

# Pregnancy Options for Victims/Survivors of Rape, Incest or any Sexual Assault

*The mission of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape is to work to eliminate all forms of sexual violence and to advocate for the rights and needs of victims of sexual assault.* 🌀

## Position:

The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape believes that when a woman, adolescent or child becomes pregnant as the result of rape, incest or any sexual assault, the full range of medical and treatment options must be presented. Options counseling is guided by the wants and needs of the victim/survivor.

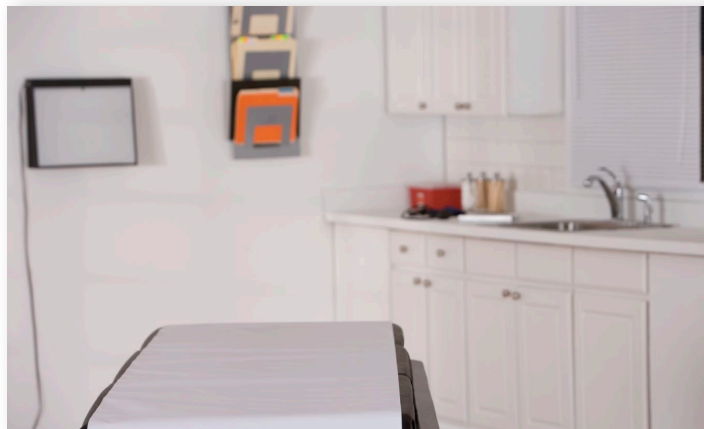
Personal views of a center's representative regarding pregnancy continuation or termination will not interfere with the victim's/survivor's right to receive the full range of available information and referral to community resources regarding pregnancy options. It is imperative that center representatives provide non-judgmental support of the victim's/survivor's decisions.

## Rationale:

A victim of rape, incest or any sexual assault has been the victim of a violent act. If she becomes pregnant as a result of that act, she is faced with the decision to continue or terminate that pregnancy.

All victims/survivors have the right to have complete information regarding medical and treatment options. Just as victims/survivors are entitled to information regarding the rape evidence kit, gynecological problems, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and pregnancy prevention options; victims/survivors are entitled to all available information regarding the continuation or termination of a pregnancy.

Rape crisis centers offer information, crisis intervention and supportive counseling. Centers provide empowerment counseling to emphasize that victims/survivors determine what is best for their lives. The role of center representatives is to support and inform in a sensitive, non-judgmental,



and empathetic manner to aid in returning control to the individual.

## Background:

*Roe v. Wade* was decided in 1973 prior to PCAR becoming an official organization; however, through the years amidst controversy within communities as well as misinformation regarding whether a woman could become pregnant as a result of rape, PCAR has held firm that victims/survivors have the right to have complete information regarding medical and treatment offers.

The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape may issue statements regarding public policy affecting sexual violence victims and rape crisis centers. All position statements adopted by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape will be viewed as the official position statement, the center, when publicly or privately voicing opposition to the statement, will do so in the capacity of an independent program and in no way as a member of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape.



PENNSYLVANIA COALITION AGAINST RAPE

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