

No-Cost and Confidential Women's Center

Call: (307) 215-9684

Text: (307) 215-9684

REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT

COERCED ABORTION

Coercion and Abortion

Should not my "right to choose" abortion also give me, the pregnant woman, the right to carry and deliver my baby if I so desire?

She called our scheduling line and explained that her husband was forcing her to have an abortion. She didn't want to abort but didn't know what else to do. Our caring helpline staff scheduled her for a True Care appointment to review her options, confirm her pregnancy and plug her into community resources. Sadly, the woman called back and cancelled her appointment saying her husband found out about it and was angry. He was taking her to Colorado for an abortion.

We don't know what happened next, if she had the abortion or not, but we do know that she felt pressured to have an abortion she did not want to have.

What is Coercion?

Coercion is "the intimidation of a victim to compel the individual to do some act against his or her will by the use of psychological pressure, physical force, or threats."

Many women are coerced by parents, boyfriends, and even husbands, teachers or managers into "choosing" abortions each year.

Coerced Abortions

Women coerced or pressured into having an abortion often have a [high risk](#) for emotional trauma and depression following the abortion.

Parents: Well meaning parents are often worried about their daughter's future and think abortion would be the best choice. Perhaps the parents try to make their daughter feel guilty for putting them through this, and tell her they thought she was better or smarter than this. Or maybe they tell her they will kick her out, punish her, or disown her if she doesn't abort. Even though abortion may be legal, a parent does not have the right to force or exert undue influence or pressure on their daughter to have an abortion. Check out [this case](#) in Texas where a teen won in court against her parents.

Boyfriends/Baby Daddy.

Not all men pressure women into aborting, but some do. Embarrassment, fear of responsibility, and eighteen years of future child support are some reasons men push women to have abortions. Even worse, hiding a crime such as molestation or sex trafficking can also be reasons some men pressure or coerce women into having abortions.

How can a man coerce a woman? Sometimes it is an emotional plea and an offer to pay for the abortion. Other times a man will tell his girlfriend the relationship is over if she doesn't end her pregnancy. He may threaten to withhold child support. Some men even threaten to kick her out of their joint home and inflict physical harm upon her. Women have been seriously injured and killed when they refused to have an abortion.

Coerced Abortions are Illegal

Did you know that legally no one (not even the parent of a teen) may force a woman to abort and those who do can be criminally prosecuted for doing so? Some states have fetal homicide laws where any third party who causes a baby in the womb to be killed may be prosecuted. ([See *Lawrence v. State*, 211 S.W. 3d 883, 884-85 \[Tex. App. –Dallas 2006\]](#)). The Federal Unborn Victims of Violence Act is another law that can be used to prosecute those who force or coerce a woman to have an abortion. This can be hard for parents to deal with when their daughter refuses an abortion. In our country, a teen has full legal reproductive health rights that allow her to see a doctor, get contraceptives and prenatal care, and obtain STD testing without her parent's permission. Along with those reproductive health rights comes her right to carry her pregnancy to term.

If you are being coerced

No one may legally force you to have an abortion. There is help available. Call our True Care scheduling line at 215-9684 and we can get you scheduled for an appointment. We have information and resources on all of your pregnancy options as well as your legal rights. You can also contact the Justice Foundation (<http://thejusticefoundation.org/cafa/>) for more information about coerced and forced abortion. If you feel like you are in physical danger call the police or contact the Self Help Center in Casper (307-235-2814). No one should live in fear for their life. Know that you are not alone.

We can only wonder if a different outcome may have occurred for our lady caller who felt pressured by her husband to have an abortion. If she had kept her True Care appointment she would have discovered resources such as safe houses, learned about options from our caring advocates and nurses and received non-judgmental support as she processed her situation. We are here to help – don't let anyone force you to do something you don't want to do, and that includes having an abortion.

CALL/TEXT:

(307) 215-9684

REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT

Name *

First

Last

Select a date and a time range nearest to your preference: *

*Please Note: Your appointment date and time is not confirmed until we contact you.

Select a second date and a time range nearest to your preference: *

*Please Note: Your appointment date and time is not confirmed until we contact you.

What services are you looking for? *