



Worries about continuing the pregnancy

Word cloud: a visual representation of word frequency in a given text.

connections

Vision 2017

SPRING 2017

When thinking about the issue of abortion, many people will think about picket lines and protests on the courthouse steps, but that's not what we think about at Support Circle. We think about a woman who has her face buried in her hands because she has an agonizing choice to make, and there are no easy answers. Our ministry vision this year is to combine the professional medical care and counseling we have always provided in our medical clinics with new practical programs designed to address the root issues facing women who are unsure about their pregnancy decision.

The latest research tells us that women who are unsure about their pregnancy decision are NOT saying, "I'm going to have an abortion because I value abortion for its own sake." They are saying:

"I'm struggling to pay my own bills. How am I going to do that with a newborn?"

"I have responsibilities at work, at school, within my family, how will I do those and add on being a parent?" And

"Is he"... the baby's father... "in this with me, or am I on my own?"

These are the concerns that unsure women are facing today. Support Circle is committed to getting UNDER the issue of abortion.

Support Circle's ministry vision is to create a community that goes the distance with women and children. Women who are unsure about their pregnancy decision overwhelmingly cite financial concerns and the relationship with the baby's father as their primary worries. For this reason, Support Circle announced at its 2017 Benefit that it

plans to launch financial literacy programs to address these needs, and as a first phase in this multi-year plan, it will launch a one-on-one mentorship program later this year.

Financial Literacy and Mentorship

What are the root issues for abortion? They all have to do with financial concerns! According to Public Opinions Strategies, the top four worries that unsure women cite for considering termination are: 1. Financial concerns, 2. Relationship with the baby's father, 3. Unprepared, 4. Lack of support. It is hard, almost impossible for many women, to think of a baby as a beautiful gift when the immediate path before her is shrouded with a thick cloud that is the fear and uncertainty of financial concerns and being alone.

The first step to address those concerns is to launch our one-on-one mentorship program in the fall. This program would recruit and train mentors, including career coaches, so that other clients can become "their own best potentials."

After we launch our mentorship program, we plan to launch other financial literacy services for our clients. These services will include 1. a Saturday financial workshop for men and women, 2. In collaboration with our partner churches we will offer weekly financial literacy support groups. And, 3. since we care about our clients' spiritual needs too, Bible studies alongside these support groups will be offered. We can better address the root causes of abortion once these mentorship and financial literacy programs are in place.

Resilience

Wanda Durant, mom of NBA star Kevin Durant and Keynote Speaker at our Annual Benefit, shared her story of motherhood, resilience and what an organization like Support Circle would have done for her.



All of you who have donated year after year to support the women who find themselves in a similar situation that I found myself in, thank you so much. I just wanted to come by and to share my story and what an organization like this would have done for me.

I was out being a bit rebellious, not really listening to my mom and met the young man of my dreams. So I thought. I became pregnant at age 17. And it was scary. I felt alone. We didn't have Support Circle. If I would have had this type of organization to support me, with the all-comprehensive program that you all have here at Support Circle, how much easier would it have been for me?

I decided to tell my mom that I was pregnant. I waited until she was on the phone. And to this day, she has never responded. I say that jokingly now, but how much pressure did that put on me as a 17-year-old girl? I never really got the support and understanding. I decided that I am going to do what I needed to do. And to be quite honest with you, my oldest son (Tony) saved my life because I had no self-esteem. I had no goals, no dreams. And I thank God for my son because he kept me focusing on life. But I still come back to the notion that if I had a program like this to support me, how much lighter would my burden have been?

I had to navigate through things on my own. I had to go down the dead end to try and figure out how I was going to make it because I was unemployed. I didn't have education past high school. My only option that I knew was public assistance. But I thank God for my mom. She wouldn't allow me to stay on public assistance. She forced me to go out to find different programs. I was able to partake in the job training program for entry level positions with the federal government.

I remember the intake personnel. She said to me: "Why should you come to this program?" And I said, "Because I want to do this for my children." And she said, "No, you want to do this for yourself. Because if you do it for yourself then your children will benefit." But me, with my flippant attitude,

I'm like, "She don't know what she's talking about. I'm doing this for my kids and she doesn't know. But okay, I'm going to say what she needs me to say so I can get into the program."

But, years later, I realized, that was a poignant message she had given me because if I'm okay, my children, would be okay. And so I wanted to encourage the donors tonight that sometimes you give support to a program like this and you want instant results. You want to see the fruits of your labor instantly. But I ask you to look at me and realize this was not immediate. It took 30 years for me to get to this point. **Your impact and your support, will be a part of generations to come.** That's what happened to one life. Mine. It has impacted my sons. It will impact my grandsons — as soon as they come. But it changed our lives and so I just want to encourage you all to realize that you may not see the results right away.

I encourage the clients to stick in there because you don't know what your life will be. You won't know what blessings God has in store for your life. I never thought my life experiences would impact people the way they told me it has. Because I didn't commit suicide like I wanted to, my sons are living out the dreams of their lives.

Because of the programs and the people that impacted my life, I had to stand on my own. I had to be resilient. I had to go out on my own and provide stability for my sons. And I did it. With God's help.

What my sons taught me, what motherhood has taught me, is how to give. It taught me how to be resilient. I never thought I would be writing my memoirs. I'm a girl from the Hood. I got *memoirs*, right?! Who would have thought it? Not me.

'Cause I am the manifestation of the seeds that were planted in my life. And my sons are the seeds of the manifestation planted in their lives. The seeds that you plant today, God is going to bring a harvest that may not be reflected in what you do, but in what someone like me does. Just know that the seeds have been planted.

client update **Marketa**

Five years ago, Marketa came to Support Circle (when we were known as First Resort) as a single mom in college who found herself pregnant again. This is Marketa's story in her own words:

After I made the choice to keep my baby, Josiah, and the support that I got from the Organization, I knew it wasn't going to be easy, but **the help that I received to sustain him for the first year of his life was enough for me to be able to appreciate the gift of having him and loving him and being a mom.**

To the donors, I thank you so much because for that first year that really changed the game for me. There was no excuse for why I could not raise that child. But (Support Circle) took all of the excuses and marked it down. All I had to do was to live up to my best potential and I was able to do that.

April 2014, everything that I had planned for my life and my children's lives was taking off. I accepted a job as an Associate Teacher, got a raise, got into a Master's of Education program. I would say April 2014 was amazing.

But all that changed in May 2014. I lost my mother to a heart attack. The following month I found out I had a heart condition called cardiomyopathy, which means that I have an enlarged, weakened heart muscle. By the end of that year, I ended up needing to have a heart transplant and went home with a defibrillator back pack.

One night, the alarm sounded and it felt like an elephant was on my chest. **My boys saved my life.**

What I've learned through this process is my children are very resilient and in days and moments when I wanted to give up, Enzi (her oldest son), would tell me: "Mom, never give up." I believe resilience has shown itself in my family. I have a drive to want to do what's right and want to make the best decisions and choices I can. I model that for my boys in a way that allows them to know their own strength.

With these new physical limitations, I'm looking forward to what Support Circle has to offer with having a Career Coach (through the mentorship program) because I know that wherever this new journey takes me, I'm going to need some support in redirecting what I do now. I feel extremely blessed to have an organization like Support Circle here for me again at this juncture in my life.



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2017 Benefit Goals

We have almost met our Benefit goals! \$505,000 is the goal to launch our mentorship and financial literacy program AND we are seeking 159 sponsorships in recognition of the 159 clients who chose to carry their babies to term last year. **Visit supportcircle.org/benefit to give today.**



Check out more photos from our Benefit on Facebook!

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