



**BOTH LIVES
MATTER**

Pro-women & Pro-life



**100,000
WELCOMES**

Céad Míle Fáilte

IMAGINE

*A people
and place that
values the life
& health of
every woman
and unborn
child, and pursues
the wellbeing
of both.*



INTRO- DUCTION

OUR STARTING POINT IN EVERY PREGNANCY IS THAT BOTH LIVES MATTER. THIS PROFOUNDLY SIMPLE CORE VALUE HELPS TO NAVIGATE THESE DIFFICULT AND TURBULENT WATERS.

Both Lives Matter is a collaborative movement of individuals and organisations from diverse social, political and religious backgrounds. Together we reject a harmful way of thinking that pitches a woman against her unborn child. We stand in solidarity with both, championing laws which protect both and advocate for the best care which serves both. We embody a compassion which is practical and creative. We challenge ways of thinking which present abortion as the solution – ‘treating’ symptoms while leaving systemic and structural causes unchanged.

In the first year of our campaign we produced a credible estimate that over 100,000 people are alive today in Northern Ireland because it did not introduce legislation similar to the 1967 Abortion Act which applies in Great Britain. The figure was challenged, but after a thorough independent investigation by the Advertising Standards Authority it was upheld. This 100,000 figure is already reframing the conversation.

This short resource includes the story of the 100,000 and some of the individual accounts contained within this amazing number. It includes information on biological development, the law and statistics too.

The right to life is the most basic right we all enjoy. Abortion cuts across this right and is an incredibly sensitive issue. It touches upon our identity, relationships and beliefs – things we all care about deeply. It cuts to the heart of the ideas we hold about what it means to be human, free and equal.



Abortion policy is complex, increasingly shaped by opinions rather than evidence. However, the impact of a range of factors cannot be ignored - medicine and biology, law, wider culture, human rights, responsibility, education, economics, religion and philosophy. The current public debate is increasingly polarised and does not serve the complexity of the issue well, nor the women and unborn children most affected by abortion.

We don't claim to have an easy solution to hard ethical dilemmas, but we do have hope for a better, more human way forward.

Across these islands pressure continues to mount for legal change towards abortion being allowed in any pregnancy for any reason possibly up to birth. In an age when a huge focus is placed on the individual and consumer, these campaigns are designed to appeal to our desire for personal freedom and choice.

There is a risk however that our common humanity and the voice of the voiceless is lost in pursuing our individual freedom.

In these critical times, we hope this booklet might help you with words and stories about a more human way to live and be together.

We invite you to
STAND WITH US

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HUMAN BEGINNINGS MATTER

THESE DAYS THERE ARE A WHOLE RANGE OF APPS AND ONLINE RESOURCES TO HELP EXPECTANT PARENTS TRACK THE GESTATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR BABY.

Pictures and videos show what is happening as a baby grows towards birth. It can be disturbingly easy to separate in our minds these longed-for babies from those which are unwanted, a 'problem' to be ended. Whether we call them babies, foetuses or 'products of conception'; whether they are wanted or not, we share with them the journey of human development.

Conception

Human life begins at conception. This is the point when fertilisation results in a new genetically and physically distinct human organism being formed.¹ The new human DNA created from the sperm and egg coming together is unique. It has never existed before and will never exist again. At this stage, the sex of the baby, hair and eye colour are determined. While people will argue about the value of this human life and when and whether it should be recognised and protected as a 'person', the existence of a new human life at conception is a fact which is not up for debate.

¹
Ronan O'Rahilly and Fabiola Mueller
(2000) Human Embryology and
Teratology, 3rd edn. New York: John
Wiley & Sons, p. 8



3^{weeks}

The heart starts to beat.

6^{weeks}

The brain is sending messages around the body and the baby is already over one hundred times bigger than at conception.

8^{weeks}

Limbs and organs are now developing into place and the body is essentially complete.

10^{weeks}

The baby now has nails and unique finger prints and can make a fist.

12^{weeks}

The baby responds to touch. It is active, kicking and doing somersaults.

13^{weeks}

The baby is sucking and swallowing amniotic fluid to exercise the lungs.

