

Sidewalk Counseling Training Guidelines and Tips

- Being a sidewalk counselor or a prayer partner are both roles grounded in love because God is Love, and we are God's instruments.
- Practical goals for sidewalk counseling: 1) Get the person to stop to talk to you 2) Get the person in need to a crisis pregnancy center (CPC).
- Broader goals for sidewalk counseling: 1) Convert hearts so that babies' lives can be saved, now or in the future 2) Be love and compassion personified because you are encountering the victims of abortion.
- Be prepared:
 - Materials: CPC information, pictures of fetal development, abortion procedure information, contraception information, lawsuit information, Rachel's Vineyard information, fetal models, graphic images (for use at the right time). We will provide an informative brochure. Other materials are available for purchase at the American Life League's website at www.all.org.
 - Prayer: Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in the words you will speak –this is not all on you. Put on the armor of Christ out there.
 - Know your materials and be prepared with a few "talking points" and your favorite pamphlets in your hand. Practice, because you will only have a few seconds in reality.
 - Know the hours of the abortion clinic. Know the hours, location and services of the CPC to which you will be referring women. Visit the CPC to get a better idea.
 - Know about fetal development.
 - Check the weather and dress appropriately.
 - Consider your appearance and present yourself professionally.
 - Know your rights on the sidewalk (you can be on the sidewalk and terrace/parkway without blocking entrance into the parking lot and without setting down items/signs on the ground).
 - Think about your personal limitations: what personal information are you willing to give out? Can someone get in the car with you to head over to the CPC?
 - The police may be called by the abortion mill. Follow the police's instructions and let an attorney rectify the situation later. This will prevent your arrest.
- Who are we dealing with here? Everyone coming and going from the clinic is in pain. Many may be afraid of you because of what the abortion workers have told them or because of the media. Women can be considering abortion for a variety of reasons: her parents are forcing her; her husband/boyfriends is forcing her; she has concerns about a medical issue; she seemingly doesn't care about the life of her child; she is too tormented to make a decision; she is sick during pregnancy; or, she feels incompetent to support a child. These concerns

can be met with assurances of help from you or a CPC, information about the effects of abortion and genuine care from you. Remind the parents, husband or boyfriend that this child is their own flesh and blood, worthy of their protection.

- Your position on the sidewalk: If you are the sidewalk counselor, you want to be where you have the best view of people coming and going while having the room to engage the people going in. Remain vigilant. If you are the prayer partner, you will stand back from the sidewalk counselor so that you do not intimidate the clients with a group of people standing around.
- Your presence on the sidewalk: You are peaceful, prayerful, helpful, joyful and appealing, attempting to win the person over to your side and recognizing that everyone involved in abortion is a victim. Exude confidence. Be serious and focus on the task at hand, avoiding socialization where possible. When you are not actively sidewalk counseling, you are in prayer or studying your materials, fortifying your efforts. Have your literature ready in your hand with your talking points prepared.
- What to say: “Hi, my name is...Are you going into the clinic?... Are you pregnant?... There are resources available for you... Help yourself and spare yourself the pain of abortion... You already have a child inside of you... This (the mill) is a dangerous place.” Be ready to share information on fetal development, adoption, the abortion procedure (surgical or chemical), effects of abortion, material help/CPC resources, and job opportunities for abortion workers (hopefully!). Continue to share the help that is available and speak about the child as a human baby. End on a positive note, saying, “We’re praying for you. You can come back out and talk to us.”
- What NOT to do: 1) don’t carry harsh signs; signs should be held away from the sidewalk counselor 2) don’t approach clients with a hellfire and brimstone tone 3) don’t yell or condemn 4) don’t focus on evangelization if you haven’t yet engaged the client 5) don’t interrupt another sidewalk counselor 6) don’t step away from a sidewalk counseling session to help another person 7) don’t expect visible rewards to feel successful on the sidewalk 8) don’t picket or protest while sidewalk counseling 9) don’t argue, especially after a client says he/she is not interested 10) don’t get arrested.
- Congratulate the woman who turns away from the abortion facility and connect her with the help you promised her.
- You are representative of the pro-life movement and Christians. Represent well.
- God can use YOU to convert hearts and save lives! Be faithful and obedient.

