no link. *“Biology shows that estrogen, without the balancing effects of the other pregnancy hormones, is a factor in increased breast cancer risk. Induced abortion increases a woman's total estrogen exposure, ultimately increasing her risk for breast cancer. Beginning in 1957 and as current as the fall 2007 Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons [a right-wing conservative journal], there have been more than 50 studies in peer-reviewed medical journals that have shown an increased risk of breast cancer among women who have had induced abortions.”*

Many past studies on abortion and breast cancer suffer from bad methodology but are still cited by anti-choice groups. Notably, the Life Centre website offers no references or evidence for their position, simply a footnote that the information was copied from [www.abortionincanada.ca](http://www.abortionincanada.ca). That is an anti-choice site.

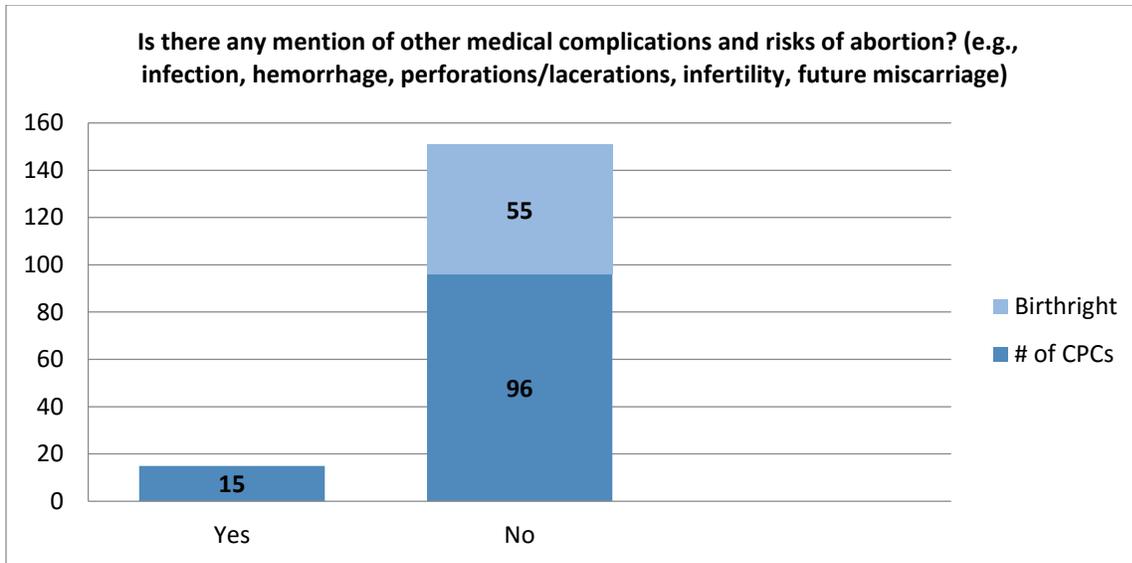
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**Figure 2.1: Group 1: 1.2% (n=2) of sites did not mention an explicit link between breast cancer and abortion but linked to other sites that did.**

**Group 2: 4.2% (n=7) claimed the issue to be undecided in medical opinion.**

**Group 3: 1.8% (n=3) claimed that pregnancy reduces the risk of breast cancer.**



**Figure 3: 9% (n=15) of sites claimed other medical complications and risks from abortion (some disproven, others exaggerated), apart from an alleged link to breast cancer.**

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**Examples:** The Pregnancy Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario (#136) provides a simple [list of physical abortion complications](#) as if they are fact: *“Infection, Heavy bleeding, Damage to the cervix or uterus, Increased risk of infertility, Increased risk of future miscarriage, Increased risk of premature births.”* There is no qualifying information that the first three complications are rare, or that full-term pregnancy and childbirth carries far greater medical risks. Further, the alleged risks of infertility, future miscarriage, and future premature birth are all scientifically unfounded when it comes to safe and legal abortion. (They may be more likely to occur with unsafe illegal abortions that permanently injure the woman’s reproductive system.)

The Pregnancy Care Centre & Infant Food Bank in Sudbury, Ontario (#144) duplicates the [exact same list](#) in the same way. Neither website cites any sources.

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**Example:** Aid to Women in Toronto, Ontario (#146) states there are serious [medical consequences](#) to abortion, but it does not elaborate: *“Abortion is not just a simple medical procedure. For many women and men, it is a life-changing event with significant physical, emotional & spiritual consequences. If you have had an abortion, we can help you find support for your needs.”* The implication is that abortion is dangerous, but in reality, it is a simple medical procedure that is extremely safe with a very low complication rate. This CPC is trying to draw in clients using fear-based techniques and bad science.

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QUESTION 4

Question 4 explored how many sites claim that abortion has negative psychological consequences for patients. Almost half of the websites, 48%, claimed that women who have abortions are more at risk for negative psychological effects such as depression, “Post-Abortion Syndrome,” or suicidal thoughts. (Fig. 4).

20% of sites specifically mentioned “Post-Abortion Syndrome,” while 16% did not specifically name “Post-Abortion Syndrome” but listed what many anti-abortion groups believe are its symptoms. 51% of sites offered post-abortion counselling at their centres (Fig. 4.1, Groups).

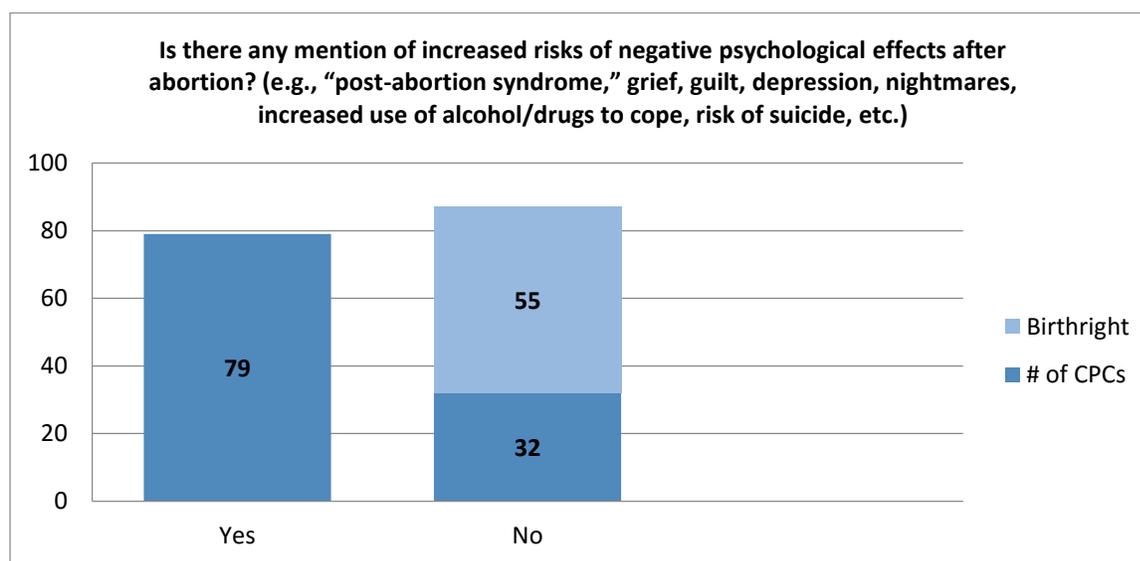


Figure 4: 47.6% (n=79) of sites claimed that abortion results in negative psychological consequences such as depression, suicidal thoughts, or “Post-Abortion Syndrome”.

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**Example:** The Kawartha Lakes Pregnancy Centre in Lindsay, Ontario (#109) [says on their website](#): “Abortion has long term effects of sorrow, grief and guilt. It leaves wounds that tear at our very fabric, that scab over but never heal, and undermine our relationships with others.” This description leaves the strong impression that such effects are not only real, but happen with every abortion. No indication is given that very few women suffer these types of serious long-term psychological effects after abortion, or that if they do, other factors in the woman’s life are likely to be contributing factors or even the main cause.

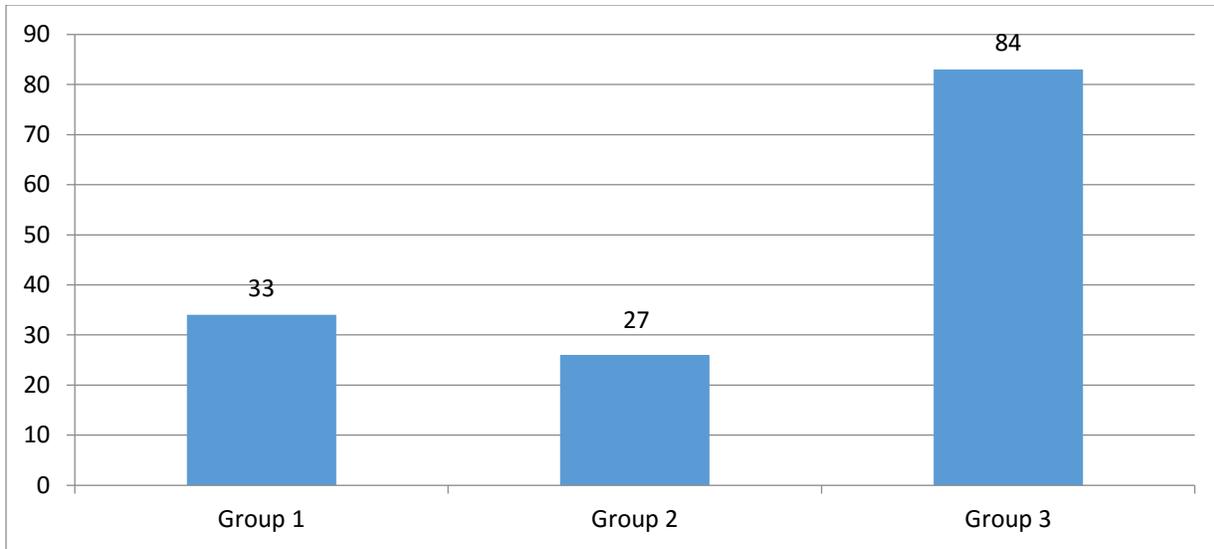
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**Example:** The Back Porch in Edmonton, Alberta (#9) [says on their website](#) that: “The most common emotional risk is Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS), which is closely related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).” The Back Porch also provides a link to the [Abortion Recovery Centre](#), which lists a fear of vacuum cleaners as a symptom of “Post Abortion Grief”.

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**Figure 4.1: Group 1: 19.9% (n=33) of websites mention or discuss “Post-Abortion Syndrome.”**  
**Group 2: 16.3% (n=27) did not name the fictitious syndrome but instead described symptoms that anti-abortion groups often claim it comprises.**  
**Group 3: 50.6% (n=84) offered post-abortion counselling.**

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**Examples:** The Okanagan Valley Pregnancy Care Centre in Kelowna, British Columbia (#31) actually says that women may become psychotic after having an abortion, as well as not be able to bond with other children. Under [Post-Abortion Recovery](#) on their website they list symptoms of “post-abortion stress”, including: “*anniversary grief*”, “*flashbacks of the abortion*”, “*interruption of the bonding process with other children*”, “*survival guilt*”, “*self-punishing or self-degrading behaviors*”, and “*brief reactive psychosis.*” However, “*post-abortion stress*” is not a known medical condition, most women feel relief after an abortion, and 99% of women do not regret their abortion.

