

YES
to
LIFE



HAVE YOU GOT
a Question
ABOUT
ABORTION?

AN EQUAL *Right* TO LIFE

As you've probably heard, some Irish politicians along with international abortion campaigners have been pushing to change Irish abortion laws. **They are looking to legalise abortion on demand by repealing the 8th Amendment.**

WHAT IS THE 8TH AMENDMENT?

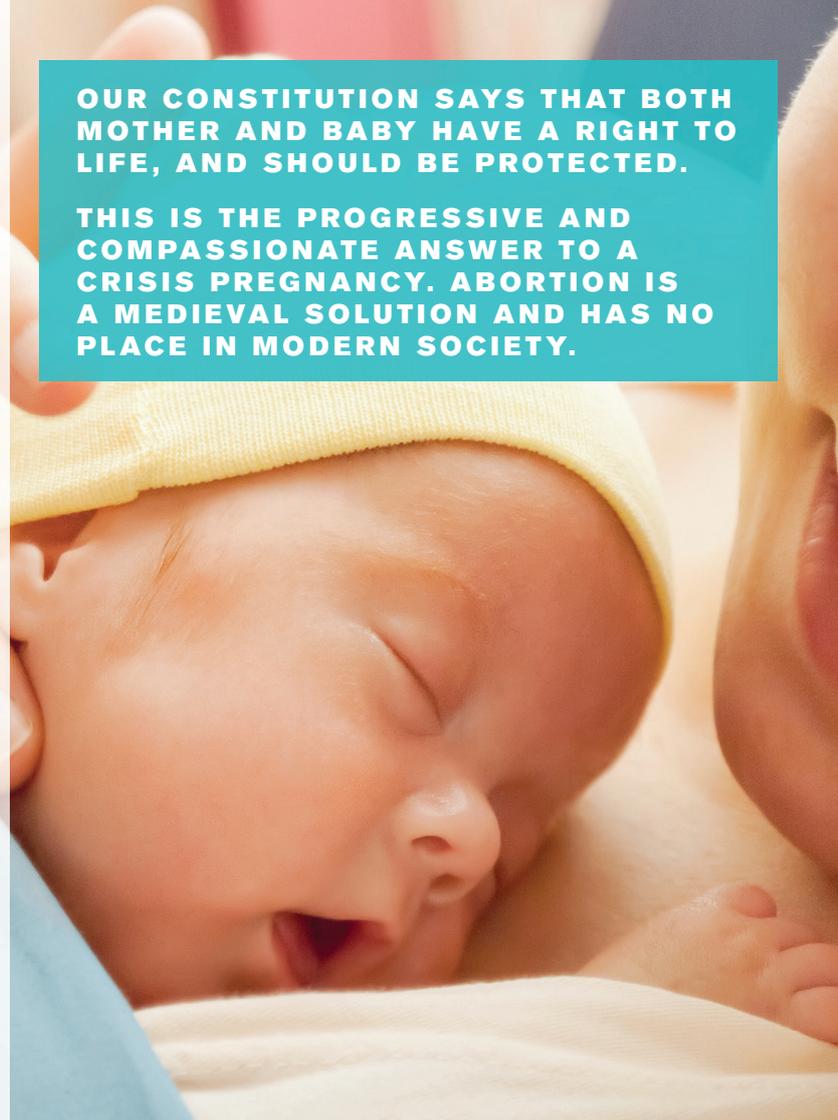
The 8th Amendment (Article 40.3.3) of the Irish Constitution was approved by a huge majority of the Irish people in 1983. It recognises that there are two human lives involved in a pregnancy, and protects and safeguards the life of BOTH mother and baby.

Without the 8th amendment, vulnerable preborn children in Ireland would have NO human rights. That's not what most Irish people want.

But like many people, **you** may have questions on this issue. We hope to help answer some of those questions on this important and sensitive topic.

OUR CONSTITUTION SAYS THAT BOTH MOTHER AND BABY HAVE A RIGHT TO LIFE, AND SHOULD BE PROTECTED.

THIS IS THE PROGRESSIVE AND COMPASSIONATE ANSWER TO A CRISIS PREGNANCY. ABORTION IS A MEDIEVAL SOLUTION AND HAS NO PLACE IN MODERN SOCIETY.



