



Coalition for the Defence of Human Life

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19th annual Rally for Life sends a strong message to Parliament



The CDHL Rally for Life was held again on the 23rd of May, drawing a crowd of close to 1500 people of all ages and backgrounds, including hundreds of young people and young adults.

The evening began with prayers and Scripture readings lead by Archbishop Emeritus Barry Hickey, Reverend Steven 't Hart and Pastor Ken Lee. Teneil Anderson, a young woman who in her own words, 'should have been aborted', then shared her powerful testimony of the immense gratitude she has for her life, despite having experienced great hardship at times.

Dwight Randall (president of the Coalition) and Michelle Pearse (research officer for a Member of Parliament) co-chaired the rally.

Speaking to the gathering, Dwight said: 'This Friday will mark nineteen years of legalised abortion in Western Australia. During that time approximately 157,000 unborn children have been robbed of life.

'Included in that total are 26 children at 20 weeks gestation or later who were born alive after surviving abortion procedures at King Edward Memorial Hospital. These babies were not offered care, but left to die. ...

'The theme of this year's Rally for Life is 'Be a voice for the missing generation', and that is what you are. You are a voice for the 157,000 children who cannot speak for themselves. Together, we plead with the Parliament to hear our cry on their behalf.'

Michelle led the crowd in a minute of silence. She said: 'Will you please join with me in a minute of silence to remember the missing generation who have been robbed of life, and to remember their mothers, and others, who have been harmed under this law? You may wish to bow your heads and remember them, and pray for strength to continue this fight until abortion is brought to a halt. In silence now, let us remember them.'

Another young woman, Belinda Manzoney, shared her story of twice being pressured into abortion by people in the medical

profession, the second time after 20 weeks. However, in both instances she refused abortion, and with the help of generous supporters, now has two beautiful, healthy children. Her testimony lead into a speech from Nick Goiran MLC about the tragedy of babies of viable age, who survive an abortion and are left to die. At least 27 infants have survived abortion in WA since 1999, including seven in 2016-2017 alone, only to die without receiving any medical care.

A petition was circulated, calling on the Government to hold a Parliamentary Enquiry to investigate the systemic failures which allow these innocent children to die such a tragic death, with no-one held responsible for their care. (The petition is included in this newsletter.)

Paul Russell, Australia's leading anti-euthanasia advocate, also gave a speech outlining the major problems with legalising euthanasia and assisted suicide. He reminded those gathered that the right to life is absolute, and that there is no 'safe' way to allow for the killing of certain members of society. His sentiments were echoed by Margaret Quirk MLA, who expressed her disappointment over plans to introduce euthanasia legislation this year, while also highlighting the need for quality, holistic and life-affirming palliative care to be made available to all who need it.

A new, youth-focussed pro-life action group was also launched at the Rally, with many young people present expressing interest in being involved. It is encouraging to see so many young people taking an active stand for life. The new generation is certainly 'taking up the baton' with a new energy and enthusiasm!

Members of Parliament in attendance included Nick Goiran MLC, Margaret Quirk MLA, Michelle Roberts MLA, Kate Doust MLC, Tony Krsticevic MLA, Martin Pritchard MLC, Bill Johnston MLA, Simon O'Brien MLC, Kevin Michael MLA. Peter Katsambis MLA also sent his apologies.

The doctors said my baby would be born non-viable

Speech by **Belinda Manzoney** at the 19th annual Rally for Life.



Hi, everyone, I'm Belinda. I have two children. I would say I'm a pretty average mum... Some days my children drive me crazy and push all of my buttons. There are the piles of unfolded washing that speak for themselves. But, behind the mess and the chaos ... are my kids, and to them ... I'm a super mum.

Yesterday I sat and received abuse online for stating that I was coming here today to make this speech. Part of me broke and felt disheartened, as I wondered how a few women could join together and attack me as an individual, stating I was against women, I was inhumane and I didn't deserve my kids.

As my courage was wearing thin, I heard a noise from the basinet next to my bed. I looked over and there was a smile, a little life, staring back at me. It was then that a voice came into my mind whispering, "nothing worth having, comes easily".

Let me tell you a story:

A girl I knew was 16 when she fell pregnant. She was in an abusive relationship, surrounded by drugs and was an extremely unstable person. After doing home tests, she chose to head to her local doctors for confirmation and advice. She sat and saw two lines come up once again, then she was quickly and bluntly handed a referral. The referral wasn't for counselling, or support. Instead, it was for an abortion clinic. The doctor looked this young girl in the eyes and told her she would ruin her life by going ahead with this pregnancy and that this was the best option for her. Such direct and personal advice, from a man who had met her only five minutes prior.

