

Why Abortion Is Not Just a 'Women's Issue'

When Tina* discovered she was pregnant, her mom demanded she have an abortion.

But Tina's boyfriend, Kent*, wanted to give his unplanned child the love of a father—something he never knew. Kent called Care Net's Pregnancy Decision Line for advice—and with his wholehearted support, Tina decided to keep their baby. For Tina, Kent's unswerving commitment to her and their baby was the assurance she needed to make a life-affirming choice.

According to Care Net's national study on abortion, the father is the single most influential factor in a woman's decision to abort or keep their baby.

As we celebrate Father's Day on Sunday, June 16, I believe that men, and fathers like Kent, have a pivotal role to play in creating a culture of life in America—and especially a culture that embraces the “abundant life” that Jesus talks about in the Gospel of John (John 10:10). That's why Care Net is not just pro-life—we're ProAbundant Life! We envision a culture where women and men faced with pregnancy decisions are transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and empowered to choose not just life for their unborn children but also abundant life for their families.

You see, some in our nation holds certain “core values” that contribute to what has become known as an “abortion culture.” The question is, how do we nurture life-affirming values in our society and reduce the demand for abortion?

Proponents of abortion often rely on isolation, enmity (between the sexes, among families and between the classes) and detachment. These “values,” if you will, are given friendly names that have the appearance of virtues. Isolation

is framed as independence. Enmity is framed as social consciousness. Detachment is framed as freedom.

But these values are not virtues. Instead, they cause women and men facing tough pregnancy decisions to think that abortion is their only choice. But it's not.

The fall-out from America's abortion culture is destroying lives, not only the lives of the one million babies aborted every year, but also the lives of their mothers and their fathers.

Men experience emotional devastation, guilt, and aftershocks from the abortion of their child—a story vividly told in the groundbreaking book, *Fatherhood Aborted* (download a free digital copy [here](#)). But the path to forgiveness and healing is found in a vital relationship with Christ, the life giver, and genuine Christian community. As Christians, we are called to act and think differently than the culture. Rather than isolation, enmity and detachment, we are called to cultivate relationships, unity, authenticity and intimacy.

When women and men are unified in their relationship with God and each other, focus on one another's needs and share true intimacy, they are much less likely to choose abortion.

That's certainly true in my own personal experience. When I was an undergraduate at Princeton University, I got my girlfriend pregnant. Against the advice of many people—including the college nurse who administered the pregnancy test—we moved forward with our plan to get married and have our baby. Yvette (now my wife of 37 years) was told: "This will ruin your life." However, Yvette graduated from Princeton—after we had our second baby, I should add—and went on to become an accomplished medical doctor as well as a terrific wife and mother.

I know that my positive encouragement and engagement contributed to the life-affirming outcome in our unplanned

pregnancy. Now, every Father's Day, I feel tremendous gratitude towards God for giving me the grace to be the kind of man and father Yvette and my unborn child needed.

My experience has given me a heart for fathers. And I often consider what the Pro Abundant Life movement can do to better engage men in solving the abortion crisis. In my own life, I have found success by mentoring other men. When men with experience in marriage and fatherhood step into the lives of younger men, real transformation happens. As Christians, we have a name for this: discipleship. (our culture's enormous need for discipleship—particularly men discipling other men—is a primary reason Care Net created the Making Life Disciples program to equip church members—women and men—to offer compassion, hope, help and discipleship to those at risk for abortion).

So as we celebrate Father's Day, think about the men in your life who need mentors, especially if they are facing a difficult pregnancy decision or are new fathers, and the men in your life who could be mentors to others. Facilitate and nurture these relationships, and our nation will see more involved fathers, better marriages, and fewer abortions. Then, and only then, can a Pro Abundant Life culture flourish.

Roland C. Warren is president and CEO of Care Net (). He grew up in a single-parent home, was the first member of his family to attend college, and graduated from Princeton University. Roland worked 20 years in the corporate world (IBM, Pepsi and Goldman Sachs) and served 11 years as president of the National Fatherhood Initiative before joining Care Net as CEO in 2012. Care Net is a national nonprofit ministry with 1,100 affiliated life-affirming pregnancy centers across North America, promoting a Pro Abundant Life vision for women, men, children and families.