Several other CPCs feature the exact same list of symptoms, including the [Bancroft Pregnancy Care Centre](#) in Bancroft, Ontario (#71), and the [Pregnancy & Resource Centre](#) in Brantford (#81) and Paris (#129), Ontario.

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QUESTIONS 5 AND 6

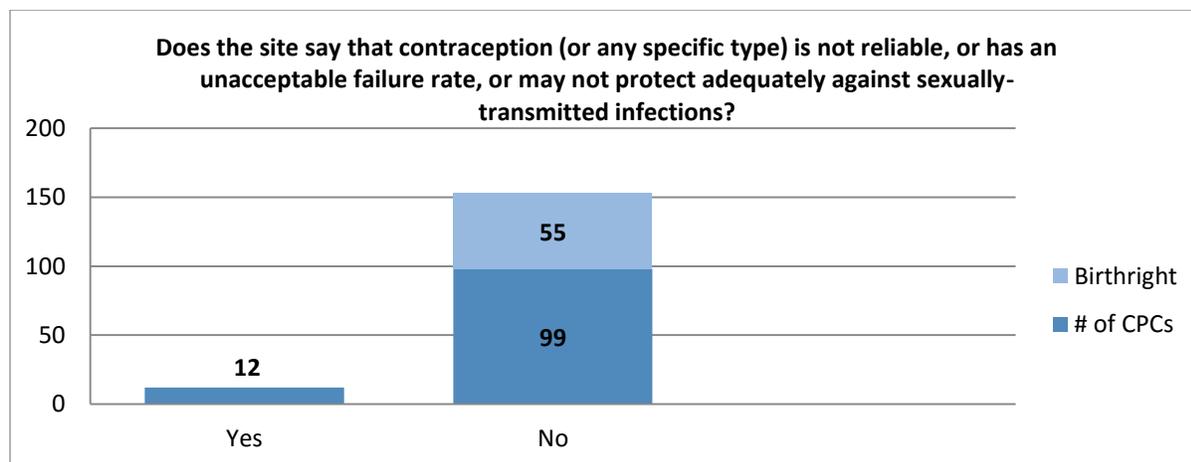
Question 5 asked whether websites promoted the misleading idea that contraception was unreliable, and Question 6 asked whether sites promoted abstinence as the only valid lifestyle choice for unwed women.

We found that 7% of websites claimed that artificial contraception is ineffective (**Fig. 5**).

60% (n=99) of websites did not have any information about contraception at all; 6% of sites had STI and/or contraceptive information only in the context of monogamous, heterosexual, married sex; and 5% of centre websites gave false or misleading information about STIs and/or contraception (**Fig 5.1, Groups**).

When it comes to encouraging abstinence, 24% of websites promoted it as the best option for unwed women, 4% of sites used explicitly religious fear-based tactics to promote it, while 16% of sites used common fear-based tactics such as STIs, pregnancy, etc. to discourage sex (**Fig. 6**).

Most websites – 78% – did not have any information about the pros and cons of sexual activity, or “sexual activity” was itself so vaguely defined as to be meaningless in this context (**Fig. 6.1, Groups**).



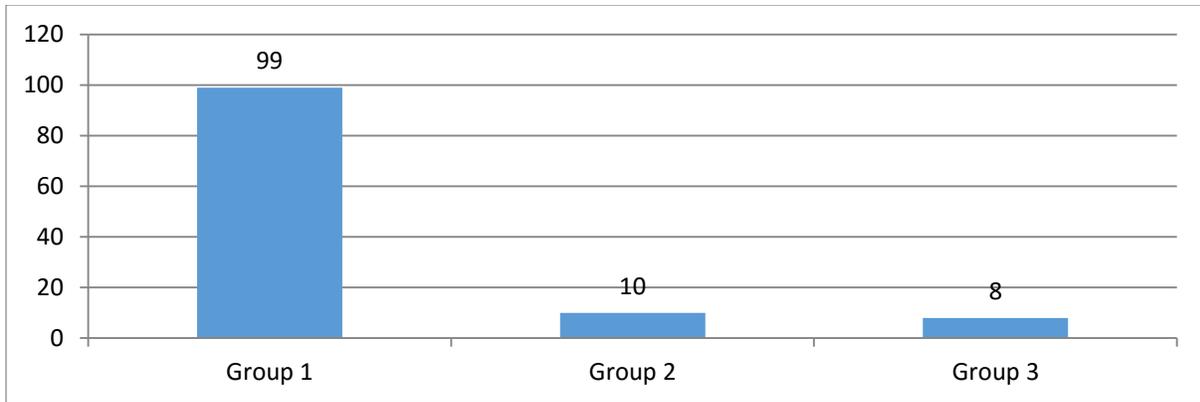
**Figure 5: 7.2% (n=12) of sites promoted the unproven claim that all artificial contraception is unreliable.**

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**Example:** The Haldimand Pregnancy Care Centre in Dunnville (#89) and Caledonia (#84), Ontario tells kids who read its sex education booklet “[pH Factor](#)”, that contraception won’t really protect them from STIs and different birth control methods offer only “*some protection*” from pregnancy. (In fact, many methods have high efficacy rates – very high when used effectively.)

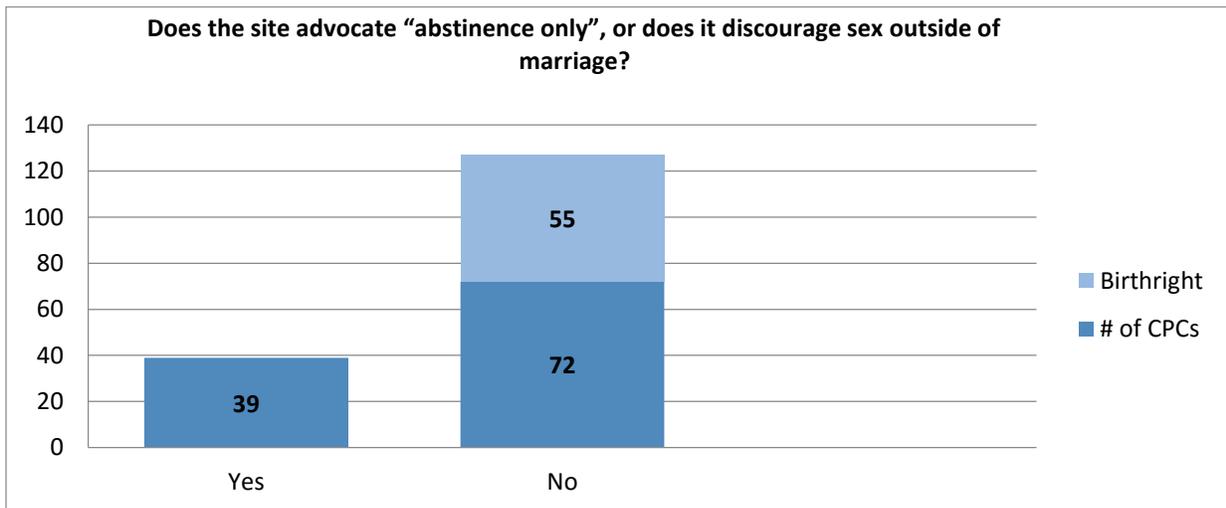
Kids are also told that “*it is legal for condom companies to distribute millions of defective condoms each year.*” The booklet scaremongers around sex by describing the symptoms and harmful effects of various STIs in detail, but with no information on how to have safe sex. Instead, it promotes abstinence as the only safe and “*right choice.*”

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**Figure 5.1: Group 1: 59.6% (n=99) of sites gave no information at all about STIs or prevention. Group 2: 6% (n=10) gave information pertaining only to married, straight, monogamous couples. Group 3: 4.8% (n=8) gave false or misleading information regarding contraception and/or STIs.**

**Example:** The Crossroads Clinic in Brooks, Alberta (#1) has a [brochure on STIs](#) that says: “The only way to protect yourself from STIs is to reserve sexual activity for a committed, monogamous relationship.” This implies that monogamous couples have zero risk of STIs and that contraception does not protect someone. The brochure is rife with scare tactics followed by assurances that abstinence is the only true protection from STIs. “Many women won’t find out their reproductive organs have been damaged until they try to have a baby...and then it’s too late”.

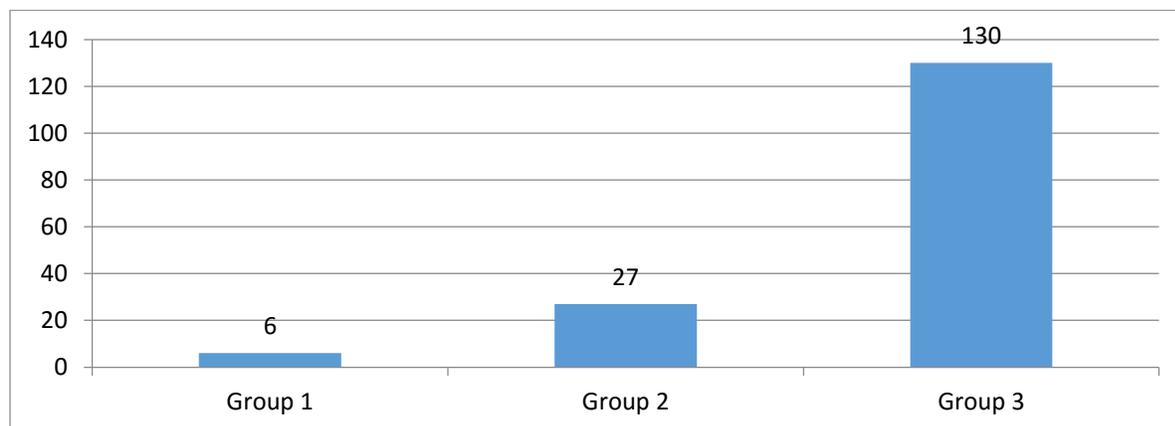


**Figure 6: 23.5% (n=39) of sites promoted sexual abstinence as the ideal solution for unwed women.**

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**Example:** The Pregnancy Help Centre of Durham (#91) and Oshawa (#125), Ontario has a brochure for a [speaker series](#) that “encourages students to consider the advantages of postponing sexual involvement”. The presentation “STIs: Fact or Fiction” lists “prevention through postponement of sexual involvement” as an objective. Another series on dating emphasizes “gender differences.” This may indicate advocacy of traditional gender roles, as well as disregard for the sexual health needs of GLBTQ youth.

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**Figure 6.1: Group 1: 3.6% (n=6) of sites used religious-based fear tactics to persuade viewers to accept abstinence.**

**Group 2: 16.3% (n=27) used non-religious fear-based tactics.**

**Group 3: 78.3% (n=130) had vague information or no information regarding sexual activity.**

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**Example:** South Niagara Life Center Ministries in Fort Erie, Ontario (#92) operates [Project Keepsake](#), which tells young people that the only way to maintain self-respect is to practice abstinence. The program purports to teach kids about the “false security of contraceptives”, and how to “be free from the emotional anguish, physical and mental scarring and aftermath [of STIs].” It also promotes unrealistic lifelong monogamy by teaching “about being responsibly prepared for sex, i.e. preparing ahead for a lifelong committed relationship; one that promotes value and respect for their lives, and longevity of days.”