250,000 REASONS TO STAY *Pro-Life*

A **really positive** outcome of Ireland's pro-life laws is that our abortion rates are very low:

- In fact, since 2001, the number of Irish women travelling abroad for abortion has fallen by **45%**.
- In Britain, **20%** of all babies have their lives ended by abortion. In Ireland our abortion rate is **5%** - because we offer women real support, and a better option than abortion.

When we compare the massive difference in abortion rates between Britain and Ireland since 1983, we see something truly amazing:

IT'S ESTIMATED THAT 250,000 IRISH PEOPLE ARE ALIVE TODAY BECAUSE ABORTION WASN'T AVAILABLE IN IRELAND.

Estimate based on figures from CSO, British DoH, www.gov.co.uk. See more at www.thelifeinstitute.net

250,000 people - that's enough to fill Croke Park twice over! It's a child in every classroom, a student in every course, your workmates, your neighbours, your friends, your family.

That's **250,000 great reasons** to keep the 8th Amendment!

Turn over to see
what you looked like
BEFORE
you **WERE**
BORN

Your life started at conception – the moment when your sex, eye colour, potential height, and even personality traits were determined!

From that moment on, you just grew and developed.

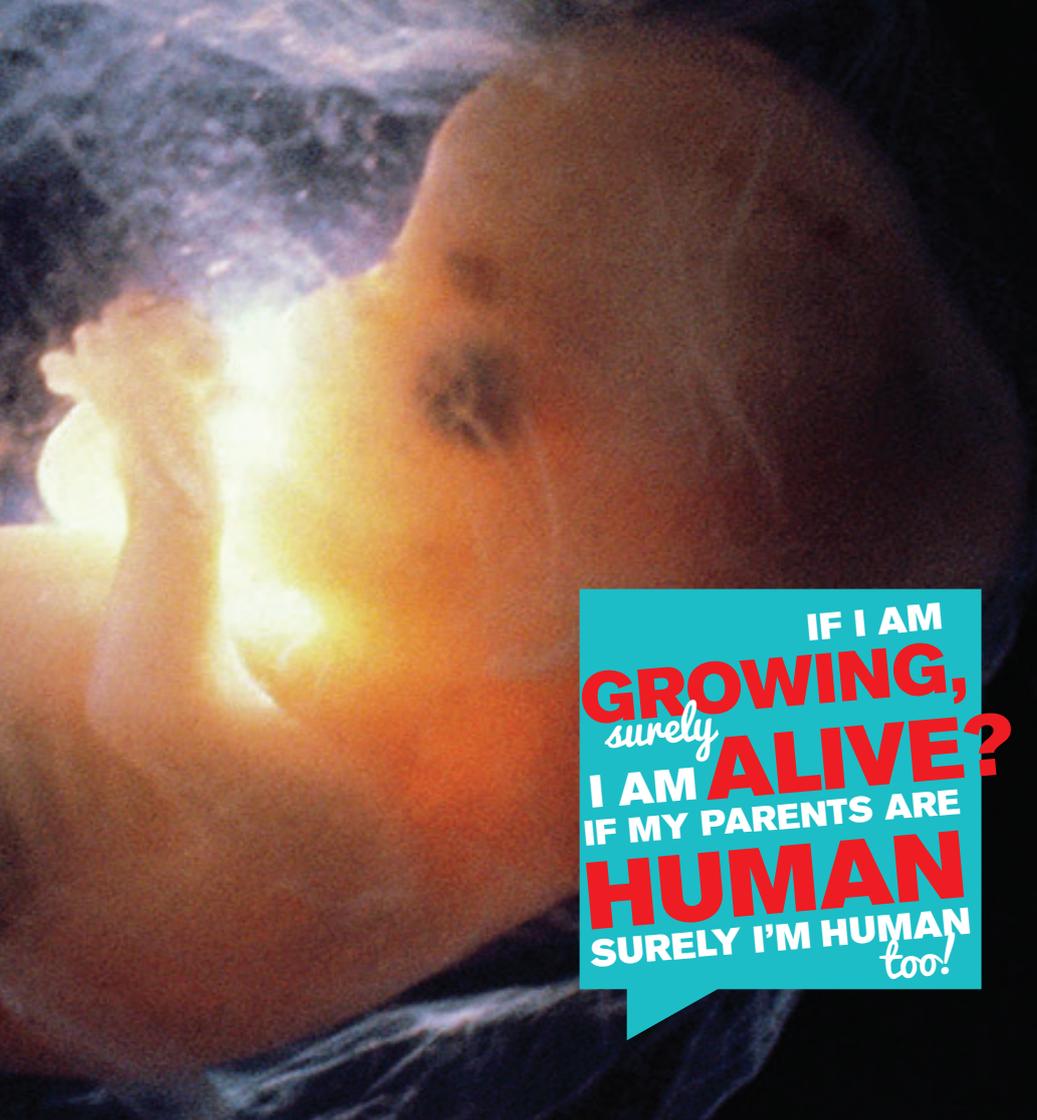
YOU WERE ONCE A FOETUS, JUST AS YOU WERE ONCE AN INFANT, A TODDLER, A TEENAGER. THESE ARE JUST TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE YOU AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF LIFE.

