



# Education and the Sensitive Issues

By Nicole Macioci



How do you address the issue of abortion with teenagers when at least one of them has either *had* or *knows* someone who has had an abortion?

How do you address the issue of chastity with teenagers, when you know that some have already had sex, some are hooked on pornography, some have been taken advantage of, and many have never experienced authentic love in their families and relationships?

What do you tell a fifteen year old Confirmation student after her face falls upon learning the spiritual implications of premarital sex?

How do you convince a 12 year-old girl with no feelings of self-worth that she has more value than she could ever imagine?

How do you assure a father who wants to teach his children about chastity that the mistakes of his past do not disqualify him from doing so?

These are just some of the many scenarios that, as the Director of Education at Carolyn's Place, I had to be prepared to face every time I led a class, facilitated a workshop, or presented to a group. While it is absolutely vital to share the truth about these sensitive issues, they are just that: sensitive. Walking into a room of brand new faces on a regular basis, it is impossible to know anyone's life story. Especially for one-time talks, there just is not any time to build relationships with people before delving in to these topics. As a result, you have to be ready for anything.

So many teenagers are broken, and the idea of an authentic love is foreign to them. One of the biggest reasons is due to the fact that it is also foreign to many of their parents. In the United States in 1960, about 90% of children lived in a home with both of their parents.<sup>1</sup> As of 2011, that number had dropped to under 70%, which included unmarried parents who are cohabitating. If we are to include only the children living with both married parents, then the number drops to about 60%.<sup>2</sup> These statistics are no doubt a result of the rise in single mothers, the absence of fathers in the home, and an increase in the divorce rate. The *cause*, however, can largely be attributed to the constant bombardment of messages from the media, society in general, and sometimes even our own families or "friends:" that the most important things in life are personal happiness and convenience... even when at the expense of another person's wellbeing. In other words, a human person is simply a means to an end: another person's pleasure, or the success of a brand, etc. Unfortunately, too many people believe this message, at least to a certain degree. The problem though, is that our hearts are unable to follow suit. If you are wondering why, the answer is actually quite simple: it's because they *can't*. The human heart was created by God, who is Authentic Love itself. Therefore, if it is true that we are "called to share, by knowledge and love, in God's own life,"<sup>3</sup> then it makes sense that our hearts were designed specifically for this kind of love. Nothing else will satisfy us no matter how hard we try or how many lies we choose to believe.

Because Authentic Love teaches that all human life is valuable, unique, full of dignity, and worthy of respect, this is the message the Director of Education must share when handling the scenarios listed above (as well as others). So, for example, when a 15 year-old Confirmation student's face drops after she learns that sex before marriage is sinful, you can't just continue on with your presentation. You must immediately make sure that she understands that sex before marriage is a sin if, knowing that it is contrary to God's law, it is freely chosen...*not* if it is something forced upon a person... Then, you must emphasize the importance of repentance, the power of forgiveness, and secondary virginity.

What about another scenario? If a 12 year-old girl named "Shania" has no sense of her value or worth, you must look at her straight in the eyes and tell her, "Shania, *you* are the only *you* there will *ever* be. *Never* in the history of the world, past, present or future, will there *ever* be another *you*. Even if you were cloned, that clone would *not* be you.

## Mission Statement

**"Love one another"**  
**(John 13:34)**

Carolyn's Place Pregnancy Care Center is a ministry committed to empowering individuals, through education, comfort, and assistance, to make life choices related to their sexuality and child-bearing consistent with the sanctity of human life.

**Education and the Sensitive Issues continued..**

It would be an exact copy of you. You would still be here. That is how valuable you are: you are *irreplaceable*. Now, if you were to go outside and find a rare gem worth millions of dollars, what would you do with it? Would you treat it carelessly by showing it off to everyone you meet? Or, would you bury it, hide it, or place it in a safe, where only you have access to it, not because it's bad or dirty, but rather, because it is *so* good and valuable and rare?" Shania will respond that she would *not* show it off to the world; she would protect it. Then, you will look her right in the eye and say, "Shania, you are more valuable, more precious, and more wonderful than this gem. If you would take such drastic measures to protect a piece of Earth, then don't you deserve to be treated just as, if not more delicately and respectfully than that gem? Don't your incredible, unique, body, heart, soul, and mind deserve the same protection? By dressing and acting modestly, by saving yourself for marriage, and by demanding respect from those around you, you *can* do just that. Without even speaking you will be able to say, "Look at me! I am so valuable, and I am not meant to be treated carelessly! I won't even let you try."