16^{weeks}

The mother may feel the baby moving and the baby can hear the mother's voice.

24^{weeks}

With proper medical care babies born at this stage have a fifty to seventy per cent chance of survival. Some have even survived from 22 weeks.

26^{weeks}

Around this time babies start to open their eyes & blink.

33^{weeks}

The baby's brain and nervous system are fully developed and their bones continue to harden.

37^{weeks}

The baby is full term and ready to be born.



Disabilities & Life-limiting Conditions

Some babies do not develop the way most of us do. A whole range of medical conditions, including physical and mental disabilities, can begin to unfold as the baby develops in the womb. Some of these conditions are minor, such as cleft lip, while others can be so serious that the baby may not survive up to term.

Scientific developments now mean that testing pre-born babies for ‘defects’ and disabilities is routine. When the purpose is to treat the unborn child and to help the woman and family prepare for life with their child, these tests can be beneficial. However, in countries where legislation allows for abortion specifically for disability or for wide non-specific reasons, abortion becomes common and normalised in cases of disabilities of many kinds. For example, in Great Britain, nine out of ten babies are aborted when Down’s syndrome (trisomy 21) is detected. It is difficult to see this as anything other than discrimination because of disability - something we consider unacceptable at any other time. In these instances screening can become a threshold for life.

Life-limiting Conditions

Some people want to permit abortion specifically on the grounds where a baby has a life-limiting condition. The term ‘fatal fetal abnormality’ has been previously used. However, this term has been discredited by the Chair of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in Northern Ireland because it has no agreed medical or legal meaning. The term ‘life-limiting condition which may prove fatal’ is consistent with international standards on perinatal palliative care.

Such diagnoses can have devastating consequences for mothers, unborn children and their families. A small number of babies given such a diagnosis are completely mis-diagnosed and some are at the very



mild end of the spectrum of the condition concerned. Most will pass away in the womb or live for only a short period of time after birth. Devising a law to allow for abortion based on a life-limiting disability raises ethical issues and is very difficult to do legally and medically. It isn't best care for the unborn baby, or often the mother, and can lead to discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Life-limiting conditions are not specific legal grounds for abortion in Northern Ireland. However, where it has resulted in a risk to an individual women's life (real and serious, permanent or long term risk to physical or mental health) doctors have performed abortions in line with the law. The assessment must be based on the risk to the woman's life. This is medically and legally very different to an assessment being made on the basis of a particular 'fault' with the unborn child.

Abortion does not solve the problem for the unborn child or women. It is not a treatment for tragedy. In these moments, we stand in solidarity with the entire family — including the mother and unborn child.

We are working to ensure that women facing these very difficult circumstances receive the best support services and personal pathways of care, including perinatal hospice care and ongoing support services for the child's lifetime, however short. Specialist support can be found from a number of peer support charities like Every Life Counts.



VALUES MATTER

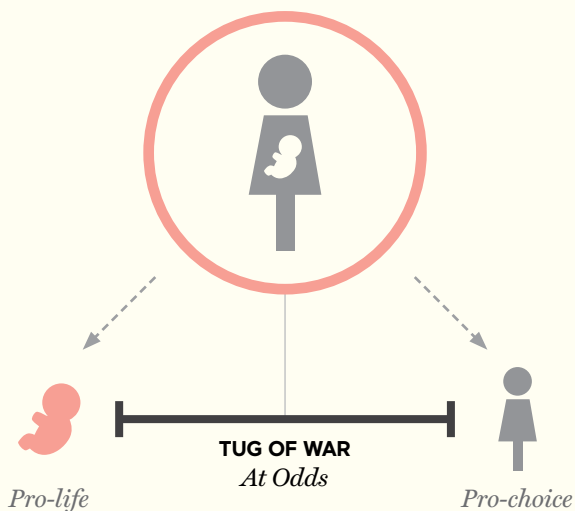


WE ALL HOLD VALUES. COMMUNIST OR CHRISTIAN, MONARCHIST OR REPUBLICAN, CAPITALIST OR SOCIALIST. FAMILY, NATIONALITY, CULTURE AND EXPERIENCE SHAPE WHAT WE THINK AND WHAT WE DO.

