

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 30, 2018 9:46 AM

**To:** Hoppes, Kelsie

**Subject:** RE: Pregnancy Center of Addison County

**Notice:** This email is from an external sender. Please use caution before clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Kelsie:

I appreciate the effort you put into your response, but I think we may need to recognize that we come from different viewpoints and that we are probably not going to settle on finding agreement in all areas. I have reports and facts that I could come back with, and we could go on and on with this back and forth. I am not interested in this type of correspondence. You certainly have been helpful in keeping me on my toes as far as keeping our information up to date, as well as gaining a perspective of how one might view our website and information.

Unfortunately, I think you are missing the forest for the trees. In reality, we rarely use our brochures nor sit down with clients to throw facts and statistics at them. We offer practical help with parenting classes, healthy relationships and many material resources. We are seeing more and more clients for these classes and are even offering parenting classes to a mother of an 8-year old. We turn no one away, we charge no fees and meet them where they are at.

I am pleased to be part of an organization that has, and will continue to, come along side women (and men) to equip them with the compassionate support and resources during their pregnancy and after so

that they are equipped to choose life for their children and also receive the assistance they need to be the parent they desire to be. Our vision is to have a community where every life, both the unborn and the born, are valued, respected and supported. We do this by bringing hope, healing and encouragement to women and families of Addison County. We have plenty of testimony from clients that we are in fact doing just that.

Kelsie, I wish you well and hope that you will make every effort to get to know organizations well by spending time with them before you draw conclusions. We come from different perspectives, but I hope that we can both respect each other and the ways that we do in fact support those who are struggling and need a compassionate and listening ear as well as practical help.

Blessings, [REDACTED]

---

**From:** Hoppes, Kelsie [<mailto:khoppes@middlebury.edu>]

**Sent:** Sunday, January 28, 2018 9:47 PM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Re: Pregnancy Center of Addison County

Hi again [REDACTED]

I would like to apologize for the tardiness in my response- J-term has proven to be an extremely busy time for me and my group, so I am only now getting the opportunity to respond. After meeting with the group, I would like to take the time to respond to the points brought up in your last email.



First, I will address the claims that the Pregnancy Resource Center of Addison County is not a “crisis pregnancy center” (CPC) by your own definition. In fact, you do not need to call yourself a CPC in order to be classified as one. CPCs are characterized as “anti-abortion organizations that provide pregnancy-related counseling and support to women with unintended pregnancies” and can “also [be] referred to as pregnancy resource centers”. By this definition, pulled from Alice X. Chen’s piece published in the *Cardozo Journal of Law and Gender* in 2013 (see attached file), your center is thus a CPC. The pamphlets I picked up for your center boast of providing accurate information on women’s options and resources, but further investigation of your literature makes it clear that your facility does not condone abortion as an option for women in any way, despite the claims of providing accurate information on all possible options for women. Further, your Fall 2017 newsletter shows the acceptance of a check from Heartbeat International, which is widely recognized as an official CPC network group, further proving the Pregnancy Resource Center of Addison County’s classification as a CPC.

Toria’s Campus article was speaking about the many typical characteristics of CPCs in general. Not every CPC will perfectly exhibit every single characteristic that she listed, but your facility exhibits more than enough to qualify as such.

Regarding the claims that you are clear to clients that you are not a medical facility, I turn to your website. Your email claims that you never state that you offer medical counsel, yet the home page of the center’s website boasts of providing “medically-sourced information” (see below).

## **Do you think you might be pregnant?**

---

**We can help. We invite you to contact us for your confidential appointment. We are an information, education and support center focused on helping people navigate decisions around pregnancy and relationships. All of our services are**



*confidential and free of charge.* We are dedicated to offering each client a safe, non-judgmental and caring experience, with **medically-sourced information**, referrals to community resources, material aid and more.

This wording is both misleading and inaccurate to your clients. Claiming to have “medically-sourced” information implies to women that, at least to a certain extent, your facility has some degree of medical capabilities. It is also problematic in that much of the “medical” information presented in the pamphlets was proven to be inaccurate and outdated (see our factual response to one of the so-called “medically-sourced” information pamphlets [here](#)). As a result, the center seems to offer no actual evidence-based abortion information, despite direct claims of doing so on the “Pregnant?” tab of the website (see below).