Now, what about that dad? The one who made poor choices in his youth, and desperately wants to make sure his kids don't make the same ones: How can he avoid being a hypocrite? Is he even qualified to talk about sexuality? After he expresses his concern, the Director of Education will smile at that dad and say, "That is a great question, and I can see that it must be difficult for you to figure out how to approach your kids. I think it's great that you want them to make better choices. May I ask you if the choices you made had any negative consequences for you?" If he answers in the affirmative, then you will encourage him to share these negative consequences with his kids. If they learn that Dad is not perfect and is humble enough to admit his own faults, they may be more willing to listen to him when he talks to them about sex or abortion, or whatever the issue might be. Regardless of the consequences that he may or may not have experienced, you will encourage this man to remember that his authority as a father does not derive from any choices he has made. Rather, it comes from God, who granted him the privilege of fatherhood at the moment he cooperated with Him in the creation of a brand new human being. So, no matter what he has or hasn't done, this dad *does* have every right to teach his children, and God asks that he exercises it well and often.

Once again, the task of the Director of Education is not an easy one, yet I have greatly enjoyed educating well over one thousand young people (and sometimes their parents!) on issues of respect life and human sexuality over the past two years. As some of you know, due to my recent marriage and my husband's job, I will be moving out-of-state and leaving my position at Carolyn's Place. It is my prayer that whoever takes over this position will have great success, because in a world of spiritual, moral, and ethical confusion, as well as a growing epidemic of false love and broken hearts, the role of the Director of Education is now more essential than ever before.

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.familyfacts.org/charts/140/despite-recent-decline-two-thirds-of-children-live-with-married-parents-](http://www.familyfacts.org/charts/140/despite-recent-decline-two-thirds-of-children-live-with-married-parents)  
<sup>2</sup><http://www.familyfacts.org/charts/135/more-than-one-in-four-children-live-in-a-single-parent-home>  
<sup>3</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 356 [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c1p6.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c1p6.htm)

Photos from Tweens Take Charge Reunion





## ADOPT-A-SHINGLE

We are truly grateful to the many people who donated toward our Adopt-A-Shingle program. We had 47 donors raising \$6,975. What an awesome response! Our roof was recently replaced so we are all set to deal with whatever nature throws at us! Thank you so much to the following donors:

2 Anonymous Donors  
Ms. June Archer  
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Bambach  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Basil, Jr.  
Ms. Charlene Berube  
Ms. Evelyn Boucher  
Mr. & Mrs. Genaro Cafasso (in memory of Paul A. Tonon)  
Deacon & Mrs. Daniel Camerota  
Ms. Catherine Capuano  
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Ms. Pamela DelDonno  
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Mr. Philip Dunleavy  
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Mr. Robert Wade  
The Wasiutynski Family  
Ms. Marlene Yeomans

## A Baby Asked God

A baby asked God, "They tell me you are sending me to Earth tomorrow, but how am I going to live there being so small and helpless?"

"Your angel will be waiting for you and will take care of you."

The child further inquired, "But tell me, here in Heaven I don't have to do anything but sing and smile to be happy."

God said, "Your angel will sing for you and will also smile for you. And you will feel your angel's love and be very happy."

Again the child asked, "And how am I going to understand when people talk to me if I don't know the language?"

God said, "Your angel will tell you the most beautiful and sweet words you will ever hear, and with much patience and care, your angel will teach you how to speak."

"And what am I going to do when I want to talk to you?"

God said, "Your angel will place your hands together and will teach you how to pray."

"Who will protect me?"

God said, "Your angel will defend you even if it means risking its life."

"But I'll be sad because I will not see you anymore."

God said, "Your angel will always talk to you about Me and will teach you the way to come back to Me, even though I will always be next to you."

At that moment there was much peace in Heaven, but voices from Earth could be heard and the child hurriedly asked, "God if I am to leave now, please tell me my angel's name."

"You will simply call her, "Mom".

