



Birthright of Pittsburgh, Inc.

"It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born." - Louise Summerhill, founder, Birthright International (1968)

45 Years in Pittsburgh!

160 N. Craig St, Suite 200 Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Volume 45, No. 1 Winter 2016



THEY COME INTO OUR WORLD

Sometimes we know they are on their way --- sometimes they surprise us. But one thing is certain, a baby's life enriches our life like nothing else. No matter the circumstances, they have a right to be born, to be wanted and loved and to have a good beginning to grow. At Birthright we help parents gently lift back the blanket of fear from their baby to appreciate God's miraculous gift of life.

You might ask us ---**Who calls Birthright?** The following situations describe a variety of calls we receive. (Names and identifying information were changed to maintain client confidentiality).

Marrissa, 28, has four children and is three months pregnant. Members of her family are taking care of her children as she is not able to parent them. She is addicted to narcotics for a second time. She wants her baby and realizes she needs treatment and is willing to undergo it. She is being evicted from her apartment in seven days and has no money and no one helping her.

Shawna is 17 and in high school. She is 16 weeks pregnant. Her mother helps her but the baby's father does not. She works part-time at a convenience store. She needs maternity clothes, a bassinet, a crib, baby clothes and diapers.

Lissette is 25 and eight months pregnant with her second child. She works full-time. The baby's father is in jail.



Who calls Birthright? (continued)

Robyn, 29, is six months pregnant and has two other children. The father of the baby occasionally visits but is not really supportive emotionally or financially to her. Her family is helping her.

Donna is pregnant and in high school. She needs a shelter or a place to stay. Her parents are kicking her out of the house because she is planning to continue her pregnancy. She is thinking about the possibility of adoption for her baby.

Rhona is looking for help to find an abortion clinic that is not expensive. She feels no one cares about her and she is all alone. She wants the baby because she was not raised to think about abortion or to give her child away for adoption but she realizes she needs a plan. She has another child. Her boyfriend lives with her but tells her it is up to her to decide what to do.

Nan is 22, five months pregnant and living with her mother. Her friend told her about Birthright. She attends college to be a nurse. She would like to keep the baby and have her own place after the baby is born. She is happy she is having a baby and that she will be a mother.

SueAnne is 24, has three other children and is pregnant again. She is unsure who the father of her baby is, but her boyfriend is kind to her and the other children. She has been a victim of domestic abuse in a previous relationship. She has a younger brother in foster care that she would like to take care of in her home. Her mother died when she was young and her father is not involved.

She is young, eight weeks pregnant and has never been pregnant before. The father of her baby is involved in her life and she lives with his grandmother. She still attends school.

A young man calling for a pregnancy test appointment for his girlfriend.

Lara is homeless and has a six-month-old baby she cares for alone. She is living in a hotel while waiting for a shelter opening. She will need diapers, formula, baby items and a crib.



“Use your voice for kindness, your ears for compassion, your hands for charity, your mind for truth, and give your heart for love.” ~ Anonymous

“We love them both”: A vocation of love

by Dr. Adriana Larregina, Birthright Board Member



When I first joined Birthright of Pittsburgh, I was immediately touched by a sentence in its’ website, “We love them both.” With just four words, Birthright had summarized its’ purpose, that is, to love both the mother and the child.

I hesitated before deciding whether I should express my thoughts in writing about this mission of love. The sentence was so simple and complete that I did not dare to say anything else. How could I talk about something so perfect without altering its’ meaning?

It was only after listening several times to the statement: “Birthright offers an alternative to abortion” that I decided to emphasize our vocation of love.

As a pro-life organization, we certainly offer an alternative to abortion, but we offer much more than that. We offer our love to the child and to the mother bearing her child. In these times, when the word “love” has many meanings, our statement might sound like a cliché. We are aware of that.

Then, what kind of love do we offer? How can we love someone we have not even met? How can we love someone that cannot yet be seen?

As a matter of fact, we do know and we do see. We know that at the moment that a woman becomes pregnant there are two lives involved, the life of the mother and the life of her child. The love that we offer is rooted in the way that we value those lives. It is the love that understands without judging and the love that prioritizes the dignity of a human life as an irreplaceable gift and right.

We love them both and we respect them both, because we believe in both. We believe in the strength of the mother that bears her child and we believe in the promise that this child represents from the moment of conception. We love that fragile person who is already growing, drinking, eating, feeling and dreaming, in the safety of a mother’s womb.

The strong emotion that I felt when I read the sentence, “We love them both” was a consequence of my belief that love generates and sustains life, and life beats death. I consider that love is the first necessity that a person has and I can assure that the power of love brings goodness out of everything. I have a reason to think this way. In the country where I born we have endured many difficult trials. We survived years of dictatorships and wars that erased the central value of the human life. Many people were tortured and killed and others remain missing, including many mothers and their children born in captivity. We lost so much, we feared so much, we were devastated. Still we have unhealed wounds. Fortunately, life found its’ way. In the mist of these times of hatred and despair only the power of love was able to hope and sow the seed of a new beginning, a better one.

This power of love was beautifully captured by Fito Paez, an Argentine poet and singer, who wrote:

I Come To Offer My Heart

Who says that everything is lost
I come to offer my heart
When there is nothing left,
I come to offer my heart
As a document that cannot be altered
I come to offer my heart.

At Birthright we offer our hearts and we offer our love because we know that giving love generates love and when that happens the true value of life is recovered. We are with the mother bearing a child in the moment of concern. During times of doubt and loneliness we say, *“You are not alone, we are just one call away, and we love you both.” Just give us the chance to help. Both of your lives are worth living.*



Birthright expresses sincere gratitude to every individual donor, Red Rose Day church pastor and parishioner, United Way donors, those who celebrated baby showers, knit and crocheted blankets, sent baby clothes and provided items. We are so humbled by your heartfelt and genuine commitment to mothers and their babies.

Birthright welcomes new volunteers!



Mary Moran and Grace Cooper offer hope and help to clients.

We are so pleased to welcome Mary Moran and Grace Cooper to Birthright. Mary previously volunteered with a pregnancy care center for five years in Cumberland, Md.; Grace belongs to the University of Pittsburgh pro-life club on campus and is a student there.

*~There are many ways **You** can help moms and babies at Birthright. Call to volunteer with us!~*