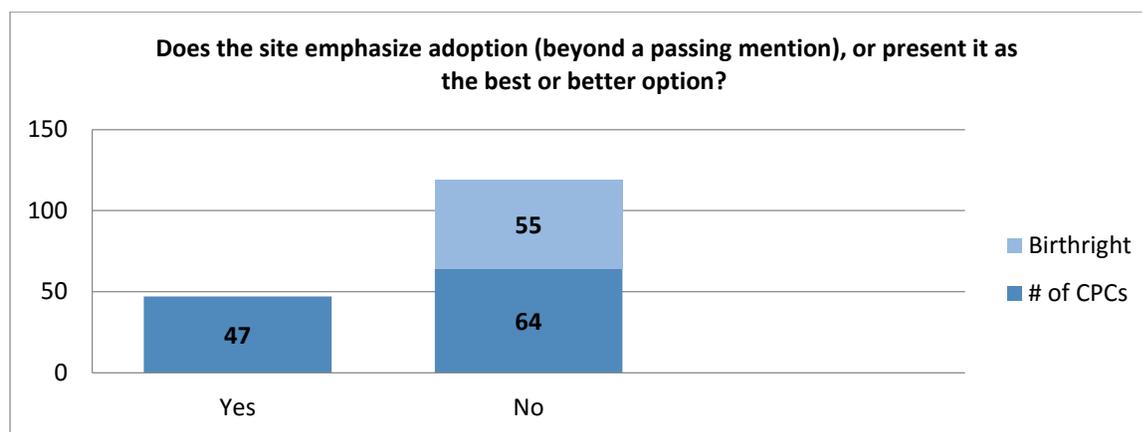
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QUESTION 7

Question 7 asked whether centre websites overemphasized adoption for pregnant women.

We found that 28% of websites used language that emphasizes adoption over other options (**Fig. 7**).

Only 14% of sites mentioned adoption without promoting it, even listing some of the negative effects of adoption. 4% of sites mentioned adoption without mentioning any negative consequences, and 11% presented adoption as the preferred choice for women with unwanted pregnancies (**Fig. 7.1, Groups**).



**Figure 7: 28.3% (n=47) of sites overemphasized adoption at the expense of other possible options for women.**

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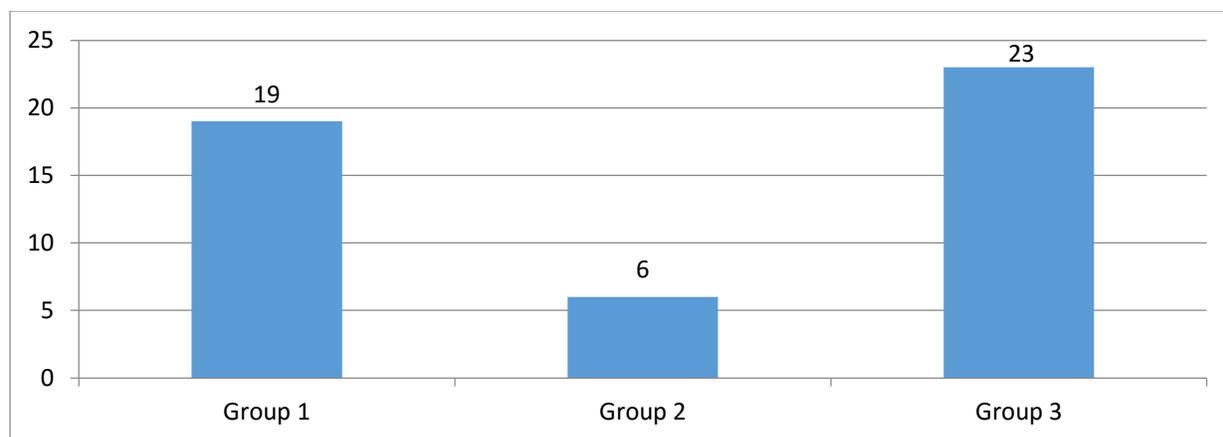
**Example:** The Pregnancy Resource Centre of Saint John, New Brunswick (#64) [discusses adoption](#) versus foster care and states: “...typically is it not adoptive parents that abuse children”. They further advise: “Looking honestly at your ability to provide for your child financially, emotionally and physically and choosing adoption is smart and very responsible.” This language is coercive and biased against single and/or young pregnant people.

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**Example:** The Pregnancy Care Centre in Edmonton, Alberta (#8) [states that](#) “Studies show that teenage moms who place their children for adoption have overall greater satisfaction in their lives – in their work, finances and relationships....As well, more than ten thousand studies show that a loving, two-parent home is best for a baby.”

The site is biased towards adoption because it emphasizes the positives of adoption over abortion and even over parenting. The parenting section is brief compared to the other options. The reference to “ten thousand studies” in the adoption section is meant to discourage single women from parenting their babies by inducing guilt and inadequacy, despite the fact that many factors affect child welfare and the number of parents present is a relatively minor one (DePaulo 2009).

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**Figure 7.1: Group 1: 11.4% (n=19) openly championed adoption as a preferred choice. Group 2: 3.6% (n=6) did not mention the negative consequences of adoption. Group 3: 13.9% (n=23) of sites talked neutrally about adoption.**

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**Example:** The Back Porch in Edmonton, Alberta (#9) states on their [Adoption Information page](#): *“Sometimes the most loving thing a woman faced with an unplanned pregnancy can do is place her child with a caring, adoptive family. There are 150 couples waiting to adopt a child in just one of Alberta’s private adoption agencies—think of how many more couples are waiting to become parents!”*

The site makes the assumption that women are being pressured into abortion and lists the risks of abortion. Negative feelings about adoption are glossed over as *“adoption can easily be dismissed”* and the focus is re-directed towards the needs of the adoptive parents. Risks of adoption such as trauma and stigma are not mentioned. Limited information is available on parenting. This agency’s bias against abortion and towards adoption are demonstrated by the website.

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**Example:** The Valley Care Pregnancy Centre of Kentville, Nova Scotia (#69) [website focuses](#) on the negatives of abortion and the positives of adoption even over the option of parenting. Bias is displayed by describing adoption as an *“appealing”* and a *“beautiful option”*. They state: *“Research has shown that pregnant teens and women who make an adoption plan are more likely to finish school, have better jobs and overall report a high level of satisfaction with their decision for adoption.”*

Adoption risks are not discussed other than the phrase *“challenges natural parents face”*. But people with unplanned pregnancies need access to complete and impartial information to make responsible decisions.

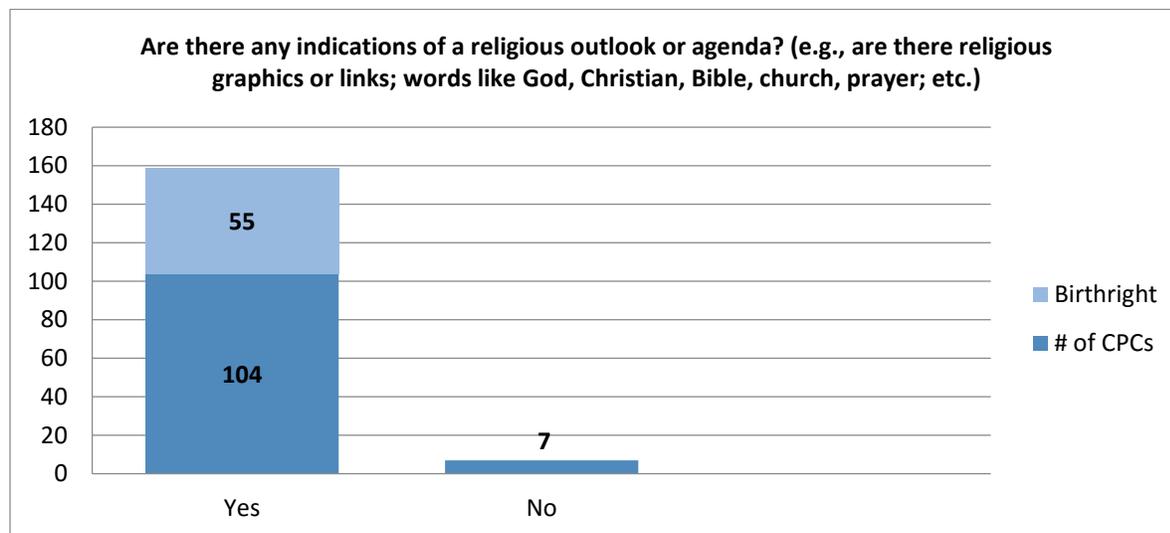
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QUESTION 8

Question 8 asked about the religiosity of a centre based on its website.

We found that 96% of centres revealed their religious affiliation or religious agenda (**Fig.8**).

However, only 24% of sites were transparent by using openly religious language, while 72% were more subtle, not using explicitly religious language but instead vague terms and references that could be interpreted as religious, or linking to one or more religious websites (**Fig. 8.1, Groups**).



**Figure 8:** 95.8% (n=159) of sites revealed their religious affiliation or agenda, but usually in a hidden or unclear manner.

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**Example:** The Calgary Pregnancy Care Centre (#3) in Calgary, Alberta only mentions their Christian connection on the [donate page](#) where they state: “God bless you all for your dedication to helping young teens, new moms, and those trying to make decisions. Your compassion and care is inspiring and such a blessing.” “The CPCC is a member of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities.” People expecting secular advice may be deceived regarding the religious nature of the services offered by this website.

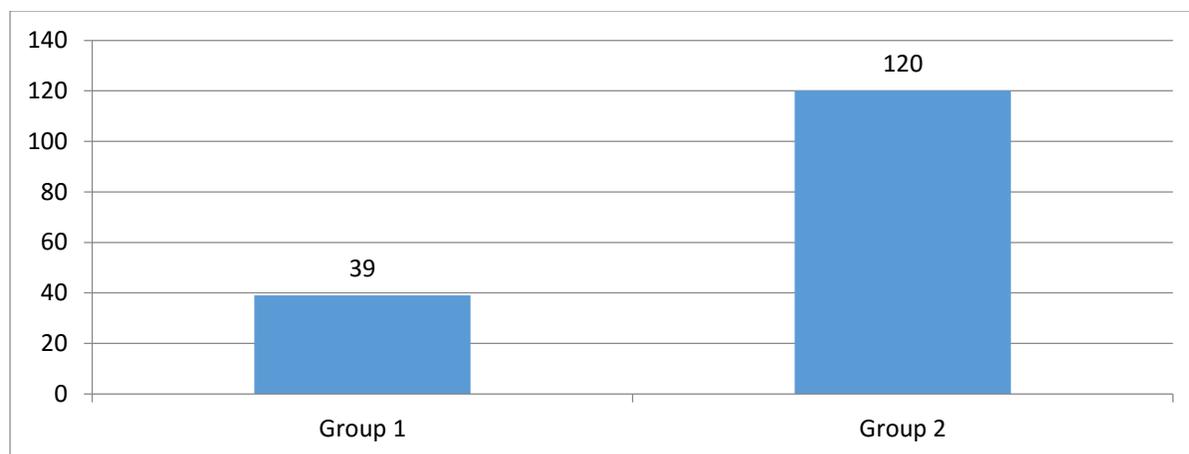
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**Example:** The Comox Valley Pregnancy Care Centre in Courtenay, British Columbia (#27) has no indication of religion [on its website](#). However, if you click their Donate link, it takes you to the [Canada Helps website](#), where it says: “Comox Valley Pregnancy Care Centre is a Christ-centered ministry committed to upholding the sanctity of human life by demonstrating the love of Christ to women facing crisis pregnancies through the provision of spiritual, physical and emotional support and by proclaiming the Gospel.” Clients accessing the CPC’s website would not be informed that the centre is a Christian ministry.

