

► Spring into Action! ►►

The current political climate leaves me feeling that access to our reproductive rights is becoming as precarious as the mating dance between Queen bee and Drone!

In nature, sex exists openly without shame or legislation. But currently, anything involving those three letters S-E-X, causes a storm of controversy, whether it's access to birth control, reproductive health care or pre-natal and maternity care. It has never been a better time to pay attention! As I see my own reproductive rights coming under fire, I feel privileged to serve on the Board of Citizens for Choice.

I was inspired last month when we lobbied at the Capitol (you'll read more about this later). We were early for our appointment with Assemblymember Toni Atkins, so we took some time to stroll around the Capitol building. I was with a small group of five, including one young African American high school student from Chico. She posed excitedly, taking pictures next to marble statues in the hall. She scanned the pictures of Assembly members posing in frames, and then she looked bewildered.

"Where are all the black people?" she asked. Ding ding ding! Indeed, that was a good question. And also, "Where are all the black women?" I said to her. The group proceeded to talk to her about how those elected officials represent her, represent us. We all chimed in on the importance of voting and of finishing school, and having your voice heard, and of speaking up, even when you didn't know whether people agreed with you or not.

For me, that small moment was magic. It was one of those tingly moments, one of the few, as compared to so many other moments where I feel helpless and tiny, where my voice feels lost in a canyon of whispers that nobody can hear. I was reassured in that moment, that I was in the right place, and that I was contributing to something large. Let's pay attention. Let's contribute. Let's stand up for what we believe in. And above and beyond that, let's do it while we still have the right to control our bodies and reproductive rights, instead of waiting to notice until when we lose them.

I am entering into this spring season with enthusiasm and hope. Won't you do the same? Citizens for Choice exists to serve you, our community. Please help us to continue to keep the doors open at The Clinic! If you see a need that we can fill, won't you contact us?

Please stand with us and participate! We need you. We need all of you.

*Miranda Lamon,
Secretary*



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PROMOTING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND JUSTICE

By Elaine Sierra, Public Policy Director

Our advocacy efforts each year intensify in the spring, culminating in Reproductive Freedom Day in Sacramento. Our delegation this year included our Outreach Education Coordinator Liz Mantle, Sierra College CHOICES club representative Shelby Mosel, and board members Sharon O'Hara, Miranda Lamon and Marlene Katz. You may want to read about the Safe and Early Access bill that we now officially endorse, in this newsletter.

If you've ever had the unsettling experience of hearing a close family member or friend voicing fierce anti-choice views, you can appreciate how affirming it is to be part of a large group who shares pro-choice values and beliefs. And, this year, we felt renewed optimism about younger generations when we joined in a pre-RFD training by Women's Health Specialists. The young women and girls who participated in the training and in RFD showed intense interest and growing concern as they learned more about reproductive health, rights and justice. We witnessed their empowerment as they acted to remove one barrier to access by lobbying (for most, their first time) to increase the number of providers of safe, early abortions. This is just one example of how our spirits were lifted by RFD.

We can report on another encouraging development relating to sex education at Nevada Union High School. Regular followers will recall that, along with other concerned individuals and with the local American Association of University Women and Business & Professional Women groups, we have been advocating for improvements to the sex ed curriculum and instruction at the high school. A major deficiency was the use of a Living Well presenter. Living Well is a limited services, crisis pregnancy center that is a faith-based organization opposed to abortion and contraception. According to its website, its "Abstinence Education for schools started in 2008," and has included presenting

sex education to students at Nevada Union High School, Bear River High School, Colfax High School, Lyman Gilmore Junior High School, and Mt. St. Mary's High School. This, despite the fact the California law prohibits abstinence-only sex education and the instruction or promotion of religious doctrine.

In January, we reported that improvements were in the works. We are happy to say that NJUHSD Superintendent Marianne Cartan tasked School Nurse and Health Educator Kris Youngman to develop an up-to-date HIV//AIDS curriculum meeting state requirements, and that Youngman presented the new instruction unit to NU freshmen this semester. We strongly support these positive efforts. We appreciate the commitment it represents to better serve the needs of local students for medically accurate information about HIV/AIDS, how it spreads, how to lower the risk of being infected, and local resources -- including The Clinic! -- for diagnosis and treatment. And, while we recognize the difficulties faced by the district in these times of continuing budget cutbacks for schools, we look forward to more positive changes in the future.

