



1237 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30310-1731
Tel: 404.756.2680
Fax: 404.756.2684
Email: info@SisterSong.net
Website: www.SisterSong.net

Florida State Grant Program Starts Call Center to Reduce Abortion

© SisterSong

Originally published in *Collective Voices*, Vol. 2 Issue 5, Summer 2006

Many reproductive justice advocates are concerned about crisis pregnancy centers that deceptively advertise that they help women make their own decisions – such as whether or not to continue a pregnancy – but in reality steer women towards gruesome lectures to discourage them from having abortions. The state of Florida is now funding such operations with taxpayer dollars.

CareNet announced, in February 2006, its new 24-hour call center to help find alternatives for pregnant women considering abortion. The *Christian Wire Service* reported that The State of Florida allocated \$2 million to a new program, which is jointly owned and operated by CareNet and Heartbeat International. The Florida Pregnancy Care Network (FPCN) retained the Option Line call center to serve as the official call center for the new state program. They report that the Option Line receives more than 10,000 calls, e-mails, and instant messages per month from women facing unplanned pregnancies. Kurt Entsminger, president of CareNet, stated, "CareNet is enthusiastic about this new program, which allows meaningful participation by faith-based organizations." CareNet is a non-profit organization that supports a network of 900 crisis pregnancy resource centers in North America. Among the services provided by these centers are free pregnancy tests, peer counseling and post-abortion support. In addition, qualified pregnancy centers offering counseling services and that abide by Florida's faith-based initiative guidelines will receive reimbursement by the Florida program. The FPCN will allocate the state funds to pregnancy centers that have been trained, approved by the FPCN and participate in the counseling services.

The irony is that while state funds are drying up for contraception coverage to prevent pregnancies, such as in Missouri, somehow taxpayer money can be found to support these problematic centers that encourage women to continue an unwanted and/or unplanned pregnancy.