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**Figure 8.1: Group 1: 23.5% (n=39) of sites used openly religious language and terminology. Group 2: 72.3% (n=120) used more subtle or hidden religious language.**

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**Example:** Pregnancy Concerns in Coquitlam, British Columbia (#26) does not mention religious affiliations [on its website](#) but it does mention that it is affiliated with CAPSS (Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services). As an affiliate, this agency is required to sign a [Statement of Faith](#). *“The Centre agrees to require that all board members, paid staff and volunteers agree with each affirmation of the CAPSS Statement of Faith and Sanctity of Life Statement.”* Clients accessing the Pregnancy Concerns website would not be informed of the religious nature of the services they would access.

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**Example:** The Back Porch in Edmonton, Alberta (#9) is operated by ALIES.ca (Alberta Life Issues Educational Society), which is explicitly religious and has this [Statement of Faith](#) on its website: *“Faith - In all our programs and services, we share God’s message of love for all people, which offers hope and transformation. Respect - We believe that each person is created in the image of God and must be treated with dignity and respect. Integrity - We are transparent and trustworthy, accountable to God and each other. We are committed to biblical, ethical and professional accountability in all of our dealings.”*

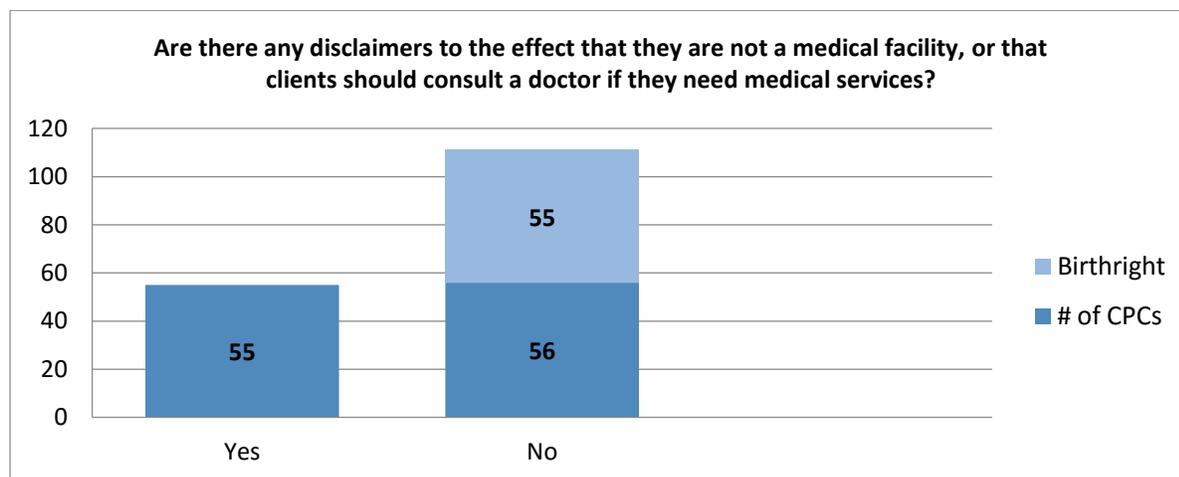
However, there is no mention of religion or religious affiliation on the [Back Porch website](#), although their [Facebook page](#) describes them as *“An 11th Hour Ministry”*. Clients accessing the Back Porch website would not be informed of the religious nature of the services that they would access.

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QUESTION 9

Question 9 asked whether the centres mention on their websites that they are not a medical facility, or that clients should consult a doctor if they need medical services.

Out of the 166 CPC websites studied, 33% had disclaimers on their sites that they are not a medical facility, while 67% had no such disclaimer (**Fig 9**).



**Figure 9: 33.1% (n=55) of websites had disclaimers that they were not a medical facility, while 66.9% (n=111) failed to include such a disclaimer.**

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**Example:** The Comox Valley Pregnancy Care Centre in Courtenay, British Columbia (#27) does not have a disclaimer about whether or not it is a medical clinic or has medical staff. They state: “We have trained peer-counselors who will go over these three options with you and give you information in order that you can make a wise and informed choice.” This wording may be confusing to clients that may associate pregnancy care with medical clinics.

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**Example:** Pregnancy Concerns in Coquitlam, British Columbia (#26) has a disclaimer in small print at the bottom of their website: “Pregnancy Concerns is staffed by a team of trained volunteers under the supervision of a Director and Executive Board of the Community Pregnancy Concerns Society. Most volunteers do not have academic degrees in counselling; therefore the counselling provided is not intended as a substitute for professional counselling. Pregnancy Concerns is not a medical facility.”

Clients may miss this disclaimer due to the location and size of the font. Clients may assume that they are receiving professional counselling or other services from medical professionals.

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## DISCUSSION

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### DECEPTION AND MISINFORMATION ON CPC WEBSITES

This study reveals that “Crisis Pregnancy Centres” are skilled at being deceitful and misleading. We found that approximately one-half of Canadian CPCs provided direct misinformation about abortion or sexual health on their websites. This misinformation includes stating that abortion is or may be linked to breast cancer (5% of sites), or presenting “Post-abortion Syndrome” as real and common (48% of sites). Neither of these claims are supported by evidence (NARAL 2016).

Many recent studies have now established that having an abortion does not cause an increased risk of breast cancer (Arthur 2014). All reputable medical organizations agree that the best evidence shows that abortion does not lead to breast cancer, including the [Canadian Cancer Society](#), [American Cancer Society](#), [National Cancer Institute](#), [National Breast Cancer Coalition](#), [American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#), [Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#), and [World Health Organization](#).

Nine percent of the CPC websites exaggerated the medical risks of abortion, or presented them without any qualification that they were rare or that childbirth carries far higher medical risks (Raymond and Grimes 2012; Hogue 2008). In some cases, concerns on medical risks of abortion were hinted at or stated more subtly on CPC websites, or links were provided to other websites that provide inaccurate information.

Although around half of CPCs did not directly provide misinformation on their websites, it should be noted that many websites simply don’t get into a lot of detail on most things. But we know from previous studies in Canada and the U.S. (see list on page 6) that CPCs often engage in harmful activities when interacting directly with clients – at the very least, providing misinformation about abortion, but often much worse, such as showing graphic anti-abortion videos, or using judgmental and scare-mongering language to shame and frighten women. The CPC websites serve to lure potential “patients” in order to dissuade them from abortion – thus making these websites dangerous tools.

This is borne out by our study, which found a high degree of non-disclosure on CPC websites. Although CPCs rarely if ever refer clients for abortion, 60% of websites (99 of 166) gave no indication of this, while 67% (111) failed to inform clients that they are not a medical facility and/or that clients should consult a doctor for medical advice. (Note: Both figures include the 55 Birthrights sharing the same website.)

In addition, 28% of websites (47) encouraged adoption, with 14% (23) promoting it at the expense of other options and rarely mentioning any of the negative effects that adoption has on most women who relinquish their babies, including lifelong trauma (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2013; Origins Canada 2010). When sites encouraged adoption, the benefits were most often presented from the view of the baby and the adoptive parents. The consistent message was that it is a responsible choice and the best thing for the baby, and that “birth mothers” (an unacceptable term that implies breeders) can maintain contact with the baby. However, open adoption contracts may not be enforceable in Canada (Origins Canada 2009).

## REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA

Almost half of centres – 48% (79) – claimed on their websites that abortion results in negative psychological consequences, including depression, suicidal thoughts, or “Post-Abortion Syndrome”. However, a 2008 Task Force on mental health and abortion by the American Psychological Association (APA 2009) found that the majority of studies on the topic suffered from methodological problems – often severe ones. The anti-choice movement cites these flawed studies to claim that abortion leads to serious psychological issues.

Of course, abortion can give rise to a range of feelings, and some women may feel sad or guilty, but the most common emotion after abortion is relief. The APA Task Force and several subsequent studies concluded that most women who terminate a pregnancy do not experience mental health problems. There is no evidence that observed associations between abortion and mental health issues were causally linked, as other factors could be responsible, such as a prior history of mental health issues, or any source of stress occurring in the woman’s life – including in many cases, the unwanted pregnancy itself rather than the abortion (APA 2009).

Further, a 2015 study found that 99% of women don’t regret their decision to have an abortion, even three years later (Rocca et al. 2015). Nevertheless, 51% (84) of the CPC websites said they offered post-abortion counselling. While this could in theory be a valuable service for the small number of women who experience problems after abortion, the religious focus of most CPCs and other post-abortion “ministries” generally leads them to impose an inappropriate counselling model on patients, based on inducing guilt followed by repentance and forgiveness (Campaign Life Coalition. N.d.).

Twenty percent of websites (33) used fear-based tactics to discourage sexual activity and encourage abstinence, mostly under the guise of safety and values like “self-respect,” rather than being upfront about the CPC’s religious morality.

Many CPCs hide their religious stance. Of the 180 CPCs we identified for our study, 33% (60) are affiliates of the Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services (CAPSS). These affiliates are expected to abide by the CAPSS “Sanctity of Life Statement” that states human life is made in the image of God including the “unborn”, a “Statement of Faith” that mandates belief in an inerrant Bible, and other religious directives. All staff and volunteers at affiliate CPCs are required to have a “personal relationship with Christ.” Further, a “Code of Counselling Ethics” requires counselling theories and tools to be consistent with the Bible, and counselors must “not provide, recommend, or refer clients for abortion or abortifacients.” (CAPSS 2015) Despite this high level of religious commitment, only 32% (19) of the 60 affiliate CPCs openly stated on their websites that they are a Christian organization or operated from a religious perspective. The rest presented a secular front to potential clients.

Another 56 CPCs in Canada (31%) are Birthright centres, affiliates of Birthright International, which was founded by a Catholic woman and is still Catholic-oriented. The remaining 64 CPCs (36%) operate independently, but are still primarily Christian ministries. Overall however, out of 166 CPCs with websites, only 39 (23%) were openly religious on their websites.

We also reviewed all CPC websites to determine if they offered a sex education program to youth or local schools and communities. At least 35% did (59 of 166). Of those sex-ed programs, at least 68% (40 of 59) are offered or provided to schools, including public schools. In fact, many CPCs have infiltrated public schools in Canada to deliver sex education curricula. In one case in Edmonton, a parent discovered that a CPC (Edmonton Pregnancy Care Centre, #8) was teaching conservative ideology and

## REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA

misinformation on sexual practices and health (CBC News 2014). The Pregnancy Help Centre of Durham (#91) and Oshawa (#125) in Ontario also offer a sex-ed “[Speaker Series](#)” program to local secondary schools, with the apparent approval of the public school board. The deceptive secular front of many CPCs, combined with the conservatism of many school boards and sex-ed curricula in Canada, may contribute to the CPCs’ ability to access public schools when it is clearly inappropriate for them to do so.