Isn't it wrong to discriminate against preborn babies just because they are younger or weaker than us?

THIS WAS YOU AT 10 WEEKS!

DID YOU KNOW THAT 'foetus' IS A LATIN TERM MEANING 'OFFSPRING', OR 'little one'?

Deep down, we all know the preborn child is a human being. That's why so many Irish people are deeply uncomfortable with abortion - and why we must try to find solutions that protect both mother and baby. **Ending a child's life is never the answer. Abortion is barbaric.**

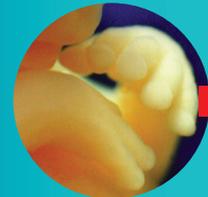


IF I AM
GROWING,
surely
I AM **ALIVE?**
IF MY PARENTS ARE
HUMAN
SURELY I'M HUMAN
too!

FOR SOME
MOTHERS,
PREGNANCY IS
A **CRISIS**; BUT
SHOULDN'T WE
HELP ELIMINATE
THE CRISIS,
AND NOT THE
CHILD?



Your feet @
6 WEEKS



Your hands @
7 WEEKS



Your feet @
11 WEEKS

Protecting WOMEN'S LIVES

WOMEN ARE SAFE WITHOUT ABORTION:

When abortion was banned in Ireland, we were one of the **SAFEST** places in the world to have a baby, according to the United Nations. Our Maternal Mortality Rate – the amount of women who die during or after pregnancy – was amongst the lowest in the world.

At a major public hearing in the Dáil in 2013, top Irish Obstetricians testified that:*

1.

Pregnant women received ALL life-saving treatment they needed in Irish hospitals - and our ban on abortion did NOT prevent that.

2.

They also said that NOT ONE WOMAN had died in Ireland because of our ban on abortion - and that usually they were able to save the life of both mother and baby.

3.

They pointed out that where the baby did lose his/her life that was not the intention of the procedure and that was not an abortion.

Our pro-life laws allowed our doctors to perform any life-saving medical treatments that a pregnant woman might need.

AUDREY MC ELLIGOTT was diagnosed with cancer while pregnant in 2012. She was offered all the medical treatment necessary, and underwent surgery and chemotherapy while pregnant. She gave birth to Joseph Francis, a healthy 8lb 7ozs baby boy, and both mother and baby are thriving now, with no sign of Audrey's cancer returning.



REAL LIFE:

Audrey's Story

“

Everyone at Our Lady of Lourdes was going to do everything they could to save me - and to also save my little baby. There was hope for the two of us, but I knew I would never be denied any treatment I needed to save my life. Women like me are living proof that abortion is not needed to treat cancer.”

— Audrey McElligott, Cancer Survivor

WHAT HAPPENED TO SAVITA?

Savita Halappanavar died in University Hospital Galway in 2012 after undergoing a miscarriage. The Irish Times told the world she died because she couldn't get an abortion. **But then the real facts emerged:**

1. The **official inquiries** into Savita's death found that she died of **sepsis** - blood poisoning – which went unnoticed by medical staff because of major oversights and mistakes in the hospital.

2. Her medical team believed Savita was having a normal miscarriage, and were allowing it continue naturally, as is considered a standard management practice internationally.

3. They testified that if they realised Savita's life was in danger from the infection in her womb, **they would have intervened**. The source of the infection would have been removed, which would have resulted in the loss of the baby as an indirect consequence. Doctors in Ireland were always allowed to do this, even with our ban on abortion.

4. But in Savita's case, because of **mistakes** made by an overworked and understaffed maternity hospital, the **warning signs** showing the severity of her condition were missed.