Recent challenges included anti-choice picketing at The Clinic! during the so-called 40 Days for Life Campaign. Local anti-choice organizers included Living Well. Past and present Citizens for Choice board members acted as clinic escorts to prevent harassment of clinic clients. Yubanet reported on the picketing in a Feb. 23rd, 2012 article that you may want to read, at <http://yubanet.com/regional/Citizens-for-Choice-Clinic-in-Grass-Valley-Picketed-by-Religious-Group.php>. A number of individuals expressed their opposition to the picketing and their support for The Clinic! and for Citizens for Choice. Many thanks to all you supporters!

Citizens for Choice thanks the following donors whose generous donations were received between Jan. 16, 2012 - April 24, 2012

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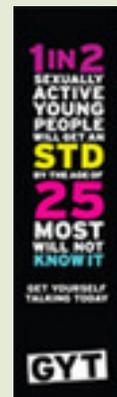
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Special Recognition to Judy Seabridge for donating new chairs for The Clinic!



► Reproductive Justice: Does a Woman Have the Right to Choose? ►

A PANEL DISCUSSION - SIERRA COLLEGE, ROCKLIN - MARCH 22, 2012

By Sharon O'Hara, VP for Programs

Sharing the spotlight with me were: Sen. Liz Figueroa, (Ret.) (Planned Parenthood, Mar Monte), Jan Flint Robinson (Executive Director of Black Women for Wellness, Los Angeles), Lisa Ikemoto (Professor of Law, UC Davis) and Shauna Heckert, (Executive Director, Women's Health Specialists).

We were introduced by Reyes Ortega, Ph.D. who spoke of the justice work of Cesar Chavez for whom the Higher Education Speaker Series is named. Moderator Megan Seely, Professor of Sociology and former president of NOW California, asked questions of us about the social and political climate surrounding reproductive rights, abortion, and access to rural healthcare.

In spite of some controversy over the topic and the college's support for the event, Ms. Seely noted that the speakers were confirmed long before publicity began. "It is interesting that we have seen this topic explode in the last couple of weeks, but we chose to focus on this almost a year ago. It is also an issue that is very relevant to our students today that are exploring their own options and their own reproductive health", she said.

Trustee Aaron Klein posted this on his blog at the same time community members were lobbying the Board to disavow any connection with the event: "The concerns expressed by the public were not about the event itself, but rather the makeup of the panel. Both the event moderator, and every single panelist chosen for the event, were tightly affiliated and came from the abortion perspective. There had been no attempt by event organizers to balance the panel with perspectives on the two other choices that women have for an unplanned pregnancy: adoption or parenting. The event organizers were given the opportunity to rebalance the panel to include all perspectives, but they unfortunately refused to do so. Their intentional and repeated violation of the college's core values is disappointing and unfortunate."

From coverage in the Auburn Journal, "Sharon O'Hara, vice president of Nevada County Citizens for Choice said the forum was important. She said options for those who have no insurance or are underinsured are limited in Nevada County. "The reason (the panel discussion) is important is the audience and the chance to educate people who are still questioning or making up their mind," O'Hara said. "What I wanted to get out of it was to be a voice for the small entity, the grassroots entity.

We need to bring reproductive health to everyone."

Liz Figueroa spoke about the ways in which some cultures handle issues of sexuality and abortion using examples from her own experience and the old stricture of refraining from talking about sex, politics or religion. "Those are three subjects that now dominate every aspect of my life in women's health," Figueroa said. "How much money is made in advertising based on a woman's body? But heaven forbid those women's breasts get cancer, heaven forbid another part of her body gets cancer or some dysfunction. Then all of a sudden society pushes you away."

I did get a little laugh when I asked who in the audience remembered 1970 and President Richard Nixon. I spoke about the importance of the Title X legislation as the only existing federal grant program that is completely devoted to providing comprehensive family planning and other related preventive health services to individuals from low-income families and/or uninsured people. I emphasized the need to retain and defend Title X under attack in Congress now. As the rural advocate, I brought up the lack of easy access to emergency contraception and the \$50 price tag for the medication.

Shauna Heckert also related personal experiences which influenced her to work for Women's Health Specialists. Ms. Ikemoto specializes in bioethics and reproductive rights law and policy. Her comments reflected her concerns about the health care disparities of race and gender.