For some people it is their religious beliefs for some it is their belief in human rights which drives and shapes their core principles and values. Often these overlap and are not exclusive to each other.

Abortion, the deliberate ending of an unborn baby's life, is always going to be controversial because it is literally a matter of life and death. Abortion raises questions about woman's rights, bodily freedom/autonomy, care for the vulnerable, freedom and equality, justice and compassion, dignity and humanity. It is about human rights and responsibility, the tension between the obligation on the state to protect life and the limits of individual freedom.

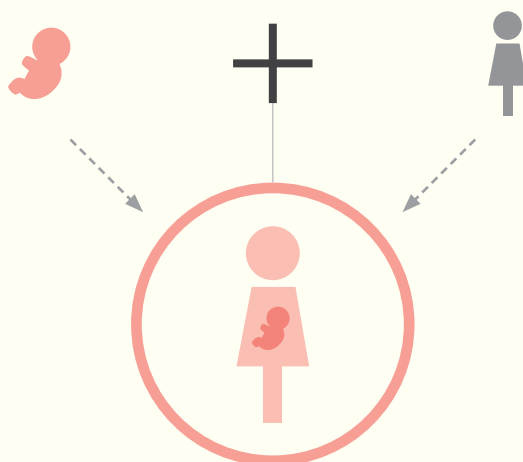
When it comes to abortion, the practical working out of these values can be difficult and complex. However it is increasingly presented as a simple tug of war, where women only win when unborn children lose their life's protection. The innate relationship between woman and unborn child is severed and they are pitched against each other in a battle of rights.



It's tragic, but for some, abortion has become a symbol of freedom, progress and equality. Those who oppose it are portrayed as oppressive, regressive and anti-women. Some campaigns, led by those paid to carry out abortions, paint the decriminalisation of abortion as the last battle in a long series of hard-won legal rights for women, like the right to vote and equal pay. This way of thinking tells women, 'you are only as free and equal as your decision to end the life of your unborn child'. Progress on women's rights is being strongly linked with the erosion of the right to life of unborn children.

This is a zero-sum game which is exposed as confused and dangerous when the practise of gender-selective abortions is consider which are largely used to terminate female babies.

Both Lives Matter is more than a name. It neatly sums up our core values. The woman and child remain connected in our thinking – reflecting the biological and social reality. We believe that progress for women means progress for their unborn children too. When women thrive so do unborn children and vice-versa. This is an inclusive, creative and compassionate way of thinking about progress and equality. It does not deny trauma, heartbreak or the frightening realities of a crisis pregnancy. Rather it stands in solidarity alongside both women and unborn children in these moments offering a more human vision of what it means to be and live together.



ON THE SAME TEAM

What's good for mother is good for child

We are made up of many people from across the political, ideological and religious spectrum who share a consistent, rational position of protecting human life before birth. We are up-front about our values. Supporting the current law which protects both lives, does not equate to imposing our views or beliefs on anyone. Every law reflects some sort of value which the society holds. The law will often limit some personal actions for the protection of other citizens, the wider common good or future generations. We all support laws which align with our values around theft or paying taxes or littering – this is not imposition but agreeing boundaries for how we live best together.



WORDS MATTER

WE SEEK TO BE SENSITIVE AND HONEST IN OUR LANGUAGE. WE RECOGNISE THE AGONY OF THE SITUATIONS SOME WOMEN FIND THEMSELVES IN AND THE DECISIONS THEY MAKE.

We are not trite or blind to tragedy. We speak to build value in people, not tear them apart. We will not dehumanise our opponents, neither will we shy away from naming things truthfully.

Abortion dehumanises — literally. The language of some of those who seek to further abortion mirrors this physical reality. Words are used which make it easier to ignore the humanity of those involved. Women become ‘vessels’ or ‘life-support machines’, unborn babies become ‘parasites’ or ‘products of conception’. Words like mother and baby are only used when the baby is wanted, otherwise the baby remains a foetus/embryo – technically correct but relationally void.



‘Choice’ is used as a euphemism for the freedom to decide to end the life of an unborn baby. Those who oppose abortion are told to stop forcing their views on everyone else – the implication that any other belief or dissent is oppressive. While those who support abortion are in fact forcing their views on others leading to the oppression of the most vulnerable, the unborn child who has no voice.