In addition, doctors, clinics, hospitals, and social service agencies often unwittingly refer women to CPCs without realizing their anti-abortion agenda (Arthur 2009).

### CPC ADVERTISING

“Crisis Pregnancy Centres” use a variety of techniques to advertise. They advertise on TV, on billboards, in the Yellow Pages, at bus stops and on buses, and they strategically locate their centres adjacent to abortion clinics. They also have websites and take advantage of online advertising.

These days, a woman may first come across a CPC online. The anonymity of an Internet search is appealing for those who need answers to sexual health concerns. With a website being a likely first point of contact, it is important to examine the messaging used and the information provided in order to understand how CPCs design their websites to encourage women to use their services.

A website for any organization has three main functions: to provide information, to advertise services with an eye towards recruitment, and to fundraise by providing an opportunity for donors to visualize their work and donate to the cause.

For advertising purposes, CPCs understand the power of Internet anonymity and have invested in it to get “abortion-minded” women in their door (NARAL 2015). According to NARAL Pro-Choice America, umbrella groups in the U.S. have spent “more than \$18,000 per month on pay-per-click advertising campaigns that target women searching for abortion providers and bring them to their websites and call center” (NARAL 2015, pg 4). So when “a woman types the words “abortion clinic” into a search engine, she gets results for CPCs instead of actual health clinics. A 2014 campaign by NARAL succeeded in removing CPCs’ deceptive advertising from the major search engines Google and Yahoo. (NARAL 2015, pg 5). But online deception lives on in other forms and even in Canada, “the distinction between the ‘Abortion Alternatives’ and ‘Abortion Services’ categories is not obvious online” (Smith 2010a/b).

CPC online deception goes beyond the search engine, and includes web pages for individual CPCs. These websites are advertisements in themselves and use similar but not identical deceptive practices to lure women into their doors. And American CPCs are not very different from Canadian CPCs, which learn and adopt a great deal from their southern neighbours.

A journalist from Cosmopolitan Magazine who attended an annual Heartbeat International conference in the United States, “a gathering of roughly 1,000 crisis pregnancy center staff and anti-abortion leaders from across the country” (Winter 2015a), found that CPCs dedicate a great deal of strategy time to identifying ways in which they can “attract women seeking contraception, counseling, or abortion” without scaring them off by revealing true intentions. For example, Heartbeat International recommends that the centres have two separate websites: one to “secure donors and another that lists medical information to attract women seeking contraception, counseling, or abortion”. The donor website, the article says, is typically more religious and straightforward about its anti-abortion goals. The

other appeals to young, likely secular women who are interested in learning more about access to abortion and information about pregnancy and sexual health.

The Cosmo journalist learned at this convention that CPCs strategize their deception in an almost comically sinister way. And because this deception is built into their advertising strategy, just looking at the website may not actually reveal the type of false or offensive information and Christian references that other studies have found by visiting CPCs. For example, while we know that these organizations are religiously motivated, CPCs trying to appeal to a broader base rely on more progressive and perhaps even feminist sentiments (Saurette et al. 2013). Many of their websites, careful to not scare anyone away, might not actually provide misleading information *per se*, but do misrepresent their services. The Cosmo exposé revealed that such tactics are not an accident but part of a toolbox built into their advertising strategy in order to hide, conceal, or minimize references to Christianity and anti-abortion rhetoric and anything they actually do in real life.

The concern then is not necessarily what is on the website, but the fact that it serves as a way to get women in the door. Inside the CPC is where the most danger lurks for women. However, some CPC websites do provide misinformation on abortion, while others hint at alleged problems or generally paint abortion in a bad light. The effect is to scare women and cause them to doubt having an abortion even if they don't visit the centre or access services. Therefore, even engaging with the website can be harmful to women and public health.

### CPC FUNDING

Little information is available on how “Crisis Pregnancy Centres” in Canada are funded, although there is reason to suspect that some Canadian CPCs may benefit from American support (Arthur 2009). In the U.S., we know that CPCs enjoy large amounts of public funding through government programs that pay for things like abstinence-only education and “options” counselling. At least 12 states provide government funding to CPCs (Winter 2015b; McDonough, 2015).

Most CPCs in Canada seem to fundraise in the community, often through churches, but also by participating in public fundraising campaigns and applying for foundation and government grants. Unfortunately, they usually do so without disclosing their anti-choice or religious stance to the public or potential funders. Here's a few examples where this apparently occurred:

- A 2009 report on CPCs in British Columbia noted that: “In BC in 2002 (or 2003), at least one or more CPCs belonging to CAPSS got a \$64,000 grant from the BC Liberal government's Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.” (Arthur 2009).
- The Pregnancy Care Centre of Kamloops (#30) solicited funds in a 2011 Christmas campaign by placing donation cans in government liquor stores, and was selected as one of five charitable beneficiaries for the 2012 Christmas Cheer Fund by the Kamloops Daily News (Arthur 2012).
- First Place Options in Kanata ON (#103a) was selected by the “Sens Better Halves” as one of several charities to receive funds from a Christmas tree raffle held in 2007 in Ottawa. The CPC withdrew from the fundraiser after unfavourable media coverage (Ottawa Citizen 2007).
- The Pregnancy Options & Support Centre of Sarnia ON (#135) received an \$83,800 grant in 2014 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The grant money was partially rescinded by the foundation after a campaign by feminist blogger Fern Hill (Hill 2014).

## REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA

It’s possible that Canadian CPCs are obtaining private or public funding in order to purchase medical equipment like ultrasounds. Our research revealed that at least four CPCs in Canada had ultrasounds as of July 2015<sup>1</sup> (and more are likely coming). However, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada states that ultrasound technology should not be used for non-medical purposes (Salem et al. 2014).

Many CPCs also enjoy charitable tax status, which significantly increases their ability to fundraise (Arthur 2005). Out of the 180 CPCs we identified, 68% (122) had charitable tax status. However, Canadian groups should not be eligible for charity status if they disseminate biased or inaccurate information that is disguised as “education” or “counselling.” (Arthur 2005; Canada Revenue Agency 2013).

### CAN CPCs BE REGULATED?

Canadian CPCs are not currently regulated. There are no meaningful laws or regulations in place to dictate how they operate. Since CPCs are not medical facilities, laws and policies associated with them do not apply. CPCs are usually completely volunteer-run and offer free aid. Thus, their “counsellors” are not accountable to professional standards or associations (such as the [Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association](#)), and their services are not billed to Medicare, which keeps them off the radar of provincial Ministries of Health.

CPCs engage in much advertisement to attract their clientele and thus are governed by the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards, which is administered by Advertising Standards of Canada. However, that agency has little to no enforcement power, plus CPC ads in particular (such as on buses) are usually subtle enough to evade sanction.

In the United States, attempts to regulate CPCs have had mixed success. Federal attempts to regulate CPC practices have not been successful so far (Crockett 2015). Some U.S. states and cities have passed regulations, primarily to require CPCs to inform clients that they won’t refer for abortion or contraception. However, these laws have been challenged by CPCs, and mostly struck down by courts based on “free speech” grounds (Murphy 2011). In effect, CPCs in the U.S. have successfully sued for the right to lie to clients (Busby 2015; Ryan 2011).

One law that still stands after a failed legal challenge by a CPC is a San Francisco ordinance prohibiting false or misleading advertising by CPCs (Egelko 2015). Another encouraging precedent occurred in December 2015, when a federal judge upheld a California state law (National Women’s Law Centre 2015; Redden 2015) that required CPCs “to disclose that they are not licensed medical providers and to post notices providing information about California’s public programs offering access to family planning, prenatal and abortion services.” (Feminist Newswire 2015)

Canadian jurisdictions might have more success in passing regulations or bylaws to govern CPCs, because Canada does not have the same strong free speech protections as the U.S. Our Charter of Rights and Freedoms has the ability to limit free speech to protect other rights, using Section 1 (Westcoast LEAF 2008). Further, it can be argued that U.S. cases striking down some of the laws were

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<sup>1</sup> Crossroads Clinic, Brooks AB (#1) • Edmonton Pregnancy Crisis Centre, Edmonton AB (#7)  
Your Pregnancy Options, Abbotsford BC (#22) • Women’s Care Centre, Fredericton NB (#60)

## REVIEW OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE” WEBSITES IN CANADA

wrongly decided, as the courts failed to account for the rights of people seeking healthcare and the public health danger that CPCs pose.

### LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

We reviewed only the websites of CPCs, which may not capture their actual practices or counselling when they speak to clients in person or on the phone. The list of 180 CPCs that we identified as operational as of mid 2015 was developed as accurately as possible, but may contain some errors or omissions. Further, a few CPCs may have closed since then or new ones opened. Most websites were reviewed in mid to late 2015 and some websites have since changed. (Copies of websites at the time of review were not saved.)

The Review Worksheets (Appendix 2) were completed by a number of different researchers, so interpretations may not always be consistent despite the standard set of questions. Most reviews and CPC websites were re-checked for accuracy to some degree but not comprehensively. On the Excel spreadsheet that researchers used to record data, some errors in coding were found and corrected after initial quantification of data, but changes to the results were insignificant. Therefore, any remaining errors would be unlikely to affect the overall results.

The research was not done through an academic institution or formally peer-reviewed. It was entirely unfunded and done on a volunteer basis.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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This study supports the need for more transparency and professionalism by CPCs in Canada, because they purport to help and advise women on healthcare, yet often provide dangerous medical misinformation while deceptively presenting themselves as unbiased centres that assist clients with all options. This may require regulation to address, as most CPCs are unlikely to voluntarily reform themselves because of their religious anti-abortion ideology.

In two related reports on CPCs in Quebec (Gonin et al. 2014, pg. 144; FQPN 2014, pg 39-40), the authors recommend a government-created website that would provide impartial guidance and scientifically sound information on abortion, thereby serving as a central reference tool for women and practitioners. This could help reduce the reach and negative impact of misinformation provided by CPCs. Further, the authors of the Quebec reports recommend that online training be developed and provided to volunteer counsellors who advise women with unintended pregnancies. This would help establish minimum professional standards and protect public health.

The findings of our study lead us to the following recommendations – with the caveat that they do not necessarily apply to all CPCs:

- Establish disclosure notice laws at the municipal or provincial level – for example, requiring CPCs to post clear, prominent notices at their premises and websites that they do not refer for abortion or contraception, that they are not medical facilities, and that they are Christian ministries opposed to abortion.
- Ensure that CPCs are not publically funded.
- Revoke the charitable tax status of CPCs that have it, based on the biased misinformation they provide to clients.
- Ensure that CPCs are not allowed to teach sex-education in public schools.
- Remove CPCs from referral lists at doctor’s offices, clinics, hospitals, and social service agencies.
- Crack down on misleading advertising of CPCs, since they do not provide professional, unbiased counselling services; they impart distorted or medically-inaccurate information on abortion and contraception; and their counsellors are not properly trained or registered.