Jan Flint Robinson, provided insights into challenges faced by women of color. She made several statements about the sad results of lack of access, such as her friend who died of cervical cancer, despite the fact that it is highly curable and detectable. As a follow up to my urging that audience members volunteer with groups concerned with women's health and that they vote, Jan said, "After you vote, hold your elected officials accountable. Show up at their office. Give them a report card."

At the end of the discussion, questions were submitted by the audience. Ms. Heckert spoke eloquently about the many options a woman weighs when she finds that she is pregnant. Her thoughtful words made me realize how fortunate we are to partner with Women's Health Specialists and to have The Clinic!

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▶▶▶ Reproductive Freedom Day ▶▶▶

ANNUAL REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM DAY FOCUS: ABORTION ACCESS

By Elaine Sierra, Public Policy Director

Our Citizens for Choice delegation joined more than 150 fellow Californians for the 10th annual Reproductive Freedom Day, on March 20, 2012. This year our legislative focus was a bold choice: in this era of nation-wide efforts to restrict access to abortion, we took a positive step toward expanding access to safe and early abortions in California. Our lobbying focus was the Safe and Early Access bill (SB 1138). The bill would enable more women to exercise their right to reproductive choice by increasing the pool of abortion providers beyond physicians. It would allow other healthcare professionals – nurse practitioners (NPs), physician assistants (PAs) and certified nurse midwives (CPMs) – to perform first-trimester abortions under the terms of their licenses. Currently, they may provide medication abortions (an option not available after the ninth week of pregnancy).

An estimated one in three women will decide to terminate a pregnancy by age 45. Yet, access to earlier abortions is limited, especially for low-income and underserved women. In almost half of California counties, there are no local healthcare providers available to meet the needs of women who have decided to terminate their pregnancies, and who wish to do so as early as possible, when it is safest. In fact, those counties lack accessible abortion providers entirely. Most women would prefer to go to local providers whom they know and trust. And most would prefer to avoid the delay, cost and inconvenience of traveling outside their geographic area to seek abortion care. This bill takes a major step toward addressing the needs and preferences of those women.

It also takes a big step forward in improving patient safety. Earlier abortions are safer, avoiding the increasing risk of medical complications over time. Now, a major UCSF study has shown the safety of early procedures performed by clinicians covered by the bill. The study involved a pilot project to train and evaluate about 45 NPs, PAs and CNMs, who performed 8,000 first-trimester aspiration procedures over five years. Compared to an equal number performed by physicians,

those procedures resulted in comparable rates of high patient satisfaction and low levels of medical complications. In other words, the safety records of trained clinicians in the study were similar to those of physicians, showing that the clinicians were competent at performing abortions throughout the first trimester.

What is most important about the Safe and Early Access bill is that more women would gain access to early abortion care that is safer and more affordable.

Sponsored by the California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom, of which we are a member, RFD is held each spring in Sacramento. Conference goers learn about a pending bill affecting reproductive justice – meaning the right to affordable access to healthcare, the right to make one’s own sexual health and reproductive health decisions, and the right to safe and legal abortion and contraception. Then, we visit legislators’ offices to inform them about the bill and give our perspectives on it.

Citizens for Choice believes that justice requires that we trust women to make their own decisions. We acted on that trust by joining with others to promote SB 1138, with the aim of expanding access to safe and early abortion care.

CCRF’s Mission

The California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom (CCRF) is a statewide alliance of nearly 50 organizations working to promote sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice. CCRF supports and facilitates member-driven initiatives including strategic communication, collaboration and collective policy advocacy to benefit California’s diverse women, youth and communities.

Baskets!

The following businesses and offices have graciously allowed us space in their store to display our informational baskets. We thank them!

- Behind Closed Doors
- Big Diamond Tattoo
- BriarPatch
- Cafe Mekka
- Classic Tattoo
- Common Goals
- CoRR (Community Recovery Resources)
- DVSAC
- Garrett Eckerling MD
- Foggy Mountain Music
- Good Times Skate Shop
- Maternity Health Center
- The Mine Shaft
- Nito’s T-shirts & Accessories
- Renegade Rider
- Serendipity
- Sierra Care Physicians, Grass Valley
- Sierra Care Physicians, Penn Valley
- Sierra College Health Services
- Sierra Family Medical Clinic
- Sierra Mountain Coffee Roasters
- Tribal Weaver
- Valentina’s Bistro and Bakery
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Services)
- Judi Wright MD
- Yabobo
- Yuba Docs



STRONG FAMILIES MOVEMENT

By Marlene Katz

During Reproductive Freedom Day in Sacramento, I was fortunate to attend a workshop for the Strong Family Movement. The original title of the program was “Sex Stories” which drew an overflow crowd. It was really about getting issues on the radar regarding immigrant families’ issues concerning health care, emotional support, and building strong families. Women are in charge of a new project, to gather 5,000 stories from such families.