We seek to shift the narrative to life and flourishing. We deliberately speak of babies and tiny family members. We do not entertain the negative and dehumanising language of ‘fatal foetal abnormality’ – instead we talk of babies with a life-limiting condition. We extend humanity and dignity to each baby whether or not they are wanted, using the inclusive language of family and community.



NUMBERS MATTER

- » The World Health Organization estimates that there are around 40 to 50 million abortions carried out each year around the world.
 - » In the UK, since the 1967 Act, there have been over 8 million abortions in England and Wales. That's more than the population of the island of Ireland.
 - » In 2016 in England and Wales there was 696,271 live births and 185,596 abortions, so for every four children born, one was aborted.
 - » By the age of 45, one in three women in England and Wales will have had an abortion.
 - » In the last ten years in England and Wales, out of almost two million abortions, only 16 were recorded as for the purposes of 'to save the life of the mother.' Overwhelmingly, most abortions are for socio-economic reasons.
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**A HUNDRED
THOUSAND
LIVES
MATTER**



100,000

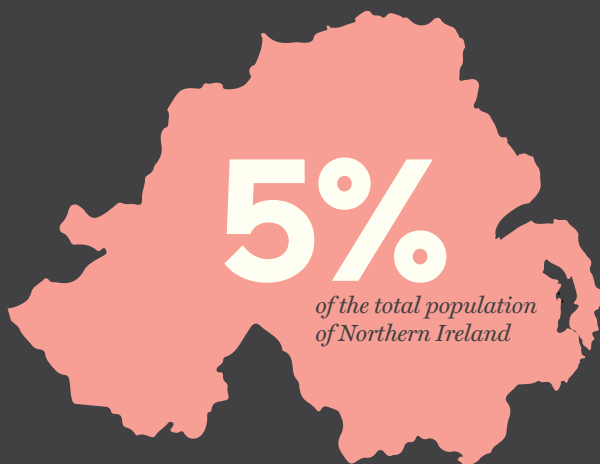
WE ESTIMATE THAT MORE THAN 100,000 PEOPLE ARE ALIVE IN NORTHERN IRELAND TODAY BECAUSE THE 1967 ABORTION ACT OR SIMILAR LEGISLATION WAS NOT INTRODUCED.

This figure is already helping to change the story around abortion and the role of our law in Northern Ireland.

People you know and love today are here because of our laws around abortion, which protect both women and unborn children about as far as humanly possible.

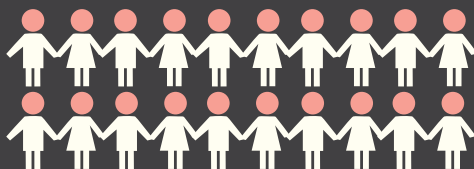
You can find out lots more and download the report and ASA addendum on the Both Lives Matter website which contains our methodologies and calculations.

THIS IS
EQUAL
TO...



ONE IN
TWELVE
Under 50s

100 SCHOOL CLASSES
Every Year



Exterior

100,00

PEOPLE ARE ALIVE TODAY BE
OF OUR LAWS ON ABORTI

Why change that?



BOTHLIVE



WE THOUGHT THIS FIGURE WAS GOOD NEWS

SO WE PRODUCED AND LAUNCHED
A REPORT AND SOME BILLBOARDS
IN JANUARY 2017 TELLING
EVERYONE ABOUT THIS.

A small number of people complained to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) questioning our figures and methodology. The role of the ASA is to make sure that the public are not misled with regard to advertising

The ASA robustly investigated the methodology used in the report, and following detailed consideration involving an assessment of all the evidence by an independent health care statistician, the ASA concluded there was a 'reasonable probability' that 100,000 individuals are alive today who would not be if Northern Ireland had introduced the 1967 Act.²