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**Note: All websites accessed between March 31 and May 7, 2016.**

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# APPENDIX 1: LIST OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRES” ACROSS CANADA

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*Compiled by Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada*

**Notes:** The following are not included on the list unless their website specifically says they provide pregnancy options counselling:

- Homes for pregnant women
- Adoption agencies
- Post-abortion counselling agencies (e.g., Project Rachel)
- Anti-choice and right-to-life groups (advocacy, political)
- Crisis pregnancy centre hotlines

The table lists all current CPCs in Canada: **180**. The table is sorted alphabetically by Province, then City. (The table lists 182 entries because CPC numbers were permanently assigned to the reviews and three entries were later deleted due to accidental inclusion and one was added later, as explained in the table: # 21, 59, 103a, 147).

**Data collection and verification:** All data was collected in August 2014. The CPCs were verified to currently exist via Internet searches and some phone calls, except for a few Birthrights (see below). Re-verifications with updates and corrections were made between May and August 2015 (and some later up to May 2016), except for Birthrights without charitable tax status and CPCs without websites, which were not re-checked.

**Birthrights:**

- All Birthrights share the same webpage: [www.birthright.org](http://www.birthright.org), with the sole exception of Birthright Ottawa.
- If listings showed two Birthrights in one city, only one was included due to assumed moving or closure.
- It is possible that a few Birthrights *not* listed as a registered charity are currently not in operation (some could not be confirmed).

**Table Legend:**

- Charity: The CPC is a registered charity in good standing as of July 2015 with Canada Revenue Agency.
- CAPSS: The CPC is a member of the Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services, a CPC umbrella group: [www.capss.com](http://www.capss.com).

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #  | Name   | City                 | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website  |
|----|--|----------------------|-------|---------|--------------|--|
| 1  | Crossroads Clinic Association                        | Brooks               | AB    | Y       | N            | www.crossroadsclinic.ca  |
| 2  | Birthright Calgary                                   | Calgary              | AB    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 3  | Calgary Pregnancy Care Centre Association            | Calgary              | AB    | Y       | Y            | www.pregcare.com   |
| 4  | Cochrane Pregnancy Care Centre                       | Cochrane             | AB    | Y       | Y            | www.cochranepreg.com   |
| 5  | Pregnancy Problem Centre                             | Cold Lake            | AB    | N       | N            | www.pregnancyproblemcentre.ca/   |
| 6  | Birthright Edmonton                                  | Edmonton             | AB    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 7  | Edmonton Pregnancy Crisis Centre                     | Edmonton             | AB    | Y       | N            | www.edpregnancy.ca   |
| 8  | Pregnancy Care Centre                                | Edmonton             | AB    | N       | Y            | www.pregnancycarecentre.ca   |
| 9  | The Back Porch                                       | Edmonton             | AB    | N       | N            | www.thebackporch.info/   |
| 10 | Birthright Ft. McMurray                              | Fort McMurray        | AB    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 11 | High Level Women's Support Services                  | High Level           | AB    | N       | N            | www.highlevel.ca/residents/clubs-and-organizations/32-residents/clubs-and-organizations/207-high-level-womens-support-centre |
| 12 | West Yellowhead Pregnancy Care Centre                | Hinton               | AB    | N       | Y            | www.wypcc.ca <i>(not reviewed because website new in late 2015)</i>  |
| 13 | Birthright Lethbridge (& District)                   | Lethbridge           | AB    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 14 | Lethbridge Pregnancy Care Centre                     | Lethbridge           | AB    | Y       | Y            | www.lethbridgepregcentre.com   |
| 15 | Agnes Adam Lee Centre                                | Medicine Hat         | AB    | N       | N            | No website   |
| 16 | Pregnancy & Family Support Centre                    | Medicine Hat         | AB    | Y       | N            | www.facebook.com/M.H.Pregnancysupportcentre  |
| 17 | Central Alberta Pregnancy Care Centre                | Olds                 | AB    | Y       | Y            | www.pregnancycare.ca   |
| 18 | Central Alberta Pregnancy Care Centre Society        | Red Deer             | AB    | Y       | Y            | www.pregnancycare.ca   |
| 19 | Birthright Mountain House                            | Rocky Mountain House | AB    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 20 | Pregnancy Care Centre                                | Strathmore           | AB    | N       | Y            | www.pregcare.com   |
| 21 | <i>(Deleted because CPC closed in 2012)</i>          |                      |       |         |              |  |
| 22 | Your Pregnancy Options                               | Abbotsford           | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.yourpregnancyoptions.ca  |
| 23 | Crisis Pregnancy Centre of Burnaby & New Westminster | Burnaby              | BC    | N       | Y            | www.optionscentre.ca   |

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #  | Name  | City            | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website  |
|----|---|-----------------|-------|---------|--------------|--|
| 24 | Birthright Campbell River                     | Campbell River  | BC    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 25 | Chilliwack Crisis Pregnancy Centre            | Chilliwack      | BC    | N       | N            | www.chilliwackprolife.com/centre.php   |
| 26 | Pregnancy Concerns                            | Coquitlam       | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.pregnancyconcerns.org  |
| 27 | Comox Valley Pregnancy Care Centre            | Courtenay       | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.cvpregcare.ca  |
| 28 | Birthright Surrey Delta                       | Delta           | BC    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 29 | North Peace Pregnancy Care Centre             | Fort St. John   | BC    | N       | Y            | www.northpeacepregnancycare.ca   |
| 30 | Pregnancy Care Centre of Kamloops             | Kamloops        | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.mypregnancychoices.ca  |
| 31 | Okanagan Valley Pregnancy Care Centre         | Kelowna         | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.ovpcc.com  |
| 32 | Woman Care Pregnancy Centre                   | Maple Ridge     | BC    | N       | Y            | www.womancarepc.ca   |
| 33 | Crossroads Crisis Pregnancy Centre of Nanaimo | Nanaimo         | BC    | Y       | N            | www.pregnancynanaimo.com (1)<br>www.cpcnanaimo.com/ (2)<br><i>(Where websites differed, the "wrong" answers from either website were used for analysis; see Answer Key, Appendix 4.)</i> |
| 34 | Nelson Crisis Pregnancy Centre                | Nelson          | BC    | Y       | N            | https://crisispregnancynelson.wordpress.com/   |
| 35 | Birthright North Vancouver                    | North Vancouver | BC    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 36 | Birthright Penticton                          | Penticton       | BC    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 37 | Birthright Powell River                       | Powell River    | BC    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 38 | Prince George Crisis Pregnancy Centre         | Prince George   | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.pgcrisispreg.ca  |
| 39 | Birthright Quesnel                            | Quesnel         | BC    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 40 | Pregnancy Support Centre of the Shuswap       | Salmon Arm      | BC    | Y       | N            | www.pscshuswap.ca/   |
| 41 | Pro-Life Smithers Care Centre                 | Smithers        | BC    | N       | N            | https://lifecollective.io/smithers/about/who-we-are<br><i>(No content; not reviewed)</i>   |
| 42 | South Fraser Pregnancy Options Centre         | Surrey          | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.pregnancyoptionscentre.com   |
| 43 | Birthright Terrace                            | Terrace         | BC    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |
| 44 | Birthright Trail                              | Trail           | BC    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org   |

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #  | Name   | City        | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website                             |
|----|--|-------------|-------|---------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 45 | Birthright Vancouver                                   | Vancouver   | BC    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 46 | Crisis Pregnancy Centre of Vancouver & Richmond        | Vancouver   | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.optionscentre.ca                |
| 47 | North Okanagan Pregnancy Care Centre                   | Vernon      | BC    | Y       | Y            | www.vernonpregnancy.com             |
| 48 | Birthright Victoria                                    | Victoria    | BC    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 49 | Victoria Pregnancy Centre Society                      | Victoria    | BC    | Y       | N            | www.victoriapregnancy.org/          |
| 50 | ImPregnant.org   | The Pas     | MB    | N       | N            | www.impregnant.org/                 |
| 51 | Crisis Pregnancy Centre of Westman                     | Brandon     | MB    | Y       | Y            | www.cpcbrandon.ca                   |
| 52 | Parkland Crisis Pregnancy Centre                       | Dauphin     | MB    | N       | N            | No website                          |
| 53 | Northern Pregnancy Crisis Centre                       | Flin Flon   | MB    | N       | N            | No website                          |
| 54 | Pembina Valley Pregnancy Care Centre                   | Winkler     | MB    | Y       | Y            | www.pvpcc.com                       |
| 55 | Pregnancy & Family Support Services                    | Winnipeg    | MB    | Y       | N            | www.pfsswinnipeg.com/               |
| 56 | Birthright Bathurst                                    | Bathurst    | NB    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 57 | Birthright Edmundston                                  | Edmundston  | NB    | N       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 58 | Birthright Fredericton                                 | Fredericton | NB    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 59 | <i>(Deleted because CPC mistakenly included twice)</i> |             |       |         |              |                                     |
| 60 | Women's Care Centre / Centre de soins pour femmes      | Fredericton | NB    | N       | N            | http://womenscarecenter.ca/         |
| 61 | Birthright Moncton                                     | Moncton     | NB    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 62 | Pregnancy Resource Centre of Moncton                   | Moncton     | NB    | Y       | Y            | www.pregnancysupport.ca             |
| 63 | Birthright Saint John - Kings                          | Saint John  | NB    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 64 | Pregnancy Resource Centre of Saint John                | Saint John  | NB    | Y       | Y            | www.saintjohnpregnancyresources.com |
| 65 | Sussex Pregnancy Care Centre                           | Sussex      | NB    | Y       | Y            | www.sussexpregnancycare.com         |
| 66 | Centre for Life  | St. John's  | NL    | N       | N            | www.centreforlife.ca/               |
| 67 | Birthright Halifax-Dartmouth                           | Halifax     | NS    | Y       | N            | www.birthright.org                  |
| 68 | Open Door Women's Care Centre                          | Halifax     | NS    | Y       | N            | www.opendoorcentre.com              |
| 69 | The Valley Care Pregnancy Centre                       | Kentville   | NS    | Y       | N            | http://asafeplaceforme.com          |