Sidewalk Counseling Methods Links

- Sidewalk.com –Various Methods

<http://www.sidewalkcounseling.com/>

- Karen Black Method (Atlanta Method)

<http://www.sidewalkcounseling.com/black.php>

- Pro-Life Action League Method (Chicago Method)

<http://prolifeaction.org/sidewalk/>

- Helpers of God's Precious Infants (Helpers Method)

<http://www.helpersbrooklynny.org/>

Important Resources and Contact Information

- Vigil for Life, www.vigilforlife.org

Laura Karlen, laura@vigilforlife.org, 608-445-2064

- Pro-Life Wisconsin, www.prolifewisconsin.org

Peggy Hamill, info@prolifewisconsin.org, 262-796-1111

- American Life League, www.all.org

540-659-4171

- Alliance Defense Fund –Legal Concerns, www.alliancedefensefund.org/

800-TELL-ADF (835-5233)

- Thomas More Society –Legal Concerns, www.thomasmoresociety.org/

info@thomasmoresociety.org, 312-782-1680

- American Center for Law and Justice –Legal Concerns, www.aclj.org/

757-226-2489

- Non-Emergency Police Contact, City of Madison

(608) 266-4275

- CareNet of Dane County, www.carenetdane.org/

608-259-1606 (business line), 1-800-395-HELP (client services)

- Pregnancy Helpline, pregnancyhelpline.net/

608-222-0008 (24/7 helpline)

- Our Lady of Hope Clinic, ourladyofhopeclinic.org/

(608) 819-8544

Sidewalk Counselor Agreement

As sidewalk counselor with Vigil for Life, I, _____ (print name), agree to follow the guidelines and suggestions for sidewalk counselors, which include foremost a complete commitment to peace and compassion. I will never intimidate with my presence or words, instead offering kindness and help to all who enter the abortion facility, men and women clients as well as abortion workers. I will never argue with clients or workers, especially if my help is declined. I will not bring signs with me to sidewalk counsel but will focus on prayer and engaging clients in conversation to convert hearts. I will use the sidewalk counseling materials suggested or approved by Vigil for Life while I am sidewalk counseling on behalf of Vigil for Life.

Signature

Date

E-mail Address

Phone Number

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For Before and After a Period of Counseling Outside an Abortion Center

Before Praying or Counseling outside an abortion center:

Prayer to the Trinity > Psalms

If Catholic:

- Sacrament of Penance
- Attend Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and visit the Tabernacle
- Invoke the saints, especially: St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and St. Michael

After Praying or Counseling outside an abortion center there is a need to pause, grieve and heal. One needs to pray (if Catholic try to visit the Tabernacle):

1. Entrustment to Divine Providence - Letting Go – Giving them to the Lord

- Entrust all souls to the Lord, His Most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary
- *“Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”* Luke 23:34
- *“A sower goes out to sow his seed...Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear.: Luke 4:4-15*
- *“Where two or more gather in His Name...”* Matt 18:20
- *“If anyone wished to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”*
Luke 9:23

2. Mourn the loss of the child’s life and the jeopardy of the parents’ and abortion provider’s souls

- *“Blessed are they who mourn”* Matt 5:4
- *“Do not fear the one who can destroy the body, but not the soul; rather, fear the one who can destroy both body and soul.”* Matt 10:28
- *“Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.”*” Isaiah 49:15

3. Acknowledge Your Loss – investment of time, prayer, study, risk of safety or arrest, jeopardy

to reputation, opportunity cost incurred, commute and travel, your prayer intent, presence in

diabolical situations.

4. Seek Healing – though some hurts I remember and others I do not, there is never a small hurt

- sadness

- *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened,¹⁶ and I will give you rest."* Matt 11:28

- hurts – verbal, looks or physical contacts, taunts

- rejection, alienation and isolation

- betrayal

- helplessness

- *"But I have stilled and quieted myself, just as a small child is quiet with its mother."*

Psalm 131:2

- sense of failure

- hopelessness

- "I have told you this so that you might have peace in Me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world." John 16:33

- self-recriminations – saying or doing the wrong thing

- loss – baby, mother, father, etc

- anger

- *"The wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God."* James 1:20

- *"Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun set on your anger, and do not leave room for the devil."* Eph 4:26

- *"We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The insults of those who insult you fall upon Me." Romans 15:1-3*

- *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."* Matt 5:7

- *"And to strengthen Him an angel from heaven appeared to Him."* Luke 22:43

- *"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."* Matt 6:12

5. Remaining Non-Judgmental

- *Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."* Luke 24:34

- *"Whosoever is without sin, cast the first stone."* John 8:7

6. Overcoming despair with hope

- *"So shall My word be that goes forth from my mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it."* Isaiah 55:11

- Pray all of the Beatitudes Matt 5

- *"Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up."* Gal 6:9

- *"That all things work together for good to those who love God."* Romans 8:28

[- **Remember**, it is not what is suffered, rather it is who suffers – Jesus Christ

- And every child, mother, father, abortion provider and collaborator is destined to be "Another Christ" in this world] Houslander, Caryll, "Wood of the Cradle, Wood of the Cross"

Questions? Need Help?

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