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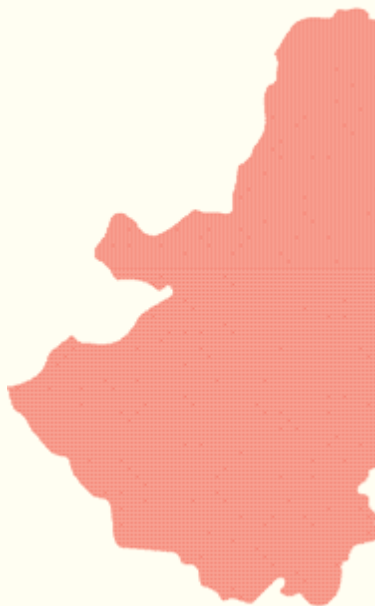
See "ASA Ruling on Both Lives Matter," Advertising Standards Agency, published 2 August 2017, <https://www.asa.org.uk/rulings/both-lives-matter-a17-370344.html>



LAW MATTERS

- » The laws on this island have historically been based on a particular vision of the common good, which continues to place a high regard on personal freedom while limiting the deliberate ending of innocent human life. Protecting both women and unborn children as far as humanly possible is not backward and regressive. It is a compassionate, ethical and hopeful aim.
- » A dangerous idea has developed particularly in human rights law, that legal or indeed moral 'progress' on human/women's rights should be measured by our ability to end the lives of our unborn children. Our law protects women and unborn children, it is to be cherished and celebrated.

- » The law on abortion in Northern Ireland is very different to abortion laws in Great Britain and the rest of Western Europe. The law here strikes a very difficult and delicate balance between the life, health and wellbeing of the mother and that of her baby. Our law reflects the biological and relational reality that both lives are intimately linked.
- » The basic starting point is that in Northern Ireland termination of pregnancies are unlawful. There is a limited exception or defence where the termination is performed in good faith only for the purpose of preserving the life of the woman. The 'life' of the woman in this context has been interpreted by the courts (in the Bourne case) as including her physical and in very limited cases, her mental health.
- » A termination of pregnancy can therefore be lawful only where the continuance of the pregnancy threatens the life of the woman, or would adversely affect her physical or mental health in a manner that is real and serious and permanent or long term.
- » It is important to state that abortions have been carried out in NI in instances where the continuance of the pregnancy must have either threatened the life of the woman or would have adversely affected her physical or mental health in a manner that is real and serious and permanent or long term. i.e. the law in Northern Ireland allows abortion only for the sole purpose of preserving the



life of the woman. Abortion is never allowed for the sole purpose of ending the life of the unborn child.

- » If the law is changed in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland, as has been proposed, a rubicon would be crossed where abortion is permitted on the grounds of a 'fault' with the unborn child. This would be a shift legally and medically from indirect abortion to direct abortion.
 - » Laws which more carefully limit access to abortion should be complemented with other policies which address the perceived need for abortion beyond saving lives. These policies could include delivering better relationships and sex education, appropriate family planning and world-leading pregnancy healthcare. We advocate consistent pathways of care for every pregnancy and pregnancy crisis, including a system of perinatal hospice care. This is complemented by changes to further flexible childcare, fair pay and government policies which are properly family-proofed.
-

“““

“There is obviously no absolute certainty about what “*an alternative Northern Ireland*” would have looked like if the 1967 abortion legislation had been applied here as in GB. However, what Both Lives Matter have done, as the basis for their report, is to make plausible and cautious estimates as to what might have happened.

Those estimates are based on what actually happened in GB. Considerations of policy options in Northern Ireland are frequently based on data drawn from experience in the rest of the UK.

The estimates suggest at least 100,000 people—men, women and children—are alive today in Northern Ireland who would not have been alive if Northern Ireland had the same rate of abortions as Scotland had had since the late 1960s.”

DR ESMOND BIRNIE MA (ECON) PHD (ECON)

Dr Esmond Birnie is an economist with 30 years of experience in evaluation public policy.



OUR STORIES



REBECCA'S STORY

The 98%

IF YOU HAD ASKED THE TEENAGE VERSION OF ME GROWING UP, 'WHAT'S THE QUICKEST WAY TO RUIN YOUR LIFE?' WITHOUT A SHADOW OF A DOUBT, I WOULD HAVE SAID, 'GET PREGNANT.'