Author unknown



## HELP US "CHANGE" LIVES

A Baby Bottle Boomerang is a fun and easy way to save lives and show your support for Carolyn's Place. You simply fill the provided baby bottle with spare change over a couple of weeks, and then-like a boomerang-return it to us. The BBB is our



largest single fundraising activity accounting for over 27% of our income. Since we do not take any state or federal money, this is a critical fundraiser for us. This simple event can be held by any size organization, parish, club, school or even an individual. In addition to the invaluable funds raised for our ministry, the event also promotes awareness of Carolyn's Place and our many services to help moms, dads and babies and educate others on the sanctity of human life.

Carolyn's Place will deliver the baby bottles, speak at the kick-off of your event (or provide you with a talk if you would prefer to speak yourself). We will provide you with containers for returned bottles, collect the filled bottles and count the proceeds, and provide you with the total raised and a Thank You certificate. *What could be easier than that?* So please consider hosting a Boomerang at your parish, your place of business, your club, your extended family or just keep the bottle in your home to collect that change hanging around the house. Every penny counts.

For more information see page 7 of this newsletter or call Wes at 203-266-4282 (wwensek@att.net) or Ginny at 203-597-9080 (staff@carolynsplace.net).

## From Ellen's Desk

Often, after a young, pregnant woman has come in to register for our Earn While You Learn classes, I am reminded of Louisa May Alcott's quote, "What do girls do who haven't any mothers to help them through their troubles?"

Many of our clients attending parenting classes have never had the benefit of a parent. And the absence of a mother when they're pregnant leaves a huge hole in their hearts.

We hear, "I'm coming to this class to give my baby what I never had." Sometimes it's "I have no clue what to do. I never saw anybody be a parent."

Our Earn While You Learn classes stand in that gap. We build trusting relationships as first time Moms and Dads learn all about labor and delivery. We allay fears about parenting as we discuss diapering, feeding, teaching your child to be kind and the impact of TV on children. There's lots of laughter and love.

And it is love that is all important. Helping our clients recognize their children as tremendous gifts and helping them see that they, too, are gifts.

We walk with our parents for as long as they need our support. We've been privileged to go through labor and delivery with many of them. Being that support has given us many long-lasting friendships.

And so, I would answer Miss Alcott's question this way. They can come to Carolyn's Place and find guidance and unconditional love. And that is what mothers do!

## From Nicole's Desk



Mrs. Nicole (Macioci) Lovell

## Mirna's Story

Carolyn's Place was privileged to have Mrs. Mirna Gonzalez intern with us this semester, as part of her certification program in Child and Family Services with a major in Human Services, at Naugatuck Valley Community College in Waterbury. Mirna plans to get her Associates Degree and then her Bachelors so she can work as a family counselor.



Mirna was born in the Dominican Republic. She and her husband, Eulalio, moved to Queens, New York in 1998, and then settled in Waterbury in 1999 to raise their family. They have two teenage daughters. She worked evening jobs so she and her husband would trade off watching the girls when they were younger. Then Mirna took a job as a bus driver so she could bring the girls with her on the bus when necessary, and have the same work schedule as their school schedule. Mirna is still raising her daughters while working full time and attending college. She is also very involved at her church, where she is the area coordinator for the Pathfinders ministry.

When asked about her experience at Carolyn's Place Mirna said, "I really liked being at Carolyn's Place. I liked that I can mention God and pray with the girls if they want. I would hear and read about people's sad situations, but now I had the opportunity to meet people with real problems and try to help them. At Carolyn's Place, you see the real thing. Every time a client came in, I learned something from them. If we just judge a person by looks, and don't find out what is going on behind the curtain, we are in trouble. I learned how to give compassion and care to others. Before I came here I had never heard about Carolyn's Place. After seeing how many things you do for so many people, we need to promote Carolyn's Place more. This is such a peaceful place. I recommend that we let people know that Carolyn's Place is a safe haven where people can come and be safe and not be judged."

We were truly blessed to have Mirna share her gifts with us these past few months and pray for success in her future plans. Thank you Mirna and God bless you and your family.

*We have been privileged to have Nicole as our Education Director for the past two years.*

*In April, Nicole was married. She and her husband will be relocating out of state.*

*We extend a heartfelt thanks to Nicole for sharing her gifts and enthusiasm with all she met through Carolyn's Place.*

*Congratulations Nicole and Jack and may God bless you as you grow together in faith and love.*

# Thank

## A Toothless Fairy for Carolyn's Place



This is a picture of toothless Brinley Powell. Her family received a baby bottle at St. John of the Cross Church in Middlebury. Seven year-old, Brinley really liked the idea of helping babies and their moms. She collected change for 1 month to fill the baby bottle to benefit Carolyn's Place. Unfortunately, there was still some space at the top, so Brinley neatly folded 3 dollar bills, which she had earned from recently losing her two front teeth. Her toothless grin couldn't have been more beautiful after looking at the now fully filled bottle.