*We care about how you feel and want you to know you are not alone. Our compassionate staff are here for you. We can help you understand your choices and your pregnancy, discuss your health and explain your abortion options. You deserve to know the facts and **we offer evidence-based abortion information** as well as opportunities for you to get answers to your questions.*

Overall, I found many of the center’s claims to be ambiguous in nature, with unclear intentions and hidden biases. You claim to provide resources and referrals for all options for pregnant women, but do not give referrals to Planned Parenthood or abortion clinic locations, removing that option for women in need. You say that you offer practical steps to avoid pregnancy, but what do you offer that most women would find truly practical? According to the [Guttmacher Institute](#), the proportion of young people who engage in sexual intercourse increases rapidly with age, with over 70% of men and women



having engaged in sexual intercourse by the age of 20 based on 2017 statistics. This percentage of individuals participating in sex represents a wide portion of the population, and pushing abstinence-only methods (as many of the center's pamphlets do) provides an impractical approach to addressing unwanted pregnancies. Failing to provide practical options and accurate information for young women engaging in sex hinder their reproductive rights and freedom.

After a close reading of your website, I could not find anywhere where it says you only provide abortion information when a client asks for it specifically, which is what you claim to say in your email. The website's overall vagueness towards the information it provides on abortion is in and of itself problematic- and the information I found you to provide through pamphlets was factually inaccurate. I again implore you to read [our breakdown of your pamphlet "You Have a Right to Know..."](#). Further, we have never claimed that the center is wrong to not offer abortions as you are insinuating that we do. My concern with the Pregnancy Resource Center of Addison County lies in its claim to provide impartial information on abortion, when in reality much accurate information is withheld from the women coming into the center.

I agree with your sentiment that some women and men may face a variety of depression-like symptoms following an abortion. It can be true that you have seen people who experience grief, but that does not mean that it is necessarily widespread as your center insinuates. Additionally, it is important to recognize the extensive research which has proven that "women experiencing mental health problems after abortion in most cases have other pre-existing and co-occurring risk factors for mental health problems," as stated by Bryant et al. in a public health journal published in 2014 (see attached file). Based on this, it is extremely important that these risk factors are being appropriately and professionally addressed. In this, I question how the center is qualified and equipped to provide this support. Do you have licensed mental health professionals there to provide official medical support? If not, the center is taking advantage of vulnerable individuals by claiming to provide support.

Regarding the Resource Pregnancy Center of Addison County's title, I must disagree with your claims of the casual use of "Addison County" in the name. As stated previously, CPCs are designed to be ambiguous, and the name does not make the center's politics clear. Connecting the center to the county in title is designed to portray legitimacy and potential



governmental ties, rather than recognizing your religious basis in operations. If your name is not designed to portray a specific misleading image, then why did you change it from “Caring Hearts Pregnancy Center”, as it was previously?

If you are truly “committed to present information on all options” then you must provide accurate and equal information about all of a women’s options- not just ones that she has to ask for, as you stated you do with abortion. Right now, I know for a fact that the center is failing to provide accurate information based on the fallacies found in the pamphlets I picked up. The choice that is “up to the woman” is based on lies designed to guide her away from abortion as a feasible option, and the center fails to be upfront about this very specific intention.

I appreciate your acknowledgement of the outdated information in “You Have a Right to Know”, but want to draw attention to the fact that there is far more than one outdated statement. Once again, please see our breakdown of the pamphlet’s many inaccuracies [here](#). The center must recognize that it is responsible for the information that it puts out for women, including its brochures, rather than attempting to diffuse its connection to them. This is also relevant regarding the aforementioned “If Sex Feels So Good, Why Do I Feel So Bad?” brochure. You claim that you are not looking to ridicule or coerce young women, yet the language used in the publication is extremely ridiculing and coercive in nature. Targeting young girls to feel guilty about their personal sexual activity, while simultaneously dismissing boys’ sexual behaviors, is extremely problematic and only works to reinforce the societal structure that makes women subservient to men.

I also want to restate that no major health organizations back the connection between abortion and breast cancer. You can read more about this in [American Cancer Society’s publication on this topic](#). The research you are referring to is outdated and unsubstantiated.