My teenage judgements sound very extreme but if we are completely honest with ourselves, we all know the teen mum stereotype – chav tracksuit, no qualifications, hanging around the 'dole office'. Not to mention, it is automatically assumed that they are bad mothers. So, when I sat in that doctor's surgery at 3am, aged 18, and was told that I was pregnant... I stepped into my own living nightmare. The doctor gave me a look that said, 'Say goodbye to your gap year travels, your university place, your future'. I was shocked. And I was devastated.

On the drive home I simultaneously tried to convince my mum that I was still a virgin, but also that I was probably about 6 months on. (It had been a while since anything baby-making-related had happened). My head was spinning as I remembered all the things I had done recently; The nights out. The wine. The 'Jaegerbomb-Queen' title. The A levels. The failed driving test where I nearly killed a pedestrian. The trip to Israel where I rode camels through the desert. The grade 8 violin exam. The Sunday morning I abseiled down the Europa Hotel... I was the last person this should have been happening to.

For the next three months I was constantly carrying another human, but I'd never felt so humanly alone. It should have been the happiest news of my life but everyone's reaction was to console me or avoid me. The amazing new life inside of me was overclouded by my young age. As a result, I think I only truly accepted that I was going to be a mum when I went into labour. Reuben's gigantic head was making its jolly way through my cervix and that's when I informed my mum, and the midwives, *'I don't think motherhood is for me.'*

But oh my. One look at that deliciously-beautiful yet hairy new-born of mine, and I knew it was so for me. He was so for me. The beauty of having a baby so young is that quite often that baby is your first real experience of true love. When I looked at Reuben, I wasn't a teen mum anymore. I wasn't a stereotype. I wasn't a statistic. I was just

Reuben's mum. And I was going to give this motherhood thing everything I had.

Of course, that hasn't been easy. I've been winging my way through motherhood. But, aren't we all? On top of googling what colour my new-born's diarrhoea should be, I was working part time, repeating A levels, and completing a counselling course to get into university... most of which was done whilst Reuben slept at night. But just because something isn't conventional, doesn't mean it can't work. I'm now 21 and these days Reuben and I live in Belfast where I go to Queen's University to study Theology. He goes to Queen's crèche when I am in class or at the library and he is only ever 20 yards away.

Anyone who knows me, and anyone who doesn't know me (the beauty of being an over-sharer with a blog) will know, that I am pretty strong willed. Some would say stubborn and annoyingly head strong, but I prefer to say unwaveringly-determined. If ever there was going to be a single-teenage-mum studying for a degree at university – I am your girl. But for this reason, I worry that people will look at me as the 'success' story. The 'minority' story. The 'exception to the rule'.

But in reality my story is the same as everyone else's. And the truth- the truth that I rarely tell anyone is, I didn't want the baby in my belly. I wanted what society told me was a quick fix. I wanted an abortion. Even after my beautiful Reuben was born, I still

struggled to accept what had happened. I felt that people were waiting for me to fail and I couldn't help but notice the looks on the street. I began to believe the lies that were spoken over me – 'what a shame this has happened so early in your life', 'what a waste of potential', 'how could you make such a mistake?', and not to mention the derogatory names that I'd receive from people I didn't even know.

Boy, am I glad that I didn't receive my news until I was 6 months on. The choice was taken out of my hands, and although my mum may have wanted to kill me – I am so thankful that I didn't have the option of doing something I'd regret. I wish I could go back in time and tell myself how full my life would be. I wish I could go back and tell myself that there was hope. I was told about an organisation called Surestart who run groups for young parents. I begrudgingly went to the group, annoyed that I was expected to be friends with these people just because we all got knocked up before the culturally appropriate age. Little did I know, I would meet some of the most amazing girls who would become a massive part of my life. We were in this together.

After becoming a Christian, I stopped believing that motherhood or Reuben was an unfortunate mistake that could have been avoided. I started believing that Reuben had a purpose – that I had a purpose. I was no longer a product of my circumstances. And in my darkest moment, coming face to face with the extravagant love of Jesus, I was enabled to

love Reuben more than I knew possible.