Thank you for being our own "toothless fairy"!

## SFX WOMEN'S GUILD

In early April, our director Ellen Cavallo was invited to speak to the Women's Guild at St. Francis Xavier Parish in New Milford. Ellen told stories about our ministry while everyone enjoyed delicious baked items. The women all brought many baby items including adorable baby outfits to this "Baby Shower" event. Thank you for hosting this and allowing Ellen to be a special part of the afternoon and especially for the generous donations.

## Sharing Their Gifts

Carolyn's Place is continually blessed by many people who share their creativity and gifts by donating handmade items. We are truly thankful to everyone who contributes and makes it possible for us to include a special "made with love" item in the layette set we provide to newborns. A few of these donors are:

- ◇ Ms. Lois Benis for the two large bags filled with knitted hats, blankets and booties. They are all beautiful soft pastel colors and various patterns and sizes.
- ◇ The women from the Watertown/Oakville Senior Center Knitting and Crocheting Group were busy this spring making five blankets and ten hats to keep our babies warm. The blankets were all beautiful pastel colors and we are very grateful for all the creativity and time that went into these items.
- ◇ Elizabeth Semeraro for the five soft and snuggly blankets and one beautiful quilt.
- ◇ Sonia Rein for four beautifully stitched, handmade quilts.

## OLMC St. Ann's Society



Recently the St. Ann's Society at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Waterbury held a Baby Shower for us. Our chairperson, Jane Teta, spoke to the group about our story and services and to show their support the women donated many items for our babies including diapers, wipes, handmade blankets, and adorable baby outfits. Thank you so much.

## "Angels in the Waters"

"Angels in the Waters" is a beautiful book by Regina Doman. Our director, Ellen, uses this book to talk with young children about how each of them is a special gift from God. They talk about the many exciting things that a baby does while it grows in their mommy's womb and tells how each of us has a guardian angel to protect us. This is always a special event for both the young students and Ellen. This year we were invited to talk to the second grade class at both St. Matthew's School in Forestville and St. Rose of Lima School in Newtown.

PHOTO: The second grade class at St. Matthew's School collected baby items and proudly presented them to Ellen following the special presentation. Thank you very much!



PHOTO: The St. Rose of Lima second grade class enjoyed the presentation and all took baby bottles to fill with change and return to Carolyn's Place for their own Baby Bottle Boomerang. Thanks so much!

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Once again, Jillian Murray and Gabriella Gagas from Girl Scout Troop 64067 in Middlebury, chose Carolyn's Place to work on their Silver Award. In addition to the bake sale they held, which raised over \$300 for us, and the beautiful basket they donated toward our silent auction in November, the duo spent two Saturday mornings helping at our Center. In April, the girls came and helped organize the personal needs items for our babies which included taking all of the winter clothes upstairs and bringing the summer clothes downstairs. Then Jillian and Gabriella returned to help do spring cleaning. They took on the daunting task of cleaning all of our windows. We are sincerely grateful for all your work and for choosing Carolyn's Place to support as you work toward your award. The girls will receive the Silver Award this June. Thank you and congratulations!



## ADDITIONAL MEMBERS

Many thanks to these additional donors to our 2014-2015 Membership Appeal.  
 Pillar Level: Mr. and Mrs. Paul Garber  
 Protector Level: Mrs. Maureen Williams

# YOU

## TWO MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

- Thank you to the members of the **Woodbury United Methodist Church** who generously donated many items for babies at their Mother's Day Shower. We are grateful to Diane and Paul Hibbard for organizing the event and to all who contributed.
- We are thankful for the faithful support from the **Watertown United Methodist Church**. Under the leadership of Pat Kurtz., they once again held a Mother's Day event for us; collecting many baby items and monetary donations. THANKS!

