

Focus on the Family's Option Ultrasound™ Program - Fifth Anniversary -

It's been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Ultrasound is an irreplaceable medical tool that allows a woman to see a real-time image of the child inside her womb – and many women would say that picture is priceless.

Purpose of the Option Ultrasound™ Program

Option Ultrasound (OUP) was created to provide grants for ultrasound machines, professional sonography training, and to strengthen the infrastructure of life-affirming Pregnancy Medical Clinics (PMCs) in order to better serve women at-risk for abortion in communities across the nation.

The Benefits for Women

Educated and Informed decision: Ultrasound services help women understand their bodies, their pregnancy and their baby's development. During the ultrasound exam a woman has the opportunity to see what the abortionist likely will not disclose – her preborn baby. It's important that a woman receives accurate and truthful information on existing options from someone who will not benefit financially from her decision. An ultrasound can help a woman to make a more informed decision consistent with her own values and priorities.

Health issues: Ultrasound gives a woman an important bonding opportunity with her baby which encourages her to seek early prenatal care, protecting her own health and the health of her baby. Other health issues a woman must consider at this time include the possibility of miscarriage or an ectopic pregnancy, and if these health concerns are detected, patient referrals are made to physicians for follow-up diagnosis and care as needed.

Hope: Many women who initially come to a PMC considering abortion cry tears of joy upon seeing their baby for the very first time. **We've found that the combined provision of counseling and ultrasound results in at-risk women being twice as likely to express their intent to carry their baby to term as those who receive counseling alone.** These women are provided ongoing support by the local PMCs as they go through their pregnancies - and even beyond birth if needed. Each year across the country, thousands of women return to say "thank you" to these clinics for helping them make positive decisions to carry their babies. Virtually none return to say they regret the decision to give their baby life.

The Benefit for Preborn Children

Since the beginning of OUP in January 2004 through the end of October 2008, we estimate that the potential number of babies saved could be as high as **63,000**.



Number of Grants Approved

In the 5 years since OUP began in January 2004, over 400 ultrasound grants for ultrasound machines or professional sonography training for a PMC's nursing staff have been approved in 49 states.

Cost to the PMC

When a PMC has met the training and assessment requirements and been approved for an OUP grant, Focus on the Family provides 80% of the cost of the ultrasound machine or sonography training. Approximate costs for an ultrasound machine average \$21,000 - \$33,000; training costs \$13,000 - \$17,000. The PMC pays 20% of the cost.

Medical Conversion Grants

Focus on the Family does not endorse the use of ultrasound outside of a medical clinic setting and does not endorse the use of ultrasound for non-medical reasons. Therefore, before a Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC) can receive an OUP Grant they must be a medical clinic operating under the supervision of a licensed physician. Focus provides **medical conversion grants** that pay 100% of the cost for NIFLA's True Life Choice program for qualified PRCs, and these grants are in addition to the OUP grant.

100% Donor Supported

Donors from across the country have made this entire program possible and successful. As well, they have been excited to be able to invest in local PMCs. These donors are encouraged to know that their support helps support women at a crucial decision-making time in their lives.

The Future of OUP

Focus on the Family is committed to building a culture of life – both through local PMCs and on a larger scale across the nation. OUP is not just an investment into a machine or training, but into the organization as a whole - it's a committed process that helps a PMC provide medical services with excellence. International expansion of Option Ultrasound is now underway, with the first grant anticipated in Romania in 2009.

For More Information: Go online to **Heartlink.org** to find out how to be part of Option Ultrasound and to learn about other resources for PRCs and PMCs.