The workshop was conducted by three Asian women, of Chinese, Korean, and Northeastern Indian backgrounds. At least 10 cultures were represented in the audience, also including African American, Russian, Mexican, East Indian, Russian and Caucasian. The participants related what they enjoy doing most, either with their own families or with those people with whom they closely associate. They all had strong bonds with these “families” and enjoyed participating in a myriad of activities, such as hiking, cooking, music activities or games.

The trio is preparing stories of immigrant women for videotaping. These women have many stories of hardship in coming to this country and adapting with their families to this culture. Several photos were presented of what has been considered “traditional” families (a la Leave it to Beaver types) as well as single parent families, extended divorced families, and many other mixtures in between. Many women shared their stories with us before being videotaped and the stories were all very touching. One of the three leaders related the story of her parents coming to this country with nothing, eventually owning convenience stores. Their needs included health care and emotional counseling for the father’s alcoholism and the mother’s cervical cancer. I know from hearing some of these heart-rending tales of deprivation and emotional travail, of the deep concern these women have for their strong families.

I learned also about how immigrant families face particular barriers to health access. This project seeks to raise awareness about those barriers, and to spur actions to tackle the particular needs of immigrant families for affordable health care.

▶▶C.H.O.I.C.E.S.▶▶

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

By Shelby Mosel, President

There has been a lot of controversy and discussion regarding women’s health lately. But, what about how it concerns college students, women college students, to be exact?

How will Senator Kehoe’s Safe and Early Access bill affect us? The bill will allow a college student who needs an abortion to work around her school and work schedule much more easily. Now, the student has to make drastic changes. The student needs to skip a day of classes. If she works, she needs to beg a coworker to cover her shift. It’s not easy arranging to get to a clinic on the one day a week a doctor may be available to perform the abortion. For us women trying to put ourselves through college, life is already stressful enough. This bill is looking at better protecting women’s health with improved safety, but would also help women take control of their lives. So, during Reproductive Freedom Day, I was glad to give a student’s perspective on my legislative visit and to support the Safe and Early Access bill.

This year at RFD, I also experienced the wonderful work of Women’s Health Specialists through their fantastic workshop on birth control. There are so many different types! Not all are as well-known as the condom and the pill. WHS took something that can be very dry to teach and made it fun with games: Birth Control Facts Bingo, Twister, and Taboo. I was so inspired, not only by how fun it was, but also by how much I learned that I didn’t already know.

I am taking that same theme and turning it into a new game, STD Facts Twister, in honor of April’s being STD Awareness Month. At the Nevada County Sierra College Campus, C.H.O.I.C.E.S will be playing STD Facts Twister at our booth for the Earth Day Celebration, on the 18th of April. I look forward to helping others learn not only how to protect the Earth, but oneself along with it.

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▶▶▶ Tickets for wine tasting are still available! ▶▶▶

Thank you to those of you who have already purchased tickets to our upcoming wine tasting on Friday, May 18th! There are a few tickets still available. The event will be held at the Grass Valley South Pine at 7 o'clock. We will taste 12 individually selected wines (appetizers included), with the esteemed, knowledgeable and very funny Dave Luce. After the tasting, the wines will be available for purchase at below retail prices (summer sangria anyone?). All proceeds will benefit Citizens for Choice, so we can continue to further reproductive health care and access in Nevada County. We'd love to meet some of you, our supporters, in person. Seating is limited, so reserve your spot now by calling Miranda at (530) 478-1754 or emailing her at mirandalamon@gmail.com.



▶▶▶ April is STD (STI) Awareness Month ▶▶▶

Of the approximately 19 million new STDs (also known as STIs) that occur every year in the U.S., most will go undiagnosed. Since STIs often have no symptoms, many of those who are infected don't know it. Diagnosis and treatment of STIs is critical to safeguarding personal health, fostering sexual responsibility, and addressing the wider STI epidemic.

Testing for chlamydia and gonorrhea, two of the most common STIs, is easier than ever before. Sexually active adolescents and young adults are more susceptible to STIs for biological, behavioral and cultural reasons. People between the ages of 15-24 are only 25% of the sexually active population but account for nearly half of the new cases yearly. For more information, please visit www.healthyteennetwork.org, Itsyoursexlife.com, www.gytnow.org, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) STD Awareness Resource Site.