I may no longer be a teen mum. But I'm also no longer ashamed. I no longer stand under the labels of 'reckless', 'worthless', and 'failure'. I now stand under the labels of 'loved', 'strong', and 'valuable'. I wasted too much time mourning the life that I could have had, but that life was never actually mine to mourn. It just robbed me of the time and energy to live, enjoy, and make the best of the life I have now. Admittedly, I'm still a little scared to go out in public with Reuben in my tracksuit bottoms for fear of looking like a typical teen mum. But sometimes I think of the quivering, uncertain mess I was during my pregnancy, and I think 'Girl, you did good'.

I am passionate about encouraging those women who are the same quivering, uncertain mess that I was. I wish it was my job to greet every woman who comes out of a doctor's surgery after receiving their news – and do you know what I would do? I WOULD CONGRATULATE THEM! I wish I could be the voice of strength and positivity when society tells them they've made a mistake. It's my heart through my painfully honest blog, and in my daily life, to eradicate the stigma surrounding unexpected pregnancies. I want to empower women to pursue their dreams, and dare I say it – with their baby. Young mothers are not a cautionary tale to tell your daughters. I want to challenge those assumptions and through that, challenge us all to get behind and support the young mothers in our lives. Actually, let's support all the women in our lives.

BETHS'S STORY

Lack of Support

I HAD AN ABORTION WHEN I WAS 21. I HAD BEEN IN A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP WITH MY BOYFRIEND FOR THREE YEARS PREVIOUS BUT IT WASN'T UNTIL WE HAD SPLIT UP AND WERE 'SEEING' EACH OTHER THAT I FELL PREGNANT.

By this point he was now my ex-boyfriend and he was going away for 3 months. I found out that I was pregnant when he was away. I recall calling him and telling him that I was pregnant. He was very adamant that he was going to support me and there was absolutely no option of me having an abortion, *"My mum will help us with looking after the baby"*.

I was VERY sick during the pregnancy, I had recently started a new job and had

the stress of worrying about finances as I was just short of my probation period and didn't qualify for sick pay. Thankfully in the midst of such confusion my company were very supportive and went way beyond the duty of care and even offered for a member of staff to come visit me and attend appointments with me if I needed her to.

I was getting sicker by the day, I couldn't hold anything down and even the smell of certain aromas had me gagging! I was in a bad way but with each passing day I longed for my ex to get home, to wrap his arms around me and tell me everything would be ok, "not long now, he will be home soon!"

On the day of his return I anxiously waited by the phone, waiting for his call. The hours passed by and by evening I still hadn't heard from him "maybe he's tired, got jet lag and taking a rest". He didn't call that evening and he didn't call the next day either! I finally decided I would call him and he said he had been 'busy' but would come over and see me. I was so not prepared for the bombshell that he was about to drop on me.

"See, when I was away I met somebody, I met 'the real thing' so I'm sorry but I can't support you with having this baby, but I'll give you money".

Yes that's really what I needed to hear! Money was the last thing I was wanting from him in that moment. All I longed for was for him to put his arms around me, to give me a kiss but he wouldn't touch me. He had to be 'faithful' to his new woman.

My dad had just had a mini stroke, both my sisters had suffered from post-natal depression, as had my mum, so I had this war going on inside of me, a fear that such would be my fate, that I wasn't capable of being a good mother. Then the seeds of abortion were planted when I told a friend and she told me to "get rid of IT."

Abortion began to feel like a way of escape, I wouldn't be a good mother so why go through with having the child? That was the daily dialogue I was having with myself, but deep down I felt like a mother, I even began to talk to my baby; fear was driving me in a direction that I didn't want to go but I felt powerless to take back control of my life. I gave into fear and the doctor arranged an abortion for me, but I had absolutely no intention of having it!

I went to the hospital that day, with my "just get rid of IT" friend in tow. One thing I will never forget is walking onto the ward and discovering that we were actually on a labour ward. The nurse who dealt with me was very brash and insensitive, I could feel her judgement as it manifested in her body language as she flung my medical records onto the bed. This only confirmed that I was not meant to be there, in the end I decided I couldn't go through with it and went home. *"I can do this! I am going to have this baby!"*

With a spring in my step I went home and rang my ex and told him that I had decided to go through with the

pregnancy and was not going to have an abortion. He went silent then said *"well, I've been talking to my brother and I think it's best that you get an abortion, I'll pay for it because I really don't think it's a good idea for you to have this baby"*.

