

# A Brief History of CPCs



# 1967



In the United States, the first Crisis pregnancy center was opened by Robert Pearson in Hawaii. Pearson opened this center after Hawaii legalized abortion. Crisis pregnancy centers pose as women's health centers with the intent of dissuading people from getting abortion care.

# 1968



The first Canadian CPC was opened in Toronto, by anti-abortion organization called Birthright International. Since then, Birthright International has opened many CPCs.

# 1969



To continue the CPC Movement, Robert Pearson established the anti-choice Pearson Foundation in St. Louis. This Foundation assists local groups in setting up CPCs.

# 1973



Roe v Wade was decided. For anti-choice activists, this propelled them to mobilize more aggressively and open more CPCs across the country.

# 1984



Pearson authored a manual called *How to Start and Operate Your Own Pro-Life Outreach Crisis Pregnancy Center*, which is still used today. This manual outlines many deceptive practices CPCs use.

# 2009



Maryland is the first state to introduce legislation that countered deception of CPCs. In 2009, a the Limited-Service Pregnancy Centers - Disclaimers bill was introduced.

This bill required all CPCs to advertise in writing and orally that they do not provide or refer to abortion services, contraceptive services, or provide medical advice. This bill failed to advance out of committee, but had a huge impact. Many states and localities used this bill as a framework to try to pass similar legislation.

# 2018



National Institute of Family & Life Advocates v. Becerra was the first case before SCOTUS that attempted to counter the deception of crisis pregnancy centers. This case addressed the constitutionality of California's FACT act, which required CPCs to disclose information about state services. The Court ruled that the FACT Act violated the First Amendment and violated free speech.

# Today



The number of CPCs are still growing. There are around twice the number of CPCs as there are licensed abortion clinics across the United States.

# Sources



- <https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/6.-The-Truth-About-Crisis-Pregnancy-Centers.pdf>
- [http://prochoice.org/wp-content/uploads/cpc\\_report.pdf](http://prochoice.org/wp-content/uploads/cpc_report.pdf)
- <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1155&context=njlsp>
- <https://www.motherjones.com/wp-content/uploads/cpchistory2.pdf>