Thank you to our
Voices for Choice
Contributors:

Marikathryn Hendrix
Marlene Katz
Miranda Lamon
Liz Mantle
Peter Montgomery
Shelby Mosel
Sharon O'Hara
Elaine Sierra

Our Partners: Women's Health Specialists

Women's Health in Women's Hands

The philosophy of WHS is to promote positive images of women and provide our clients with a new perspective of their bodies and health. We give women the tools to evaluate their authentic health care needs - images of women not based on a societal myth, but based on women's reality and experience. We provide women with health information so they can become knowledgeable about their normal life stages. Our goal is to empower women through support, education, self-help and services so that they can make the best health care decisions for themselves.

▶▶▶ Life With AIDS ▶▶▶

By Pete Montgomery



Like most people living in California, my first experience with HIV/AIDS was in the early 80's. My uncle was diagnosed with this new disease in 1983. For several years he led a positive and loving life while his health slowly faded. Five years after my uncle died, a new category of drugs called protease inhibitors were developed. This new type of drug, in combination with the other anti-retrovirals, created a "cocktail" that manages HIV infection very well (in most cases).

In the mid 90's a lover and I got tested and after two weeks we both received HIV negative results. During this time period, as a sexually active young adult, I was careful to use protection. Fast forward to the early 2000's when my wife and I wanted to have a child, we looked for free HIV testing in Nevada County and we were unable to find any. In 2007 I became ill with digestive problems that I couldn't resolve. Doctors ordered some standard tests for digestive pathogens, but no recommendation for an HIV test. Once it was obvious that my illness was chronic, I requested an HIV test at a local clinic. When I received the HIV+ result I was both shocked and angry with myself for not getting tested earlier.

In a day when HIV infection can usually be managed, I was diagnosed with advanced AIDS because I hadn't been getting tested. I could have avoided having a permanently damaged immune system. If the virus had been managed I probably wouldn't have developed osteoporosis and the resulting compression fracture and major spinal surgery. AND IF I HAD BEEN TESTED I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPOSED MY WIFE TO HIV.

Today I feel lucky to be alive, lucky to be walking and very grateful for the health that my family and I have. After four years of focusing my energy on rebuilding my health I am excited to be riding my bicycle in the NorCal AIDS Cycle (NCAC) this May.

NCAC is a 330 mile ride in 3.5 days around the Sacramento Valley. Last year 100 riders and crew raised over a quarter of a million dollars for AIDS Service Organizations in the Sacramento area (including the Sierra Nevada AIDS Foundation). This year the goals are to raise twice as much and to raise awareness about the ongoing epidemic in Northern California. 20-25% of the people who are HIV+ are unaware of their status (like I was for about a decade). And in some populations the rate of infection has been increasing as a result of less condom use. If people who are HIV+ get diagnosed and are put on effective treatment the rates of infection will drop again.

I am riding, not only for my health, but also to give back to the organizations that helped me when I needed it most. I am also spreading the word that this virus still has no cure and everyone should get tested. I give thanks for all the times that the "condom fairies" gave me condoms that I used when I didn't know I was HIV+, and I sing praises for the Clinic! for providing free HIV testing. Citizens For Choice has been generous in providing condoms and information for me to distribute where I have been fundraising for NCAC. Continued education and free testing are both vital in addressing this epidemic.

To support Pete Montgomery in his ride in the NorCal AIDS Cycle donations can be made online at www.tinyurl.com/petencac



Misconception surrounds contraception

By Steve Eubanks (former Co-President, Citizens for Choice)
Excerpted from The Union
March 17, 2012

It's quite interesting that the majority of opposition is coming from men. Men don't seem to have any compunction about supporting coverage for Viagra, for vasectomies or products and services associated with men's other sexual health issues. To me, the focus on contraception seems to be connected to the larger and ongoing debate about abortion. Common sense and experience indicate the way to end abortions is to end the NEED for abortions by preventing unwanted pregnancies. There would be no need to pursue a ban on abortions if those opposing abortions would rise beyond their anti-choice zeal and put their energy into supporting organizations and approaches that reduce unwanted pregnancies. This includes increasing access to contraceptives, family planning and comprehensive sex education.

