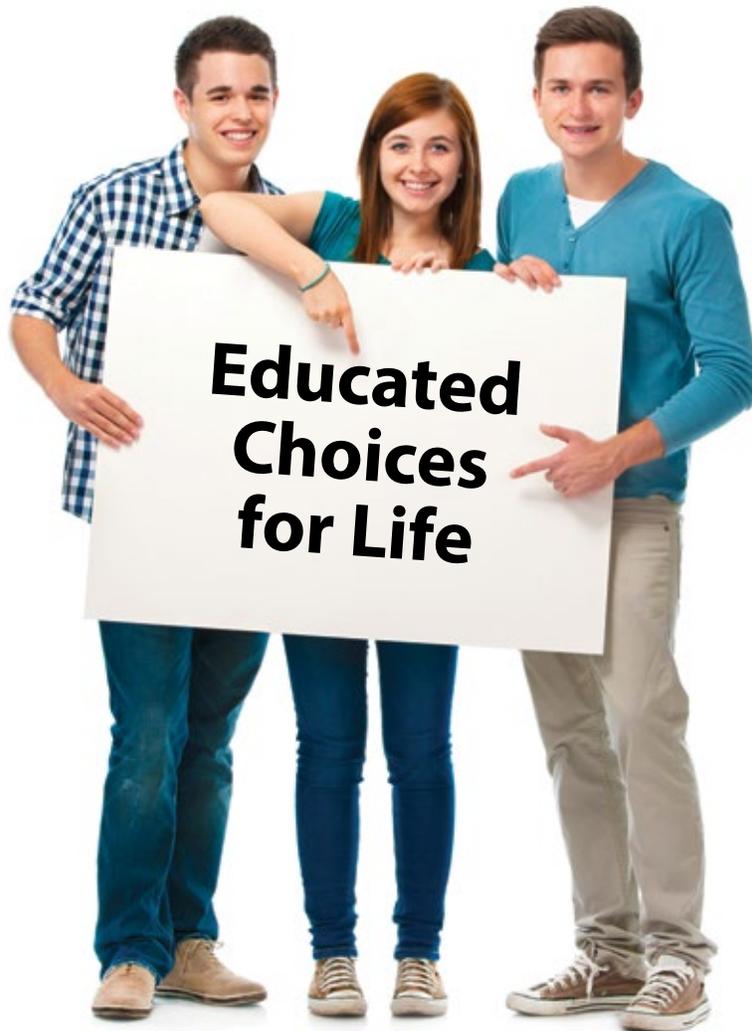




Voices for Choice

Summer 2015
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Citizens for Choice promotes reproductive justice through education, health care access and advocacy. We exist to inform and enable choice.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER By Kimberly D'Urso, President

Love is Love

I'm remembering back to 1997, when my sister came out to me at a yogurt shop. All I could manage to say was, "Finally," followed by a smile and a big hug, because I had known—or thought I did—for quite a while. I felt relieved that we would now be authentic with each other and that I would no longer be participating in a story I knew to be false.

Mostly, I was grateful that my sister felt safe in trusting me with such personal information and wanted me to be "the bridge" with our family. I treasure that moment.

Being a lesbian is challenging. After the personal truth, comes the real struggle—and it hasn't been easy for my sister, on

many levels. Processing her feelings of being "different" was only the beginning. She said that hiding her sexuality from our family, for fear of rejection or disappointing someone was the hardest on her.

I witnessed the societal hiding, fearing someone would judge or say something incredibly rude to her and her then partner. Worse yet were the many, many times she and her partner felt physically threatened, *just* for holding hands.

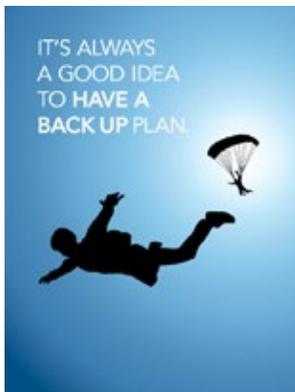
How ecstatic I was to attend my sister's wedding last October, when she married the love of her life, after 12 long years, at a Catholic mission no less. They celebrated their reception at a "Gentleman's Club,"

which surely was a sign of changing times. My whole family, with many friends, celebrated "love is love" that night.

"Love is love" won a national victory just this June, when the Supreme Court ruled gay marriage legal in the United States. We saw couples, young and old, come out to the world and declare their love.

I am proud to be part of an organization (Citizens for Choice) which does not discriminate and believes that ALL people deserve the right to love who they choose to love. Congratulations to all! Love wins.

Best—Kimberly D'Urso, President



Our **Back Up Plan** campaign launched this summer at the Grass Valley Thursday Night Market. We have found it to be a great opener for deeper discussions about how our organization can reduce unintended pregnancy, while supporting families through educated contraceptive choices.

From abstinence to family planning for all reproductive ages, the **Back Up Plan** book discusses every contraception option—their pros and cons—so that you can choose the best method which meets both your belief system, your body and your budget.



To preview the **Back Up Plan** book visit: www.citizensforchoice.org/the-clinic/
Click on the book to launch the PDF document.



Thursday Night Market table items.
Back Up Plan: flyers and condom tins!