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #  | Name   | City          | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website   |
|----|--|---------------|-------|---------|--------------|---|
| 70 | Tri-County Pregnancy Care Centre Association | Yarmouth      | NS    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.tricountypregnancycarecentre.ca">www.tricountypregnancycarecentre.ca</a>                      |
| 71 | Bancroft Pregnancy Care Centre               | Bancroft      | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.bancroftpregcare.com">www.bancroftpregcare.com</a>  |
| 72 | Barrie Pregnancy Resource Centre             | Barrie        | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.prcbarrie.ca">www.prcbarrie.ca</a>  |
| 73 | Birthright Barrie                            | Barrie        | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 74 | Belleville Pregnancy & Family Care Centre    | Belleville    | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://bellevillepregnancyandfamilycarecentre.com">http://bellevillepregnancyandfamilycarecentre.com</a> |
| 75 | Birthright Belleville                        | Belleville    | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 76 | North Shore Pregnancy Care Centre            | Blind River   | ON    | N       | N            | No website  |
| 77 | Birthright Bracebridge                       | Bracebridge   | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 78 | Birthright Brampton                          | Brampton      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 79 | The Brampton Life Centre                     | Brampton      | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.bramptonlifecentre.com">www.bramptonlifecentre.com</a>  |
| 80 | Birthright Brantford                         | Brantford     | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 81 | Pregnancy & Resource Centre – Brant          | Brantford     | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.bpcentre.org">www.bpcentre.org</a>  |
| 82 | Birthright Brockville                        | Brockville    | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 83 | Burlington Crisis Pregnancy Centre           | Burlington    | ON    | N       | N            | No website  |
| 84 | Haldimand Pregnancy Care Centre              | Caledonia     | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.haldimandpcc.org/">www.haldimandpcc.org/</a>  |
| 85 | Birthright Cambridge                         | Cambridge     | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 86 | Cambridge Pregnancy Resource Centre          | Cambridge     | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.pregcentre.com">www.pregcentre.com</a>  |
| 87 | Room2Grow Pregnancy Centre                   | Clinton       | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.room2grow.info/">www.room2grow.info/</a>  |
| 88 | Beginnings Family Services                   | Cobourg       | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.beginnings.ca/">www.beginnings.ca/</a>  |
| 89 | Birthright Cornwall                          | Cornwall      | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 90 | Haldimand Pregnancy Care Centre              | Dunnville     | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.haldimandpcc.org/">www.haldimandpcc.org/</a>  |
| 91 | Pregnancy Help Centre of Durham              | Durham / Ajax | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.pregnancyhelp.ca">www.pregnancyhelp.ca</a>  |
| 92 | South Niagara Life Centre Ministries         | Fort Erie     | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://snlmcounsel.ca/">http://snlmcounsel.ca/</a>   |
| 93 | The Life Centre                              | Goderich      | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://goderichlifecentre.com">http://goderichlifecentre.com</a>   |

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #    | Name   | City        | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website  |
|------|--|-------------|-------|---------|--------------|--|
| 94   | Grimsby Life Centre                            | Grimsby     | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.grimsbylife.org/">www.grimsbylife.org/</a>                                       |
| 95   | Beginnings Family Services                     | Guelph      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.beginnings.ca/">www.beginnings.ca/</a>   |
| 96   | Birtheright Guelph                             | Guelph      | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 97   | Michael House Pregnancy Care Centre            | Guelph      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.michaelhouse.ca/">www.michaelhouse.ca/</a>                                       |
| 98   | Highlands Community Pregnancy Care Centre Inc. | Haliburton  | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.haliburtonpregnancycentre.ca">www.haliburtonpregnancycentre.ca</a>               |
| 99   | Beginnings Family Services                     | Hamilton    | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.beginnings.ca/">www.beginnings.ca/</a>   |
| 100  | Birtheright Hamilton                           | Hamilton    | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 101  | Pregnancy Support Services of Hamilton         | Hamilton    | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.preghamilton.ca">www.preghamilton.ca</a>   |
| 102  | Hanover Pregnancy Centre                       | Hanover     | ON    | N       | N            | No website   |
| 103  | Christine's Place Pregnancy Support Centre     | Huntsville  | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.christinesplace.org">www.christinesplace.org</a>                                 |
| 103a | First Place Options<br><i>(added later)</i>    | Kanata      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.firstplaceoptions.ca/">www.firstplaceoptions.ca/</a>                             |
| 104  | Birtheright Kingston                           | Kingston    | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 105  | Kingston Pregnancy Care Centre                 | Kingston    | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.kingstonpcc.com">www.kingstonpcc.com</a>   |
| 106  | Birtheright Kitchener-Waterloo                 | Kitchener   | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 107  | KW Pregnancy Resource Centre                   | Kitchener   | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.pregnancycentre.ca">www.pregnancycentre.ca</a>                                   |
| 108  | Sunparlour Pregnancy Resource Centre           | Leamington  | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://pregnancycentre.net">http://pregnancycentre.net</a>                                  |
| 109  | Kawartha Lakes Pregnancy Centre                | Lindsay     | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.klpcentre.ca">www.klpcentre.ca</a>   |
| 110  | Birtheright London                             | London      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 111  | London Crisis Pregnancy Centre                 | London      | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.notalone.ca">www.notalone.ca</a>   |
| 112  | Anchor of Hope Pregnancy & Family Care Centre  | Madoc       | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.anchorofhope.ca">www.anchorofhope.ca</a>   |
| 113  | Markham/Stouffville Crisis Pregnancy Centre    | Markham     | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.crisispregcentre.org">www.crisispregcentre.org</a>                               |
| 114  | Huronian Pregnancy Resource Centre             | Midland     | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.huronianpregnancyresourcecentre.com">www.huronianpregnancyresourcecentre.com</a> |
| 115  | Birtheright Milton                             | Milton      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 116  | Birtheright Mississauga                        | Mississauga | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birtheright.org">www.birtheright.org</a>   |
| 117  | JFJ Hope Centre                                | Mississauga | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.jfjhopecentre.ca">www.jfjhopecentre.ca</a>                                       |

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #   | Name  | City             | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website  |
|-----|---|------------------|-------|---------|--------------|--|
| 118 | My Life Centre                                  | Mississauga      | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.mylifecentre.ca">www.mylifecentre.ca</a>                                     |
| 119 | TLC Pregnancy Centre                            | Newmarket        | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.tlcthelifecentre.ca">www.tlcthelifecentre.ca</a>                             |
| 120 | Birthright North Bay                            | North Bay        | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                                       |
| 121 | Birthright Oakville                             | Oakville         | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                                       |
| 122 | Birthright Orangeville                          | Orangeville      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                                       |
| 123 | Orillia Pregnancy Resource Centre               | Orillia          | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.orilliapregnancyresourcecentre.ca">www.orilliapregnancyresourcecentre.ca</a> |
| 124 | Centre Miriam Centre                            | Orléans (Ottawa) | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.miriamottawa.org/">www.miriamottawa.org/</a>                                 |
| 125 | Pregnancy Help Centre of Durham                 | Oshawa           | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.pregnancyhelp.ca/">www.pregnancyhelp.ca/</a>                                 |
| 126 | Birthright Ottawa                               | Ottawa           | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright-ottawa.org/">www.birthright-ottawa.org/</a>                       |
| 127 | St. Mary's Home                                 | Ottawa           | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.stmaryshome.com">www.stmaryshome.com</a>                                     |
| 128 | Owen Sound Crisis Pregnancy Centre              | Owen Sound       | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.owensoundcrisispregnancycentre.ca">www.owensoundcrisispregnancycentre.ca</a> |
| 129 | Pregnancy & Resource Centre                     | Paris            | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.bpcentre.org">www.bpcentre.org</a>   |
| 130 | First Step Options Pregnancy Care Centre        | Pembroke         | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.firststepoptions.com">www.firststepoptions.com</a>                           |
| 131 | Birthright Peterborough                         | Peterborough     | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                                       |
| 132 | Peterborough Pregnancy Support Services         | Peterborough     | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.mypregnancycentre.org">www.mypregnancycentre.org</a>                         |
| 133 | The Pregnancy Options & Support Centre          | Petrolia         | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.pregnancycentre.org">www.pregnancycentre.org</a>                             |
| 134 | Pregnancy Crisis Centre of Prince Edward County | Picton           | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.countypregcare.com">www.countypregcare.com</a>                               |
| 135 | The Pregnancy Options & Support Centre          | Sarnia           | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.pregnancycentre.org">www.pregnancycentre.org</a>                             |
| 136 | The Pregnancy Centre                            | Sault Ste. Marie | ON    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.algomapregnancy.com">www.algomapregnancy.com</a>                             |
| 137 | Pregnancy Care Centre                           | Scarborough      | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.iamnotalone.ca">www.iamnotalone.ca</a>                                       |
| 138 | Rosalie Hall                                    | Scarborough      | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.rosaliehall.com/">www.rosaliehall.com/</a>                                   |
| 139 | Norfolk Pregnancy Centre                        | Simcoe           | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.norfolkpc.org">www.norfolkpc.org</a>   |
| 140 | Birthright Niagara                              | St. Catharines   | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                                       |
| 141 | Niagara Life Centre                             | St. Catharines   | ON    | Y       | No           | <a href="http://niagaralifecentre.ca/">http://niagaralifecentre.ca/</a>                          |
| 142 | Stratford House of Blessing                     | Stratford        | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.shob.org/get-help/#services">www.shob.org/get-help/#services</a>             |
| 143 | Birthright Sudbury                              | Sudbury          | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                                       |

## REVIEW OF "CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE" WEBSITES IN CANADA

| #   | Name  | City                 | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website  |
|-----|---|----------------------|-------|---------|--------------|--|
| 144 | Pregnancy Care Centre & Infant Food Bank                              | Sudbury              | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.pccifb.ca/">www.pccifb.ca/</a>                               |
| 145 | Birthright Thunder Bay  | Thunder Bay          | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 146 | Aid to Women  | Toronto              | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://aidtowomen.ca/">http://aidtowomen.ca/</a>                        |
| 147 | <i>(Deleted due to accidentally including a non-CPC)</i>              |                      |       |         |              |  |
| 148 | Birthright Toronto  | Toronto              | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 149 | Pregnancy Care Centre – North York                                    | Toronto (North York) | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.iamnotalone.ca/">www.iamnotalone.ca/</a>                     |
| 150 | Pregnancy & Family Care of Quinte West                                | Trenton              | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://www.pfcqw.ca">www.pfcqw.ca</a>                                   |
| 151 | Sunrise Pregnancy and Family Support Services                         | Uxbridge             | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.sunriseuxbridge.com/">www.sunriseuxbridge.com/</a>           |
| 152 | Monica Place  | Waterloo             | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.monicaplace.ca/">www.monicaplace.ca/</a>                     |
| 153 | Elisha House Pregnancy & Family Support Centre                        | Welland              | ON    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.elishahouse.on.ca">www.elishahouse.on.ca</a>                 |
| 154 | Birthright Greater Windsor  | Windsor              | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 155 | Sunparlour Pregnancy & Resource Centre                                | Windsor              | ON    | N       | Y            | <a href="http://pregnancycentre.net">http://pregnancycentre.net</a>              |
| 156 | Beginnings Family Services  | Woodstock            | ON    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.beginnings.ca/">www.beginnings.ca/</a>                       |
| 157 | Birthright Charlottetown  | Charlottetown        | PE    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 158 | Island Pregnancy Centre   | Charlottetown        | PE    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.islandpregnancycentre.com">www.islandpregnancycentre.com</a> |
| 159 | Birthright Summerside   | Summerside           | PE    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 160 | Options Pregnancy Crisis Centre / Centre d'aide en crise de grossesse | Chateauguay          | QC    | N       | N            | No website   |
| 161 | Accueil Grossesse, Montréal / Birthright, Montréal                    | Dorval               | QC    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 162 | Accueil Grossesse Birthright Drummondville                            | Drummondville        | QC    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>                       |
| 163 | Options centre conseil grossesse de Granby                            | Granby               | QC    | N       | N            | No website   |
| 164 | Action Nouvelle Vie   | Longueuil            | QC    | Y       | N            | <a href="https://actionnouvellevie.com">https://actionnouvellevie.com</a>        |
| 165 | Centre Conseils Grossesse / Pregnancy Counselling Centre/             | Montréal             | QC    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.ccgrossesse.org/">www.ccgrossesse.org/</a>                   |
| 166 | Enceinte et inquiète?   | (online only)        | QC    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.enceinteinquiete.org/">www.enceinteinquiete.org/</a>         |
| 167 | Support familial flocons d'espoir                                     | Montréal             | QC    | Y       | N            | No website   |

