

Family & ProLife News Briefs

August 2025

IVF, Surrogacy, Parental Rights

Is IVF the Way?

In a May 2024 poll, more than two-thirds of Americans opined that IVF (in vitro fertilization) is good and should be accessible to anyone who wants it. In this thoughtful, readable guide, *IVF is Not The Way* (Sophia Institute Press, 2025), Stacy Trasancos examines the issues associated with IVF and traces the history of artificial procreation. In these pages, seemingly pulled from today's headlines, the doctor reminds us, with both candor and sensitivity, of the fundamental truth that children are a gift and that every human has a right to be loved. She answers pivotal questions such as:

- How can IVF be opposed to human dignity if it allows couples to bear new life?
- How IVF children impacted by this decision?
- What do we as a society do about all the embryos in cryogenic storage?
- Why exactly does the Church oppose IVF?
- What rights do human embryos possess?
- How do we love embryonic children?



After 25 years in microscopic mechanical testing, I resigned. In surrogacy, the “intended parents” contract with a

woman, called the “surrogate mother” or “gestational carrier.” Multiple embryos conceived by IVF are implanted in the surrogate mother’s womb, but the surrogate mother generally has no biological relationship to the embryos who may be the biological offspring of one or both parents, or the intended parents may have acquired them from a donor.

Unwanted embryos are discarded, or they are frozen indefinitely for some future use. If multiple embryos survive implantation, all but one or two are selectively terminated. In its treatment of embryos, IVF defies a fundamental reality of the human person that, as Pope St. John Paul II said in his *Letter to Families*, “at the moment of conception itself, man is already destined to eternity in God.”

Every surrogacy contract has conditions when the surrogate mother is obligated to abort. Last fall, the *Daily Mail* published a story, “I caught our surrogate drinking alcohol & made her abort the baby.” I guess when you’re buying an heir, the specifications are tight. This little one didn’t make the cut, snuffed out at his 20th gestational week. Even with a healthy baby, health risks to the surrogate mother are significant. A large study in 2024 by the American College of Physicians found the risk of severe maternal morbidity was 7.8% for surrogate mothers, only 2.3% for natural mothers.

The root problem is that surrogacy treats children and women as products to be bought & sold. Speaking to international diplomats, Pope Francis called for the practice to be universally banned: “I deem deplorable the practice of so-called surrogate motherhood, which represents a grave violation of the dignity of the woman and the child, based on the exploitation of situations of the mother’s material needs.” [excerpt, <https://tennesseconservative.com/>]

Revelations by Charity Watchlist

Our list has revealed that dozens of the trusted, most popular charities use your money to support human embryonic stem cell research, contraception, abortion & other anti-life causes.

● **Girl Scouts** of America collaborates with pro-abortion groups, supports contraception, and promotes the LGBTQ+ lifestyle, even marching in Pride parades.

● **The American Cancer Society** supports IVF, abortion, sperm banks, and contraception.

● **UNICEF** backs abortion and a pro-LGBTQ+ lifestyle.

● **March of Dimes** promotes contraception and has a “neutral” view on abortion.

Can you imagine taking a “neutral” view on the murder of innocent human beings? Neither can we. [Judie Brown, Pres., American Life League email, 7/10/25]

For Moms To Be: Fetal Concerns

Don't miss the webinar on Thursday, August 7 at 8pm ET, titled "Navigating Fetal Concerns: Supporting Families Through Prenatal Diagnoses." Prenatal diagnoses are usually traumatizing for parents and subject them to great adversity, often coming from the very healthcare teams that should be helping them to offer their preborn child the best healthcare possible. Neonatologist Dr. Robin Pierucci shows how to support families through these life-changing situations. The webinar will be streaming LIVE on our YouTube channel, American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists. [www.aaplog.org email 7/24/25]

The US Supreme Court upheld a Texas law requiring pornographic websites to verify that its users are not minors, holding that the law does not violate the Free Speech Clause of the 1st Amendment. Age verification requirements like the Texas law are featured as a recommendation in the new edition of the US Catholic Conference of Bishops' pastoral response to pornography, *Create in Me a Pure Heart*. [USCCB email, 7/2/25].

Treat My Daughter as a Boy?

ADF attorneys filed an amicus brief on behalf of Wisconsin mother Tammy Fournier, whose child's former school district insisted on treating the girl as a boy despite the mother's express instructions not to do so. Parents have a fundamental right to direct the moral & religious upbringing of their children, even in the public-school setting. Also, in a win for religious liberty in *Mahmoud v. Taylor* on June 27, the US Supreme Court decided in favor of a diverse group of Maryland parents who challenged a public school district's refusal to opt their children out of activities like “LGBT” storytime that challenge children's religious beliefs about sexuality and gender. [Alliance Defending Freedom, email, 7/4/25] The court held that the public school district's refusal to allow the opt-out likely burdened the parents' free exercise of religion. The USCCB also submitted an amicus brief. The decision was welcomed by Bishop Kevin Rhoades, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Religious Liberty. [USCCB email, 7/2/25]

This monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert and as a handout. Since 2013 it has had over 30,000 readers and is now posted on three diocesan websites. To receive each month's free issue in your inbox, email Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu

Court: Christians Allowed to Adopt

Jessica Bates won a preliminary injunction in her case against Oregon officials who were discriminating against her for her Christian faith. A mom of five, she lost her husband in a tragic car crash several years ago, but God sustained her. And then He placed a call on her heart to adopt kids in need, to share the love of the Heavenly Father that she and her five children relied on with children who had also experienced difficulty and loss.