LOUISE DUNLEAVY also developed blood poisoning during pregnancy after doctors discovered she had a septic abscess on her spine. She was hours from death.

Thankfully, Louise responded to aggressive antibiotic therapy and now has a healthy baby. If necessary, doctors would have operated on her to remove the infection, even if this meant ending her pregnancy by delivering her baby early. Our abortion ban did not interfere with her treatment.

“

I was very sick with sepsis. The doctors acted very quickly and they treated me very appropriately. My pregnancy didn't impact on my treatment. I never felt I was treated differently because I was pregnant.”

- Louise, survivor of sepsis



REAL LIFE:

*Louise's
Story*

WHAT DO DOCTORS SAY?



As experienced practitioners and researchers in obstetrics and gynaecology, we affirm that direct abortion – the purposeful destruction of the unborn child – is not medically necessary to save the life of a woman.”

— Excerpt from the Dublin Declaration on Maternal Healthcare, signed by over 1,000 medical professionals

ABORTION KILLS WOMEN

In 2012, Aisha Cithira from Dublin died after she had an abortion at a Marie Stopes clinic in London. Aisha suffered internal tears and subsequently bled to death in the back of a taxi after being discharged from the abortion clinic. The medics who performed the abortion are currently awaiting trial.

Another Marie Stopes abortion doctor was struck off the medical register after he almost killed an Irish woman when he perforated her uterus in a botched abortion.

BABIES WITH A DISABILITY HAVE A RIGHT TO LIFE

THESE ARE OUR MOST VULNERABLE BABIES

- Some babies are diagnosed with a condition which means they may not live for long after birth. These are babies with a severe disability.
- We've long rejected the notion that people with a severe disability should suffer discrimination or be treated unfairly. We need to wrap our arms around these babies and their families and help them make precious memories, and let love shine through.
- Even in the most severe cases, most of these babies live beyond birth. That time with their families leads to great love and healing.
- Parents say that the time they have with baby, however short, is very precious, and that they need better support - like **perinatal hospice care**, not abortion, at this difficult time. This means ensuring specialist nurses, counsellors, chaplains and photographers are available to enable families to cherish the gift of time with their children.

EVERY LIFE COUNTS

Every Life Counts is a support network for families whose children have been given life-limiting diagnoses. They felt the need to speak up as their children were being used by politicians and abortion campaigners to call for abortion.

Most of these brave families only had hours or weeks with their babies, but they say abortion is not the answer. Abortion would have robbed them of precious time with their children and caused huge distress and despair.



**IT'S ESTIMATED
THAT 90% OF
PARENTS IN IRELAND
CONTINUE WITH
THEIR PREGNANCY
FOLLOWING A LIFE
LIMITING DIAGNOSIS**

Aileen's daughter LillyAnn was diagnosed with anencephaly in the womb (a condition which prevents the normal development of the skull and brain). Aileen was told that her daughter had no chance of life.

But the reality is there is NO condition where a doctor can say with certainty that a child will not live until birth.

“

They really drum it into you that your baby will not live after birth. So when you're told you're going to get nothing, to get six days is just a miracle.