Finally, your claim that we are a “smear campaign” against CPCs is false- we are simply providing a critical analysis of the information you provide at your center. We have never once said that we see you as a threat to Planned Parenthood. However, you give out inaccurate information disguised as being true, threatening women’s reproductive autonomy and justice. This is different than being a threat to different reproductive services such as Planned Parenthood, as you seem to

think we see you as. We are glad to hear that you are happy about your resources, but ask that you not conflate Planned Parenthood and reproductive justice as a whole.

Thank you for further engaging in this discussion. I hope that moving forward the center can take the analysis we are presenting and use it to promote the women of Addison County's reproductive justice, rather than hinder it.

---

Sincerely,

Kelsie Hoppes

503-298-8980

[khoppes@middlebury.edu](mailto:khoppes@middlebury.edu)

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 9, 2018 11:59 AM  
**To:** Hoppes, Kelsie  
**Subject:** Pregnancy Center of Addison County

**Notice:** This email is from an external sender. Please use caution before clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Kelsie:

Thank you for getting back to me during your break. I trust you are back in Middlebury and have begun



your J-term. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and anyone from your class that would like to learn more about the work of the Pregnancy Center. I will address briefly the inaccuracies in this email as you requested. You are welcome to share those with the group. I again appreciate your willingness to hear back from me in your effort to be accurate and not misleading. I hope that you will find that I strive for the same commitment.

I would like to first address the Middlebury Campus article that was published on November 29, 2017 by Toria Isquith. Although we do not call ourselves a “crisis pregnancy center”, we do offer resources and support for those facing any pregnancy, planned or not planned. I don’t think you will find anything ambiguous in our name or logo. We also never state that we offer medical counsel. We are very clear about that as we are not a medical facility.

Toria went on to address our website and the fact that we provide information on abortion. We only claim to provide information on abortion when a client is asking for that, so not offering the medical procedure of abortion is not misleading in anyway-we never state that we offer abortions.

Our post abortion and pregnancy loss support that we offer never claims that there is a “mental disorder”. I have met many women, and even men, who experienced different levels of grief, guilt and regret after having an abortion or being a party to an abortion. Those who have been able to heal from that pain through a confidential and caring support person or group are very thankful there was a place to get that support. Just because it is not listed as a mental health disorder does not mean that those feelings are not real or should be ignored.

Regarding the op-ed, I have no reason to believe that an organization that exists in a county can not use the name of that county in their organization’s name. What affiliation would we need? We in no way are “designed to prevent women from obtaining abortions”. I would encourage you to come again some time and walk through a “options counseling” session with our client services director. We are committed to present information on all options and then the choice is up to the woman. I will concede that the brochure on “You Have a Right to know” has one statement that is outdated, the one that states the 1994 National Cancer Institute study that showed the link between abortion and breast



cancer. That organization has withdrawn that statement and now claims that there is no link. Many facts can be disputed with research, and there is still current research that shows the risk of breast cancer after an abortion. We do not focus on that here at the center, only list it as a possible risk along with various other risks, which is not inaccurate based on research. We also share the risks of the other options in a pregnancy...parenting and adoption. Again, our goal is to work with anyone who would like options counseling and offer them information on all their options and then support them in whatever decision they make. We will not hide the fact that we want to offer the material assistance and parenting classes, as well as information about adoption so that they feel they have options besides abortion. We are a pregnancy resource center. Regarding the brochure "If Sex Feels So Good, Why Do I Feel So Bad?" , we certainly see young girls/women who struggle with these feelings- we are not looking to ridicule, and recognizing how they are feeling is only compassionate, and is certainly not coercive.

Your belief that we are a threat to Planned Parenthood is completely fabricated and based on little to no accurate information. We offer different services than Planned Parenthood, and I certainly would never take aim at their services based on the negative smear campaigns that there seem to be against pregnancy centers. I am very excited about the many resources we have and the women that we have already helped. Please give ample time and respect to find out what we really do before continuing the negative publicity you are giving us.

I truly do look forward to further discussion on this matter as we both seek to understand how best to empower women, and men as well, with information and support to make the most well-informed and responsible decision that is best for them.

Sincerely,

  
Executive Director



Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Executive Director  
Pregnancy Resource Center of Addison County  
PO Box 56  
Middlebury, Vermont 05753  
802.388.7272  
[www.addisonpregnancycenter.org](http://www.addisonpregnancycenter.org)