

Silver Lining

With Every Cloud Comes A Silver Lining

It was a cloudy winter day when Sarah found herself in front of Pathways. Like the clouds that filled the sky, clouds of uncertainty hung over Sarah as she hesitantly opened Pathways' door.

Sarah, a young woman with her future before her had not planned on a pregnancy. Not knowing what to do, and with limited resources or support, she turned to Pathways for a pregnancy test. Upon entering the lobby of the clinic, she was warmly greeted by Pathways' staff and invited into one of the comfortably furnished consult rooms to talk with a client advocate about her needs and concerns.

Sarah confided that she needed a pregnancy test and that she was undecided as to how she would proceed if the pregnancy test proved positive. When the nurse informed Sarah that her test was positive, confusion as to what to do weighed heavily on Sarah. The client advocate listened to Sarah's concerns and assured her the staff at Pathways was there for her no matter what decision she made. Not yet 6 weeks pregnant, Sarah was invited to come back for an ultrasound. With mixed emotions as to what to do with the news of her pregnancy, she agreed to come back.

When Sarah returned for her ultrasound and saw her baby on the screen, she was, in her words: "amazed to see the beginning of an entire human developing inside me." With the caring support the Pathways staff gave Sarah, she decided to move forward with her pregnancy. Sarah utilized many of the services and resources available at Pathways including options education, Earn While You Learn lessons, diapers, baby clothing, and encouragement from Pathways' staff.

Sarah's story, however, doesn't end with the help she received throughout her pregnancy. Sarah returned to Pathways after the birth of her baby to proudly show the staff her healthy son and continued to visit the clinic's boutique to gather items she needed for her new baby. Knowing she had access to the Pathway's boutique and continued support from the staff was a great consolation to Sarah as she made her way through her first year of motherhood.

Thanks to your support, the scared young women who so hesitantly opened Pathways' door on that cloudy February morning is now a proud and confident mother, who in her words, "views life in an entire new way."

With a grateful heart, Sarah sends out her thanks to Pathways' donors. "Thank you for making it possible for people like me who don't have a lot of help to get the help they need. It is organizations like this one that enable scared girls to get the assistance they need no matter what it may be, and feel safe in doing so."

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A Message From Our Director

Abortion by Mail - Yes, it is real. Yes, it is easy. Yes, it is dangerous.

There is no doubt, abortion is a hot topic. It has climbed to the top of the political debate causing an even further divide between party lines. While many states, including our own Washington and Oregon, are making access to abortion easier at almost any stage of pregnancy, others are restricting access, causing pro-choice groups and abortion providers to get creative. The new trend? Abortion by mail. Yes, it is real. Yes, it is easy. Yes, it is dangerous.

In just a quick search on Google, I found page after page of providers, instructions, and articles explaining how to get an abortion by mail for as little as a \$95 donation or even for free if you had a good reason why you can't afford it. At the top of nearly every page of the search was the link to Planned Parenthood's TelAbortion "Study". That's right, America's Number 1 abortion provider's affiliate right here in the Pacific Northwest will allow a woman (or girl) to have a short video consultation and receive the abortion pill combo via mail order.



Recipients are required to get a blood test and ultrasound with a local provider to rule out an ectopic pregnancy first, and a follow up is recommended 3-4 weeks afterwards (or at least another pregnancy test) to be sure that the abortion was successful. The remaining requirements? That the recipient live in Oregon or Washington, that they are 10 weeks pregnant or less, and that they have access to a smart phone, tablet, or computer with a webcam. No age restrictions were mentioned on the website, but after quick phone call to their info line, I was assured that this service is available to anyone who is at least 15 years old.

That, my friends, is all it takes for a woman to get everything needed for a chemical abortion delivered privately and discreetly right to her doorstep. The minimal due diligence of requiring the blood test and ultrasound beforehand doesn't rule out any misinformation that a scared girl may provide during her preliminary video consultation because she is terrified or may not be old enough. How about the girl who is determined to get an abortion but doesn't have enough life experience to understand the medical questions and possible complications the doctor discusses during the video consultation? Who is there to help her understand? If the abortion is not successful or complete, complications and infection could set in well before the 3-4 week wait for any follow up. What then?

While the information that abortions by mail are readily available may not be widely advertised yet, for those who are looking for abortion information, it is easy to find with a simple internet search. Magazine and newspaper articles from publications such as USA Today, The New Yorker, Seventeen Magazine, Teen Vogue, and The Atlantic clearly describe the process, how to attain the pills, and even how to keep it a secret. With some going so far as to explain that these medications are not detected by a blood test and instructing their readers that if a woman seeks help due to a complication, she doesn't have to tell her provider that she took the pills, just that she is having pregnancy complications, to protect her privacy.

Now, more than ever, we need to be vigilant in our mission to reach women and men facing unplanned pregnancies so that we can prevent the spread of misinformation and this new danger these vulnerable women are facing.



In His Service,
Kimberli Swenson
Executive Director
Pathways Pregnancy Clinic

Volunteer Highlight - Tasha Dunn

Tasha first learned about Pathways when her church held a Bottles for Life campaign. The Director shared Pathways' heart and mission with the congregation. Bottles were then taken home, and filled with change to support Pathways. Tasha and her family filled their bottle and she returned it to the clinic, but God had more in store for Tasha that day than just returning her bottle.

Although Tasha was familiar with pregnancy clinics from listening to Focus on the Family, this was her first time visiting a pregnancy clinic. She met with our Clinic Manager and learned more about the ministry of Pathways and discovered that additional help was needed in Pathways' Boutique. With an "empty nest" at home Tasha took a step of faith and offered her help in the Boutique, where she has been faithfully serving since July 2017.

Blessings have come to Tasha in the form of friendships with Pathways staff and volunteers as well as acquaintances that have come through association with the clinic and work done off site. Tasha's time at the clinic has allowed her to build relationships with staff and volunteers at partnering organizations including Salvation Army, Shaloam Birthing Center in the Philippines, Vida's Ark, and God's Closet. Tasha faithfully serves Pathways through her interactions with these organizations by collecting donated items from them, providing them with items when we have overstock, and in some cases simply nurturing our partnership with them.

Tasha and her husband, John, live in Camas and have two adult children David (23) and Victoria (21). When she is not volunteering, or attending one of her kid's choir performances, she enjoys reading, participating in her women's Bible study, helping with musicals at church, and gardening.



Our Mission:

Pathways Pregnancy Clinic is a pregnancy and family resource center that empowers individuals to make healthy, life-affirming decisions by offering education, resources, and support.