The state of Oregon turned her away because of her biblical opposition to gender ideology. But, today, the court ruled that Jessica is free to pursue adoption and live out her faith. After two years, she can finally apply and start the process of opening her home to love and adopt foster children in need. The ruling also puts the state on notice that it cannot violate the First Amendment rights of Christian families trying to foster or adopt.

But other clients like Jessica are in the throes of a similar legal battle. The Gantt and Wuoti families in Vermont are still fighting a discriminatory policy in Vermont that bars them from fostering kids, despite the desperate situation for children in Vermont's foster care system, because of their faith. [Jonathan Scruggs, Senior Counsel, Alliance Defending Freedom, email 7/24/25]

The Care.com 2025 Cost of Care Report: parents in the US are spending a huge 22% of their household income on child care. The average parent depletes a reported 1/3 of their savings on child care costs alone. These findings from worldpopulationreview.com underscore the ongoing challenges faced by working parents. About 42% of mothers are sole or primary earners for their household.

Disposing Baby Remains into Public Water

According to a recent report by Liberty Counsel Action, an estimated 30-40 tons of fetal remains and abortion pill byproducts are flushed into public water systems annually, mostly by abortion centers disposing of the remains of aborted babies, a practice that pro-life advocates describe as both ethically abhorrent and a public health concern. The report notes that wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to process such remains, raising questions about contamination and oversight. Also, "nearly 700,000 times a year in the U.S., women take abortion pills, flushing the resulting remains straight down toilets and into our public water systems," said Abigail Forman in a broadcast reported by *The Vigilant Fox*.

The Respectful Treatment of Unborn Remains Act, introduced on June 25 in Congress, aims to address this issue by prohibiting abortionists from discarding aborted babies in garbage disposals or toilets that feed into federal, state, or local water infrastructure. Violators could face fines & up to 5 years in prison. Pro-life advocates argue that the lack of federal reg's has allowed such practices to persist. While some states require remains of aborted babies to be buried or cremated, others have no such rules, enabling abortion companies to dispose of the baby's remains through public water systems. The Act seeks to restore dignity to aborted babies and address environmental concerns, marking a significant step in the broader pro-life movement to protect the sanctity of life. [Aborted Babies are Being Flushed Into America's Drinking Water, S. Ertelt, www.LifeNews.com, 7/13/25]

True Dignity of Women A half-hour TV program, to be aired August 13-14 at 5:30 pm, examines the distorted view promoted by mass media about the role of women in modern society. It features powerful testimonies that unveil women's original vocation as God intended. [EWTN TV]

Safety Rules Were Stripped Away

The Food and Drug Administration is supposed to protect consumer health. That often takes the form of an excess of paternalistic regulation of drugs, but it has done the opposite with the mifepristone-based abortion pill. Rules have been stripped away that were designed to ensure that the pill is used under close medical supervision. In April, the Ethics & Public Policy Center released a study of over 865,000 insurance records, a sample 28 times larger than all the FDA-cited clinical trials put together, revealing that nearly 11% of women suffered a serious adverse effect from the drug. The FDA is now reviewing the pill's risks. Meanwhile, the attorneys general of Cal., Mass., NJ & NY are petitioning the FDA to loosen remaining restrictions, further proof that, where abortion advocates are concerned, the health and safety of women take a distant second place. [nationalreview.com, Aug. 2025]

A License to Kill

This is not pretty to say, but legal abortion is a state-issued license for one family member to arrange for the killing of another. And the one empowered to arrange for or perform (via the abortion pill) the killing is not just *any* family member, but the mom, the person nature-made to be the prime-protector. And the one whose life is taken is not just her child, but a person at one of his or her most vulnerable possible moments in life, before he or she can even cry out or struggle. Are children *not* our future? Have we lost our moral appreciation for innocence? Is killing no longer naturally repugnant?

And to add insult to injury, proponents call abortion a "human right" as if the human on the killing end of the instruments is not there. They fight to hide pictures of the unborn child from the mother, as if they don't respect her intelligence or can't risk her emotions. And they ridicule/denounce efforts to help post-aborted women heal emotionally and spiritually.

These accumulated insults to human decency are not sufficiently countered when we speak of the unborn's right to life of the unborn. This fails to evoke all that is morally at stake in the case of every abortion: the mother-child relationship, the intensely vulnerable condition of the child, and the question whether motherhood is an unsurmountable burden in one of the richest nations on Planet Earth. [Helen M. Alvare, *Human Life Review*, Spring 2025]

Direct Videography of a Growing PreBorn Child

Amazing video has been obtained through a rarely used technique called embryoscopy, in which a video camera the size of a pen-point is inserted abdominally or cervically. The full video was developed by the Education Resource Fund (www.ERF.science). Easily shared via social media, short clips may be found at YouTube.com/FrFrankPavone. See, for instance, the heart beating at just 4 weeks (it begins beating at 21 days!). By eight weeks, 90% of the anatomical structures found in adults are present—that's 4,000 distinct anatomical structures! At ten weeks, the child has unique fingerprints, the same he or she will have throughout life. Additional video sources are used and commentary is provided for all video clips. [PriestsforLife.com email, 7/21/25]