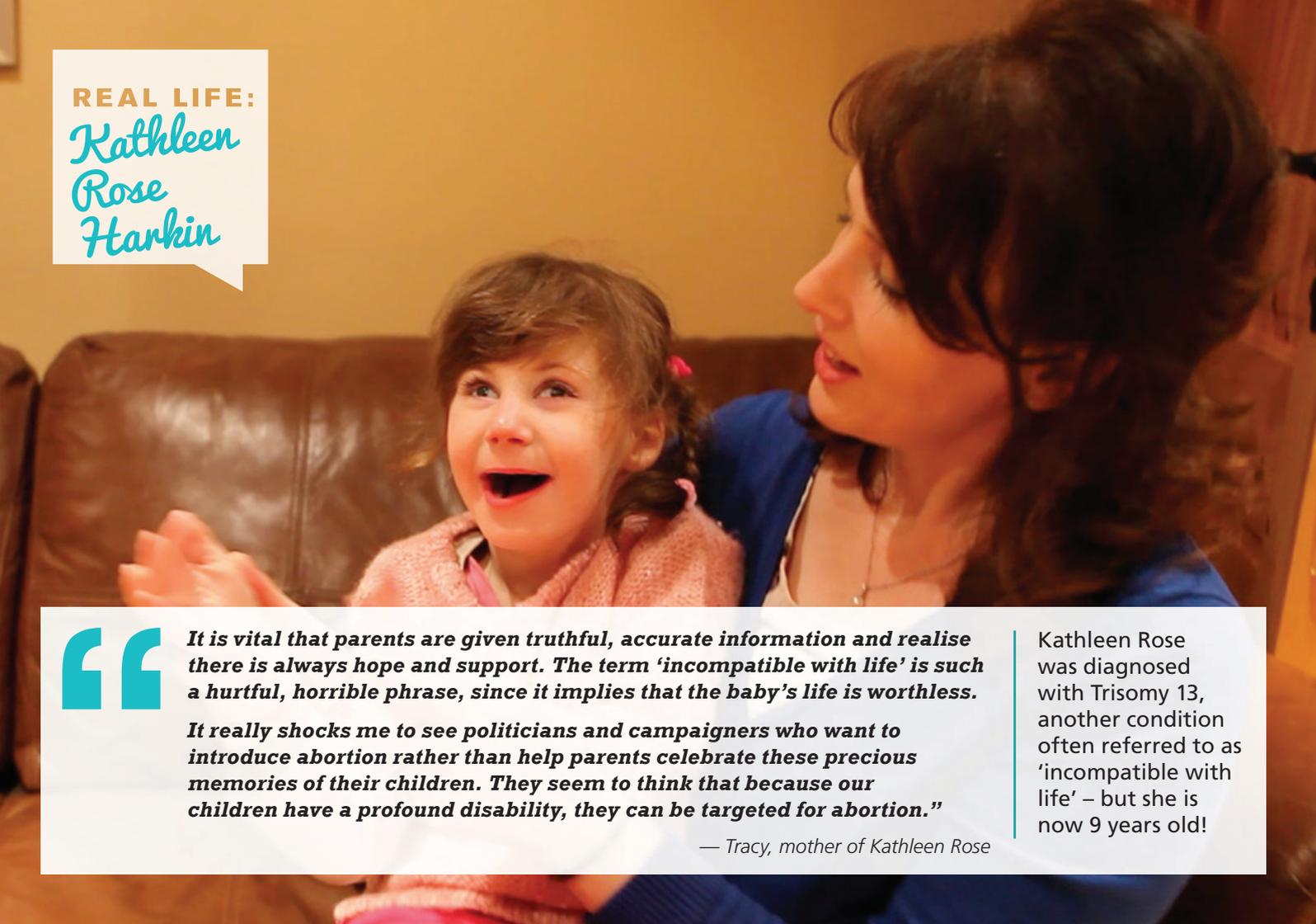
There were two wishes that I had for her; one that she would feel the air on her face, and that she would be held and loved by everyone. People said they were coming to hold an angel.”

— Aileen, mother of LillyAnn

REAL LIFE:

*Aileen
and Baby
LillyAnn*





REAL LIFE:

*Kathleen
Rose
Harkin*



It is vital that parents are given truthful, accurate information and realise there is always hope and support. The term ‘incompatible with life’ is such a hurtful, horrible phrase, since it implies that the baby’s life is worthless.

It really shocks me to see politicians and campaigners who want to introduce abortion rather than help parents celebrate these precious memories of their children. They seem to think that because our children have a profound disability, they can be targeted for abortion.”

— Tracy, mother of Kathleen Rose

Kathleen Rose was diagnosed with Trisomy 13, another condition often referred to as ‘incompatible with life’ – but she is now 9 years old!

A COMPASSIONATE ANSWER WHEN LIFE IS LIMITED

1.

Abortion is not a 'compassionate' answer in this situation. These are usually late term abortions, where the child is injected into the heart with a toxin that causes them to have a massive heart attack and die. Then the mother must give birth to a dead baby.

2.

There is no evidence to suggest that these babies suffer pain as they grow in their mother's womb. After birth, any discomfort can be minimised by good medical care.

3.

Recent studies show that abortion in these cases can cause huge trauma for mothers, with one 2015 study showing that mothers who aborted because of anencephaly were significantly more likely to suffer depression and despair.*

4.

Perinatal hospice care is a better answer than abortion. Parents say that the time they spent with their child was "happy and rewarding", and enriched their lives, regardless of how long or short that time was.