Yes, contraceptives for both men and women, together with objective, non-judgmental information of their proper and safe use. Yes, family planning for individuals and couples to help them decide when would be the right time to start a family and avoid becoming parents before they are ready.

More focus on preventing unwanted pregnancies would also support the conservatives' goal of reducing the cost of social services because there would be fewer neglected or abused children who require those services. Increasing financial support for these services seems like a good investment to me, one that should garner broad support. How about it, folks? Ready to be part of the solution instead of constantly fighting?

►► Choosing Adoption ►►

By Marikathryn Hendrix
Director, Adoption Choices of Northern
California Women's Health Specialists

Adoption Choices of Northern California is sponsored by Women's Health Specialists. Our goal is to enhance the quality of adoption services to those in the Northern California area. Adoption Choices is not an agency but rather a Licensed Adoption Facilitator which provides comprehensive services to those involved in the adoption process.

We are involved in educating communities and women about adoption all over Northern California. We have assisted hundreds of women with their pregnancy choice and have successfully assisted over 100 families in adopting newborns since 1994. Our foundation began in 1994 with the desire to help rural Northern California women who were pregnant and wanted adoption as an option but could not find local assistance due to a void of adoption services in the area.

Pregnant women looking at their options have been referred to us by public health nurses, midwives, doctors, high school counselors, social workers, jail wardens, social service agencies and many other clinics that provide abortion services in Northern California including Planned Parenthoods, San Francisco General and Choice Medical Group.

We provide a very important service to many rural women living in Northern California, including information sharing, options counseling, abortion referrals, ob care referrals, parenting referrals and birthmom support groups to name a few. We work hands on with birthmoms and provide practical support services as well as unlimited adoption counseling pre and post birth. We honor every woman's choice whether it be an adoption with lots of contact or very limited. We provide triad adoption support groups bi-monthly and an annual adoption picnic with over 125 of our families and birthmoms attending each year.

Our adoptive families are reflective of our communities including heterosexual couples, lesbian

couples, single women and gay men. We encourage diversity in the program and outreach to communities which are underrepresented in adoption.

We have assisted birthmothers from all different walks of life and in all different types of situations including women who are single or married, parenting other children, having their first baby, using drugs or not, developmentally delayed, incarcerated and women in very small communities with no other support or transportation.

What we find from working with women who place is that they all have in common a basic need; they want support in making their own adoption plan to determine what they think is best for their baby. It is our pleasure to assist these women and honor that they know what is best for their situation.

► A View on Contraception ►

LIKE IT OR NOT, CONTRACEPTIVES MAKE
THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

By Nancy Eubanks (former Citizens for
Choice Board member)

Excerpted from *The Union* March 10, 2012
Did I miss something? I thought this was the 21st Century. I thought even in this hyper-partisan political environment created by the Republican Party that we all could agree that family planning (i.e. the use of contraceptives) is a good thing for our society.

After all, about 98 percent of women in this country use contraception at some time in their lives, thus allowing women the freedom to plan when and how many children to have; AND allowing them to fully participate in society.

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Control Women?

"Why extremists always focus on women remains a mystery to me, but they all seem to. It doesn't matter what country they're in or what religion they claim. They want to control women. They want to control how we dress. They want to control how we act. They even want to control the decisions we make about our own health and bodies. Yes, it is hard to believe that even here at home, we have to stand up for women's rights and reject efforts to marginalize any one of us, because America needs to set an example for the entire world."

~ Hillary Clinton

Heard on the Hill:

Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA) challenged Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius on emergency contraception. In response to her factual statement, backed up by scientific research, that emergency contraception (the morning after pill) will not terminate a pregnancy, Murphy interjected: "We're not talking about scientists. Ma'am, we're not talking about scientists here, we're talking about religious belief."

► Celebrating Families ►

CITIZENS FOR CHOICE WORKS WITH HEAD START TO CELEBRATE FAMILIES!

By Liz Mantle MFT, Outreach Education Coordinator Contractor

March 23rd found Liz Mantle, MFT and Miranda Lamont from Citizens for Choice Celebrating Families, with the Head Start Program and talking about healthy sexuality and kids. Celebrating Families is a great support for families with young children. They gather, the kids play, parents compare notes, get information, have dinner, swap resources and have guest speakers. The whole community is invited, not just Head Start families. Celebrating Families is a way to promote awareness about different services provided for families throughout their community, awareness of stress management techniques, healthy eating habits, a great way for adults to socialize and share parenting ideas, and so much more!