## SJS CONTINUES TO SUPPORT

During Lent, the students at **St. John the Evangelist School in Watertown** had a fun way to raise money for Carolyn's Place. Teachers, Mrs. Susan Charbonneau and Mrs. Cynthia Rahmlow, created three beautiful bunny baskets filled with Easter goodies that were raffled off to the student body. In addition to the children donating money for the baskets, some of them also took baby bottles and held a mini Baby Bottle Boomerang. They raised a total of \$370.81. Thank you for the great donation and we hope the winners enjoyed the baskets.



Additionally, the **St. John Students in second grade** showed their love for babies by making fleece blankets for us, with the help of their teacher, Mrs. Elaine Cieslewski. Pictured are the Grade 2 students with their special blankets and several students from the entire school with some of the over 400 socks they collected for our babies. THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH.

### *How Sweet It Is*

The Student Council at **St. Thomas School in Southington** held a Candy-gram fundraiser to raise money for Carolyn's Place. The students raised \$83 while sending sweet notes to others and enjoying the delicious candy. Thank you for this outstanding donation to help our moms and babies.

## STARTER KITS FROM PA

**Drew Smiley from Pennsylvania** chose Carolyn's Place to be the recipient of his Confirmation project. Drew was made aware of our ministry by his grandmother who is a member of the Church of the Nativity. For the community service requirement, Drew created nine "starter bags" for us to share with our moms. Each bag contained receiving blankets, diapers, wipes, baby wash, ointment and other items needed to care for a newborn. Thank you Drew, for this very useful project and God bless you on your Confirmation.



## A Senior Project

Thank you to **Rachel Sturdevant**, a senior at Woodland High School, who collected diapers for us as her senior project. We are grateful for your support and wish you much success in the future.

## Columbiettes Contribute

The **General Philip Sheridan Columbiettes** generously donated many baby items including bibs, cute outfits and diapers. MANY THANKS!

## Ladies of All Ages at Sacred Heart Parish

- This spring, the **Ladies In Faith Together (LIFT) group at Sacred Heart Church in Southbury** held a shower for us. Not only did they collect diapers, wipes and cute baby clothes, but they also included some checks, and filled some baby bottles with change to give a monetary donation of \$167. Thank you so much for this very thoughtful and generous support.
- The very young ladies from the **Sacred Heart Parish Little Flower Ministry** took up a collection for us. They donated diapers, wipes, board books and clothes. Thank you very much for being so generous and thinking of us.

## BOUNTIFUL BOOMERANGS

Thank you to 8 year-old **Casey O'Toole** who held her own Baby Bottle Boomerang during Lent. Casey collected her money in the bottle and raised \$6.23. Casey is a shining example of giving of your treasures.

**St. John of the Cross Parish in Middlebury** hosted a Boomerang this year. With the blessing of their pastor, Fr. Dennis Vincenzo, and the leadership of Heidi Shea, they raised an outstanding total of \$3,571.79. Thank you so much to the parishioners for their years of faithful support.

Once again, this Lent **Kathy Sima** coordinated a Baby Bottle Boomerang at **St. Aloysius Parish in Plantsville**. This very generous parish raised an awesome \$3,332.98. We are so grateful to Fr. Kevin Dillon for allowing his parish to host this helpful event and to Kathy and her team of helpers and especially to the generous parishioners. Since hosting their first boomerang in 2007, the parish has raised over \$54,500.00. What a spectacular accomplishment! Thank you so very much!

### IF YOUR PARISH OR ORGANIZATION WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG:

- Purchase, or borrow from us, a sufficient number of baby bottles for your parish or organization.
- Distribute a baby bottle to anyone interested in participating.
- Ask them to fill the bottle with spare change.
- Have everyone return the filled bottle at the end of a specified time period. (Usually about 3 to 4 weeks.)
- Total the donations, and send one check to Carolyn's Place, Inc. or we will count the money for you.
- Return borrowed bottles to Carolyn's Place, or save your purchased bottles and reuse for a future boomerang.

For more information call our BBB coordinator

Wes Wensek at 203 266-4282 [wwensek@att.net](mailto:wwensek@att.net)

*Carolyn's Place, Inc.  
Pregnancy Care Center*

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(203) 597-9050

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[www.carolynsplace.net](http://www.carolynsplace.net)



RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

*Carolyn's Place Annual Dinner*  
**Save the Date**

**Sunday, November 1, 2015**

*Life Award Honoree: The CT Knights of Columbus Councils*

*See details - Page 3*