In that moment my world crashed around me, I thought he would at least support me through the pregnancy, as when I first spoke to him abortion wasn't an option! So there I was, I felt that I was back to square one again. Again the thoughts of inadequacy began to flood my mind, I was SO confused and could not see how I would get through this. In the end I gave into fear. Reluctantly I went back to the doctor and he arranged for me to go back to the hospital, I felt this was my only option. I had the abortion and from the minute I woke up I was regretting it. I felt empty, lost & confused.

I will be 40 this year and I do not have any children yet. I pray and hope that I will meet somebody special and have a family, but it's not guaranteed. At 21 it never occurred that I would be childless at 40, then I 'assumed' I would be married with children.

One thing I would say to any woman considering abortion is – do not take life for granted. As women we assume that there will be another chance to conceive but life is unpredictable and what if this is the only opportunity you have in life to conceive?



TAKE A STAND

1.

Speak Up

Too many people have been silenced by the accusation that they are forcing their views on others. We do not impose, we humbly propose. We advocate not for our own interests but for the vulnerable and the wellbeing of society. So we encourage you to talk about this issue, graciously, respectfully - around the dinner table, in the office, with family and friends and beyond. Stir in others a passion to protect life and see better pregnancy crisis care. Shape the debate and be part of the conversation.

2.

One Person At A Time

Become part of our 'one person at a time' movement and change the conversation. If 50 people each talk to one person about why both lives matter each month, and each new person does the same, in the course of a year that conversation started by 50 people will have reached over 100,000 people. Small steps can change culture, one person at a time.

Who will you talk to next?

3.

Act Up

STAND WITH

Draw alongside and support those experiencing pregnancy crisis. Support organisations like LIFE NI which among other things, provides practical help through their Pregnancy Matters service.

STAND FOR

Campaign to the Department of Health or your local health Trust for better pregnancy crisis services, better relationships and education for the longer term. Advocate by writing to, and offering to meet with, your locally elected representatives.

STAND READY

Educate yourself and others by researching the issue and speaking wisely.

THERE ARE LOTS MORE RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITE

bothlivesmatter.org





GET IN TOUCH

**WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU
IF YOU HAVE RELEVANT EXPERTISE OR
EXPERIENCES OR COULD VOLUNTEER
YOUR TIME OR SKILLS.**

VISIT *bothlivesmatter.org*

EMAIL *stand@bothlivesmatter.org*



OUR PARTNER



**TO FIND OUT MORE
OR TO SPEAK TO
SOMEONE SIMPLY
CONTACT LIFE NI:**

PHONE

028 9043 8339

EMAIL

info@lifeni.org.uk

One of the key partners in Both Lives Matter is Life NI. They provide care and support for those facing unexpected pregnancy, or those needing help during pregnancy or after having a baby.

Pregnancy Care

Pregnancy Matters is our counselling and support service for pregnancy and pregnancy loss. Volunteers trained in counselling skills offer free pregnancy testing, a listening ear service, support and practical help such as baby/children's clothes and equipment; counselling is provided by diploma qualified counsellors for pregnancy crisis and for pregnancy loss such as miscarriage, stillbirth or abortion.

Supported Housing

LIFE Housing supports women and children both during pregnancy and after birth.

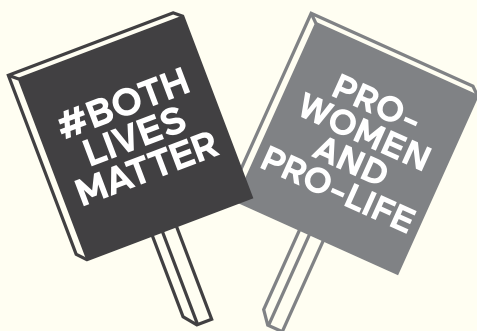
LIFE House provides 6 units of supported accommodation for homeless pregnant women and mothers with babies or small children.

The Community Support Scheme provides support for mothers living in their own homes.





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Stand with us
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