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| #   | Name  | City                                   | Prov. | Charity | CAPSS Member | Website   |
|-----|---|--|-------|---------|--------------|---|
| 168 | Accueil Grossesse Pointe-Claire – Birthright                    | Pointe-Claire                          | QC    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 169 | Options grossesse   | Québec                                 | QC    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.optionsgrossesse.com/">www.optionsgrossesse.com/</a>  |
| 170 | Tu ne's pas seule   | Québec                                 | QC    | N       | N            | <a href="http://saintthomasdaquin.qc.ca/grossesse-imprevue/">http://saintthomasdaquin.qc.ca/grossesse-imprevue/</a>                                   |
| 171 | Options Pregnancy Centre Lennoxville/ Centre Options grossesse  | Sherbrooke                             | QC    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.optionslennoxville.com">www.optionslennoxville.com</a><br><i>(not reviewed because website was new with virtually no content)</i> |
| 172 | Secours et Vie  | Sherbrooke (et Trois Rivières, Granby) | QC    | N       | N            | No website  |
| 173 | Accueil Grossesse Beauce – Appalaches                           | St. Georges de Beauce                  | QC    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.accueilgrossesse.com">www.accueilgrossesse.com</a>  |
| 174 | Accueil Grossesse – Birthright                                  | St. Laurent                            | QC    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 175 | Centre D'aide Oasis Care Centre                                 | Verdun                                 | QC    | Y       | N            | No website  |
| 176 | Birthright Lloydminster   | Lloydminster                           | SK    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 177 | Informed Choices Pregnancy Centre                               | Moose Jaw                              | SK    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.icpcmoosejaw.ca">www.icpcmoosejaw.ca</a>  |
| 178 | Birthright Regina   | Regina                                 | SK    | Y       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 179 | Options Pregnancy Center, Resources and Lifestyle Coaching Inc. | Regina                                 | SK    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.reginapregnancy.com">www.reginapregnancy.com</a>  |
| 180 | Birthright Saskatoon  | Saskatoon                              | SK    | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.birthright.org">www.birthright.org</a>  |
| 181 | Saskatoon Pregnancy Options Centre                              | Saskatoon                              | SK    | Y       | Y            | <a href="http://www.saskatoonpregnancy.com">www.saskatoonpregnancy.com</a>  |
| 182 | Onlinecare.ca   | National (online only)                 |       | N       | N            | <a href="http://www.onlinecare.ca">www.onlinecare.ca</a>  |

## APPENDIX 2: REVIEW WORKSHEET FOR WEBSITES OF “CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRES”

|                     |                     |                       |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>CPC name:</b>    | <b>City:</b>        | <b>Province:</b>      |
| <b>Website URL:</b> | <b>Reviewed by:</b> | <b>Date reviewed:</b> |

| <b>Review Questions – What to look for on the site</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| <b>1. Are there any statements to the effect that the CPC will not provide or refer for abortion or contraception? (besides Natural Family Planning)</b>  |            |           |
| Further comments, if any: (For example, if the answer is No, does the site state that the CPC will help with all options, or leave the impression that a woman wanting an abortion will be helped to access one?) |            |           |
| Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)   |            |           |
| <b>2. Is there any mention of a possible increased risk of breast cancer caused by abortion?</b>  |            |           |
| Further comments, if any:   |            |           |
| Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)   |            |           |
| <b>3. Is there any mention of other medical complications and risks of abortion? (e.g., infection, hemorrhage, perforations/lacerations, infertility, future miscarriage, etc.)</b>                               |            |           |
| Further comments, if any: (For example, are these risks presented with a lack of context as to rarity or severity?)   |            |           |
| Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)   |            |           |

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| Review Questions – What to look for on the site  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| <p><b>4. Is there any mention of increased risks of negative psychological effects after abortion? (e.g., “post-abortion syndrome,” grief, guilt, depression, nightmares, increased use of alcohol/drugs to cope, risk of suicide, etc.)</b></p> |     |    |
| <p>Further comments, if any:</p>   |     |    |
| <p>Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)</p>   |     |    |
| <p><b>5. Does the site say that contraception (or any specific type) is not reliable, or has an unacceptable failure rate, or may not protect adequately against sexually-transmitted infections?</b></p>  |     |    |
| <p>Further comments, if any: (For example, does the information leave the impression that contraception is too risky to use, not worth using, or morally wrong to use?)</p>  |     |    |
| <p>Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)</p>   |     |    |
| <p><b>6. Does the site advocate “abstinence only”, or does it discourage sex outside of marriage?</b></p>  |     |    |
| <p>Further comments, if any: (For example, is there any moralizing or scare-mongering about premarital sex, or other sexual expression outside heterosexual marriage?)</p>   |     |    |
| <p>Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)</p>   |     |    |
| <p><b>7. Does the site emphasize adoption (beyond a passing mention), or present it as the best or better option?</b></p>  |     |    |
| <p>Further comments, if any: (For example, does the site have mostly positive things to say about adoption, and little or nothing about potential challenges?)</p>   |     |    |
| <p>Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)</p>   |     |    |

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| Review Questions – What to look for on the site  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| <p><b>8. Are there any indications of a religious outlook or agenda? (e.g., are there religious graphics or links; words like God, Christian, Bible, church, prayer; etc.)</b></p> |     |    |
| <p>Further comments, if any:</p>   |     |    |
| <p>Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)</p>   |     |    |
| <p><b>9. Are there any disclaimers to the effect that they are not a medical facility, or that clients should consult a doctor if they need medical services?</b></p>              |     |    |
| <p>Further comments, if any: (For example, does the site describe facility staff, and if so, are they described as medical professionals?)</p>                                     |     |    |
| <p>Copy and paste the relevant lines or paragraphs. (Include the page title or link if not on the homepage.)</p>   |     |    |

## APPENDIX 3: EXPLANATION OF “GROUPS”

A Group refers to a category of information for which we were able to quantify additional data. Our questions 1-9 each had a Y/N answer, but the reviews also captured additional available data related to the question. The researchers looked for emerging patterns when they reviewed the data for each question, and created Group criteria according to these patterns. CPCs that met the criteria for one or more Groups were assigned to that Group. Depending on the criteria, a few CPCs were assigned to more than one Group in a question. Other CPCs did not meet any of the Group criteria, so keep in mind that those assigned to Groups represent a subset of all CPCs with websites.

|            | Group 1  | Group 2   | Group 3  |
|------------|--|---|--|
| Question 1 | Uses indirect language to make it unclear whether they will refer for or talk about abortion with a client   | Buries disclaimers regarding anti-choice philosophy or lack of abortion counselling in privacy policy links or in small print at the bottom of site, etc. |  |
| Question 2 | No statements on site, but links to sites that claim connection between abortion and breast cancer           | Tentative language: "possible link," "medical experts are still debating" "controversial"   | Statements that pregnancy reduces risk of breast cancer and abortion prevents that reduction from happening    |
| Question 3 | (No groups)  |   |  |
| Question 4 | Mentions or discusses post-abortion stress/post-abortion syndrome  | Describes post-abortion grief/symptoms similar to PASS but not named as such  | Has a post-abortion counselling/recovery program/support group   |
| Question 5 | No information/mention about contraceptives and pregnancy prevention at all                                  | Information or mention of prevention of STIs or pregnancy only insofar as it pertains to marriage or monogamy   | Directly misleading information on contraception and/or STIs   |
| Question 6 | Uses religiously-based fear tactics to encourage "abstinence only"   | Uses fear-based tactics (e.g., STI risks, painting sex as a "high-risk activity") to encourage "abstinence only"  | No information present, or vague views on being "sexually active"  |
| Question 7 | Talks about adoption but doesn't appear to promote it over other options, some negatives/downsides mentioned | Talks about adoption but does not include mention of any negatives/downsides  | Talks about adoption and favours/promotes it at expense of other options; no/few negatives/downsides mentioned |
| Question 8 | Openly religious   | Subtle indications of religious references, but hidden or not stated openly, causing a lack of transparency or implying a hidden agenda                   |  |
| Question 9 | (No groups)  |   |  |

## APPENDIX 4: ANSWER KEY FOR WEBSITE REVIEW

| Review Worksheet questions, and what the “honest” answer should be.  |  |
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| 1. Are there any statements to the effect that the CPC will not provide or refer for abortion or contraception? (besides NFP)  | The answer should be <b>Yes</b> , if they were being upfront and honest. However, some sites may bury the disclaimer in small print or on a less-viewed page.  |
| 2. Is there any mention of a possible increased risk of breast cancer caused by abortion?  | The answer should be <b>No</b> . The best scientific evidence says there is no link between breast cancer and abortion.  |
| 3. Is there any mention of other medical complications and risks of abortion? (e.g., infection, hemorrhage, perforations/lacerations, infertility, future miscarriage, etc.)   | The answer should be <b>No</b> . If it is Yes, most sites cite disproven or inconclusive risks, or exaggerate actual risks.  |
| 4. Is there any mention of increased risks of negative psychological effects after abortion? (e.g., “post-abortion syndrome,” grief, guilt, depression, nightmares, increased use of alcohol/drugs to cope, risk of suicide, etc.) | The answer should be <b>No</b> . If it is Yes, most sites cite disproven or inconclusive risks, or exaggerate actual risks.  |
| 5. Does the site say that contraception (or any specific type) is not reliable, or has an unacceptable failure rate, or may not protect adequately against sexually-transmitted infections?  | The answer should be <b>No</b> . If it is Yes, most sites cite disproven or inconclusive risks, or exaggerate actual risks.  |
| 6. Does the site advocate “abstinence only”, or does it discourage sex outside of marriage?  | The answer should be <b>No</b> . The best scientific evidence says that abstinence-only programs do not work. Further, discouraging sex outside marriage is inappropriate moralizing.  |
| 7. Does the site emphasize adoption (beyond a passing mention), or present it as the best or better option?  | The answer should be <b>No</b> . The vast majority of women with unwanted pregnancies will not give up their babies for adoption, and evidence show serious long-lasting negative psychological effects for most women who do. If the site says Yes, all sites fail to inform women of risks, or they minimize the risks.              |
| 8. Are there any indications of a religious outlook or agenda? (e.g., are there religious graphics or links; words like God, Christian, Bible, church, prayer; etc.)   | The answer should generally be <b>Yes</b> since all CPCs are Christian religious ministries. But many are not upfront about it and take pains to appear secular. In many cases, there may be only 1 or 2 subtle, half-hidden references to their religious outlook, so a ‘Yes’ answer does not necessarily mean they’re being upfront. |
| 9. Are there any disclaimers to the effect that they are not a medical facility, or that clients should consult a doctor if they need medical services?  | The answer should be <b>Yes</b> . CPCs are not medical clinics or professional counselors; however, many give the appearance of professionalism and or imply they offer medical advice or professional counselling, in order to help draw in clients.  |