NOVEMBER 2015



Mark your calendar! Stay tuned for more news about our annual fall fundraiser! We have an exciting venue planned for this year's event—you won't want to miss it. When our date is secured, we'll keep you posted via Facebook, eblast and snail mail.



Plus... Our featured article about Summer Protection is on the newstands.

Pick up a copy today—it's FREE!

PUBLIC POLICY By Elaine Sierra, Public Policy Chair

CA Reproductive Health and Justice Bills: *Prognosis Excellent*



California continues its legacy of being at the forefront of states working to advance reproductive health and justice. Chief examples are: a bill that would strengthen sex education and one that would help prevent so-called "crisis pregnancy centers" or CPCs from spreading false claims about the risks of abortion care.



Improving sex ed in California: AB 329

The first bill, AB 329, would mandate that California schools teach comprehensive sex education. As the law now stands, only HIV/AIDS instruction is mandatory. The standards that spell out what comprehensive sex education is and how it should be taught apply only if a school chooses to teach it. Too often, schools choose not to, and too often fail to provide critical sexual health knowledge.

The need for comprehensive sexual education in California is clear. More than 60% of teens are sexually active at age 18. Rates of STIs are growing and are highest in young

people. And, over 80% of births to teens are unintended. By fixing gaps in current law and updating it, AB 329 will make California's student population healthier and safer, in part by its promise of being more effective in delaying sexual activity and increasing condom and contraceptive use.



Ensuring accuracy of information provided to pregnant women: AB 775

The second bill, AB 775, would ensure that women receive the information they need to make informed decisions about their pregnancy options and to receive the care they need. It covers facilities that offer pregnancy-related services, both unlicensed and licensed. Thus, it applies to CPCs that advertise that they provide pregnancy testing, counseling and other services, targeting women with unintended pregnancies.

CPCs are, in fact, anti-choice organizations whose chief aim is deterring women from considering abortion.

And, the bill applies to reproductive health clinics like ours, operated by Women's Health Specialists.

Unlicensed facilities would be required to post a statement that they are not medical facilities licensed by the state of California and do not have a licensed medical provider on staff.

Licensed facilities would also be subject to new disclosure requirements, to ensure that women are more fully informed of their rights and of the opportunities for affordable healthcare access.

Both bills are well on their way to passing through the California legislature. Each has passed through the Assembly and is active in the Senate. The sex education bill is pending in the Appropriations Committee. The pregnancy disclosure bill may soon go the floor for a final vote.

Please join us in celebrating these legislative advances. And, join us in advocating for them to become law.

Stay connected by liking our Facebook page. And when you see a post asking for you to take action, do it.

ADDITIONAL 2015 LEGISLATION:

To keep up on public policy visit:
www.citizensforchoice.org/home/policy-activism/

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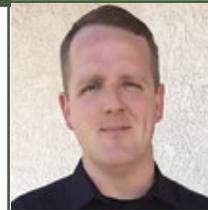
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Thank You Holly!

We are sad to see Holly go. In her short time with us, she was truly a member of the group, always going above and beyond to insure that young women have the right to choose what is right for them as far as their reproductive rights, health and other life choices go. She kept the Sierra College Choices Club going during a time of serious decline in enrollment and never wavered in her support and belief in choice. Holly will go very far in this life as she has already shown her leadership talents and strengths. We will miss her—I have hope for the future because of young people like her. —**Deb Worth**

Welcome Aaron!

Citizens for Choice welcomes our newest Board Member, Aaron Rutledge as our Volunteer Coordinator. Aaron has been a Grass Valley resident for 14 years and is a Certified Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Victim Counselor. He hopes to contribute to the organization by helping Citizens for Choice provide unbiased reproductive health education and resources to our community.



RECOMMENDED READS

Reviewed By Marlene Katz,
Donor Relations

"A Woman's Right To Choose...Not in Israel"

An article about a woman's right to choose in Israel appeared in The New York Times on Sunday, June 14, 2015. Even though Israel is more advanced in many things than the U.S.—LGBT community members, number of women in combat, free press—it is not progressive on abortions.

For example, all abortions must be approved by committees composed of a social worker and two doctors (doctors must be one man and one woman). Such committees meet a few hours twice a week.

One of these four criteria must be true for eligibility:

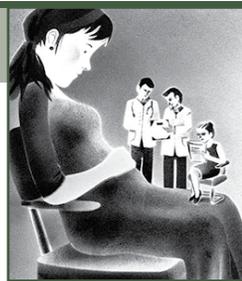
- Woman aged below 18 or over 40
- Fetus in danger
- Mental health of the mother at risk
- Pregnancy is out of wedlock or because of rape or incest

This abortion policy is definitely not liberal: the woman has no control of the process, no anonymity, and no control over her own body. The official criteria must be met for the approval of an abortion, or lack of is considered to be "highly bureaucratic."

Ninety eight percent of abortions are approved. Roughly 40,000 are completed each year with an unusually high number of 20,000 done so illegally. With these numbers in mind, the article states that the committees are "archaic."

The author of the article acknowledges that the abortions are facilitated in practice; but in principle it does not permit the woman the right to make her own decisions. Religious fundamentalists, i.e., ultra-Orthodox, believe in Genesis command to "be fruitful and multiply"

www.nytimes.com/2015/06/14/opinion/sunday/israels-abortion-committees.html?_r=0



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