For more families' stories and information on perinatal hospice care and support; see www.everylifecounts.ie

*Cope, H., Garrett, M. E., Gregory, S., and Ashley-Koch, A. (2015) Pregnancy continuation and organizational religious activity following prenatal diagnosis of a lethal fetal defect are associated with improved psychological outcome. *Prenatal Diagnosis*.



Our babies were not incompatible with life; they lived, they were loved, and they were absolutely adored."

— Sarah, mother of Baby Isabella

HOW DO WE HELP WOMEN WHO HAVE BECOME PREGNANT THROUGH RAPE?

Rape is a shocking crime, and pregnancy from rape is an extremely difficult situation. We need to ask: is abortion the answer, or is it yet another traumatic violation?

3 THINGS TO CONSIDER

- 1. Do most pregnant rape victims seek abortion?**
No. According to the Rape Crisis Centre more than 8 out of 10 women made pregnant through rape didn't have an abortion.¹
- 2. Why is this? What do rape victims say?**
Most women made pregnant through rape felt that abortion would be another violation, according to one study.² They said that issues relating to the rape experience, not the pregnancy, were of primary concern in counselling and rehabilitation. Abortion could not reverse the rape. They also saw the baby as an innocent party – a child who was not guilty of the crimes of her father. Some gave the baby up for adoption.
- 3. Can abortion add to the distress of a rape victim?**
Yes. We know that women who undergo abortion are 6 times more likely to die by suicide.³ Abortion may add the risk of further trauma to a woman who is already distressed and traumatised. Instead, we must make her safe, offer support and counselling and help her survive the rape.

LIZ CARL became pregnant after she was drugged and raped. She initially booked an abortion in a panic, but support from her family and friends helped her to realise she could get through this trauma with support and love. She says:

"I no longer care who the biological father is, he is nothing. But look at my son. Just because he was not conceived in an act of love — or a wanted act at all — he is still a precious human being who is deserving of life and everything in it. In fact, I can say that ultimately one thing has saved me from severe, severe depression, and that is my baby. Someone who has been conceived in rape is not less of a person."

REAL LIFE:

liz Carl's Story

COVER UP

Sadly, abortion is often used to cover up rape - especially when the victim is a child or a minor. Jimmy Saville sent at least 2 of his young rape victims for abortions to cover up his crimes.

“

It (the abortion) has been harder to deal with than the rape.”

— Miss C, speaking to the Irish Independent in 2013

MISS ‘C’ was brought to England for an abortion by the Irish state, following a vicious rape when she was just 13. Her tragic story became public and was used by abortion campaigners to push for abortion.

In 2009, Miss C told the Pat Kenny show: “I woke up... and I asked for the baby, and they told me there was no baby. To this day I’m still suffering.” She told the Irish Independent that the abortion was “harder to deal with than the rape”.

(1) Rape Crisis Network Ireland, 2010 National Rape Crisis Statistics and Annual Report, pp. 53-54.

(2) Sandra Mahkorn, 'Pregnancy and Sexual Assault,' *The Psychological Aspects of Abortion*, eds. Mall & Watts

(3) Gissler, M, et al., 'Injury deaths, suicides and homicides associated with pregnancy, Finland 1987–2000', *European Journal of Public Health*, Volume 15, Issue 5, 2005, pp. 459-463.

ARE WOMEN HURT BY ABORTION?

“

I felt that there was a black hole inside of me, a wound that would never heal... I suffered from depression, especially around the anniversary of the abortion and the due date.”

— Bernadette Goulding, Founder of Rachel's Vineyard Ireland



Abortion does not help women. In fact, research has shown that many women regret their abortions and have been harmed by the procedure.

- Women who had abortions were **30% more likely** to experience mental disorder, according to a major study carried out by Dr David Fergusson and others in New Zealand, and published in the British Journal of Psychiatry in 2008.
- **The suicide rate for women who had abortions was 6 times higher than for women who had given birth according to a 13-year study published in the European Journal of Public Health in 2005 by Gissler et al.**
- Women who had abortions had a **61% increased risk** for social anxiety disorders and a **59% increased risk** for suicidal thoughts according to a 2010 Canadian study.* Research by the Crisis Pregnancy Agency in Ireland (2012) showed that 44% of women who had abortions experienced either a lot or some regrets.**

*Mota, NP et. al. "Associations Between Abortion, Mental Disorders and Suicidal Behavior in a Nationally Representative Sample." *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 55(4), 239-246.