Head Start's Celebrating Families is a warm and supportive group with lots of healthy, beautiful babies of all colors. We really enjoyed being there. Tristine Dare, the coordinator for the events reported that the parents gave positive feedback, with one parent saying that Citizens for Choice was the best guest speakers they'd had! Our discussion topics included:

- When and how to start talking to your kids about sex
- Statistics on child abuse and teen pregnancy, and how to keep your child safe
- Toddlers and masturbation
- How information can empower your child and delay sexual activity
- Services offered at The Clinic!
- Questions and Answers

Would you like to have a guest speaker at one of your events? Citizens for Choice can tailor our talk to meet your audience: Please contact us at 530.274.3331

Women now are the majority of college students. Family income has been able to stay relatively ahead of inflation, not because of rising wages (which haven't increased for anyone but the 1 percent for the last 30 years), but because women are working more.

Family planning reduces poverty throughout the world. Family planning slows population growth, which is good for the planet. Every \$1 spent on public funding for family planning saves taxpayers \$3.74 in pregnancy-related costs, according to the Guttmacher Institute. Birth control is less expensive than pregnancy, thus lowering health care premiums for everyone (take note those of you who object to "paying for someone else's birth control").

Having fewer children allows families to provide better education, health care, etc. for their children. Since 45 percent of unintended pregnancies end in abortion, the use of birth control also prevents abortions. The use of birth control medication is also used for treatment of a variety of female health problems other than just preventing pregnancy.

So birth control is a win-win for everyone. It is an integral part of all women's health care; thus the ruling in the Affordable Care Act, with its emphasis on preventative care, requiring insurance companies to include contraception coverage in their policies. Because of these many benefits, providing access to contraception as part of women's medical insurance is something everyone should be in favor of. Right?

Wrong! Instead, we have an attack by the political right on women's use of contraception. Locally, we have people protesting in front of The Clinic! on Richardson Street. The Clinic!, staffed by Women's Health specialists, providing birth control, pap screening, breast exams for cancer, STD testing, and other women's health related reproductive services (not abortions) to uninsured and underinsured women.

Good people, we need to say "enough!" We need to say "stop demonizing women for using contraception!"

Support for Title X

Rep. Bob Dold (IL-10) testified before the House Budget Committee on his priorities for FY2013. He made specific mention of the value and importance of supporting Title X family planning programs. Dold emphasized the benefits of funding Title X, explaining that, "we can tighten our belt while continuing to fund our priorities." Dold said Title X is, "a valuable component of our nation's health infrastructure, providing basic preventative care, family planning services and education to millions of low-income Americans." He also noted that while the program has traditionally enjoyed bipartisan support, its recent politicization will, "jeopardize women's access to basic preventative health care, and cost more in the long run."

It is not often enough that Republicans actively, and preemptively lobby for continued support for family planning programs, and Rep. Dold's activism is certainly laudable. Dold is also working to encourage GOP members to join his efforts to protect the socially and economically valuable Title X program.

Help us “Rock the Vote” on Richardson Street!

Most likely those of you reading this newsletter are already registered to vote. But there are many eligible young voters locally who need to be encouraged, educated and registered!

Surveys show that the “millennials”- ages 16 to 34- are the most diverse group of young people in history. Many are civically engaged, passionate about issues, and politically aware. We know that young women are concerned about jobs and the economy first and next about health care issues.

That’s one reason why we want to reach out to the clients at The Clinic! by having volunteers outside with voter registration forms ready to answer questions and assist with filling out the forms.

All of the founding organizations of Citizens for Choice (AAUW, BPW, and LWVWNC) are aware of the importance of the millennial voters. The Board of Citizens for Choice has begun coordination with both AAUW and The League to schedule voter registration outreach. We have a holder with voter registration forms in it in the waiting area along with the League’s Facts for Voters pamphlets.

For the Tuesday, June 5th Primary, Monday, May 21st is the last day to register. We would like to have at least two volunteers at The Clinic! on Wednesday, May 2 and May 7, 9, 14, and 16 from 11 AM until 5 PM in two hour shifts. Please contact Sharon at info@citizensforchoice.org or leave a message at The Clinic! (530.274.3331) if you can help! Let’s Rock the Vote in western Nevada County!

Check out www.rockthevote.com to see what’s up nationally-we can do it here, too!?

Please share this newsletter-an easy way to double our circulation and exposure!

 **www.citizensforchoice.org**