** *Irish Contraception and Crisis Pregnancy Study 2010*



“

I had an abortion at 17 and it was the worst thing I ever did...I would never recommend it to anyone because it comes back to haunt you.”

— Sharon Osbourne, TV personality

HOW CAN WE HELP PREGNANT WOMEN WHO ARE SUICIDAL?

In 2013, the Irish government legislated for abortion if a pregnant woman was suicidal. They sought expert advice from leading psychiatrists and psychiatric institutions beforehand; but, bizarrely, they chose to ignore every single one.

All the medical experts who presented at the Government hearings agreed that abortion is NOT a treatment for suicidality. They said that the appropriate treatment in this instance is to make sure that women are safe, given appropriate compassionate care, support and medication. Vulnerable women do not need the added trauma of abortion.

“

Even psychiatrists who are pro-choice agree that abortion is not a treatment for those who are suicidal.”

— Professor Patricia Casey, Mater Hospital and UCD

ABORTION ON DEMAND?

If we remove all constitutional protection for the unborn baby then we are wide open to any kind of abortion legislation – such as that introduced in Britain, our nearest neighbour.

The British Abortion Act was meant to be 'restrictive' legislation, but look what it has led to:

- Up to **200,000** abortions every year¹
- **90%** of babies with Down Syndrome aborted²
- Abortion up to birth where the baby has a disability
- Babies that survive abortion simply being left to die (**66** in 2008 alone)³
- **37%** were repeat abortions in 2014¹.

Similar trends can be seen across Europe:

- In Spain the abortion rate is also at **20%**, in France it was **21%** in 2013
- In Sweden **41%** of all abortions are repeat abortions – in France 35% are repeat abortions.⁴

A BETTER ANSWER

As a nation, we should **love them both** - mother and baby - because there is **ALWAYS** a better answer than abortion. Abortion kills babies and hurts women.

(1) Statistics from British Department of Health

(2) Parliamentary Inquiry, 2013

(3) Confidential Inquiry into Maternal and Child Health 2008

(4) Statistics from Spanish, French & Swedish Depts of Health

REAL LIFE:

Kate & Cillian



“When I found out I was pregnant, I was only a child myself at 15. People told me I was too young and it would be wrong to bring my child into the world. I was totally torn in two. I couldn’t decide whether to have an abortion or to have the baby. But then I got real help and the first time I held my little boy I knew it was worth it and that I could make a real go at things.

Sometimes it’s hard being a single young mother but when Cillian looks up at me with his big blue eyes I feel like I’m melting. I honestly love him more than words can describe. I am his mother and I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

— Kate experienced a crisis pregnancy at 15

ABORTION: THE REALITY

If we are to be fully informed on this issue then we must be aware of the nature of the procedure itself, and the very real consequences it has on preborn babies. Below are some of the abortion procedures performed on women. Each procedure has the same sole intention; to end the preborn baby's life.

- **Suction [6 to 14 weeks]** A tube with a knife edged tip is inserted into the uterus. The baby is torn apart by suction from the tube and the head is crushed.
- **Dilation and Curettage [Up to 12 weeks]** The cervix is dilated and the child is cut to pieces with a knife.
- **Dilation and Evacuation [12 to 24 weeks]** The baby is crushed so he can fit through the cervix. A pliers-like instrument is used to crush the skull, legs and arms.
- **Intracardiac Injection [10 weeks up to full term]** A lethal dose of poison is injected into the child's heart.
- **Partial Birth [Late term abortion - up to birth]** The living baby is partially delivered with only the head remaining in the womb. The head is pierced and the brain removed to collapse the skull. The child, now dead, is then removed.
- **Medical [Up to 9 weeks]** Abortion pills cause the baby to detach and be expelled from the womb.



Turn over
to see how
YOU can
HELP
PROTECT
Mothers & Babies



YES to LIFE

*Protecting mothers
and babies*

Yes to Life is a new initiative which seeks to answer the questions people may have about abortion. Building on the success of the Rally for Life which has brought over 60,000 people together to celebrate life, Yes to Life is engaging thousands of people to have a real conversation with the nation about abortion. We're asking YOU to get on board with this ground-breaking, nationwide campaign.

Join us:
**SIGN
UP!**

Please phone **01 8730465** or email info@yestolifeireland.org
www.yestolifeireland.org 6 Gardiner place, Dublin 1