The girl then went home and told her dad about the pregnancy, and he was understandably angry. He said she could have an abortion which would never be spoken of again, or be unwelcome to stay in the family home.

She left, to make a decision, when her mum and a friend recommended going to a place for advice, Pregnancy Problem House. She figured her pregnancy was very much a problem, so it was fitting that she went. It was there, that she saw a dot moving quickly. This dot, was actually a heart beating. What she had been told was a mere few cells, was the beating heart of the baby in her womb.

That 16 year old girl was me, Belinda. Fast forward five years, my baby is now at school. I find out I'm pregnant again, this time in a stable marriage with an amazing man, with a home and surrounded by tonnes of stability. I was over the moon, a sibling for my child and a new addition to our family. Morning sickness came, but I was stoked because it meant the pregnancy was progressing normally.

When my pregnancy was at 18 weeks and I was at work, I felt a gush of water. Embarrassingly, I wondered if I had wet myself and so I kept working. Surely nothing would go wrong. A few days later, water was still coming so I went to the doctor. I was sent to the hospital, where it was confirmed I was in labour, dilated and rapidly losing fluid.

I was tragically told that my baby would be born non-viable. This baby that I'd seen wriggling and sucking on her hands just a few weeks before was non-viable! How?

Five percent chance was the statistical figure I was given for the survival of my baby ... And with that figure, came the advice that I'd heard once before, when I was 16, to abort ... the best thing for everyone.

Twelve hours passed and the doctors were surprised because normally in this situation the mother would have given birth by then. Then came 24 hours, and then, 48 hours. The ultrasounds showed no fluid around the baby and as I looked at the screen, my baby looked trapped, with no volume to move around in like the other scans before.

The doctors recommended that it was in my best interest to be induced there and then, to give birth naturally, and to allow the baby to die. That way, there was no risk of a serious infection for me, we could grieve and the baby would not be born disabled or deformed. Apparently, disability would be worse than death. Wasn't this baby's life still worth more than that, even if born without eyesight or the ability to walk?

As time passed each day, the team of doctors would pop into the room and share the same advice, same statistics and the probability of what was going to happen. Over and over again, I heard that I could remove what they referred to as the foetus medically before 20 weeks and told that this was the best option. As though the option of my baby surviving wasn't an option at all. I was told that if the baby was born alive before 22 weeks they would sadly leave it to die, with no attempt to save it.

The baby held on, with no fluid for two weeks. The 20-week mark arrived and with it the final chance to decide on being induced and in control of my baby's life and my own health. The final opportunity to terminate. I made a decision to keep the pregnancy and let nature take its own course. However, I certainly still felt grief and fear beyond my control, especially going against medical advice.

Well, my baby miraculously hung in there until just four weeks before its due date. It was at that point, the doctors smiled and asked me if I was ready to have my baby.

As teams of doctors waited to see what was wrong with my baby—what limbs it may be missing, what disability it might hold because of the lack of fluid—out came a perfect, six pounds of life, a little girl!

She was born with an infection and put in ICU, I grew an infection and was quickly treated, but we were alive. The doctors checked over my baby girl and said there was nothing wrong with her, externally and internally, she was absolutely fine, more than fine.

It makes me wonder how many wrong diagnoses are given, and how many lose lives because of that?

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Q & A with Paul Russell

Based in South Australia, Paul Russell is one of Australia's leading advocates against euthanasia and assisted suicide. He visited WA in May to speak at the Rally for Life, as well as meet with MPs and other community leaders. We asked him some of the most common questions surrounding medically assisted dying.



What is euthanasia and assisted suicide?

Euthanasia is an action or omission which of itself and by intention causes the death of a person for the purpose of relieving suffering. Euthanasia is the direct and intentional cause of death. It is usually done by lethal injection. Euthanasia only differs from common homicide in its motivation is to relieve suffering. Euthanasia intends that the person's death occurs directly because of the action or omission.

Assisted suicide is about someone helping or aiding another person to end their own life. It is often called Physician Assisted Suicide recognising that, in places where it has been made legal for someone who qualifies for assisted suicide, that the lethal drug is supplied/provided by a doctor.

Euthanasia and/or assisted suicide is NOT withholding or withdrawing medical treatment that is useless (futile) burdensome or extra-ordinary, the proper use of large doses of pain killing drugs to relieve suffering, or the proper use of sedating a person with a regimen of drugs to relieve the suffering of a person.

Both euthanasia and assisted suicide are illegal in every jurisdiction in Australia.

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Yesterday when I was told I didn't care about the rights of women, it came to my realisation that actually, I'm speaking today because I *do* care.

I care more than to sugarcoat the truth or to worry about being politically correct. I care enough to see the potential happiness these women could experience should they battle through, the support they could be surrounded with, the way they wouldn't just be tossed aside after an abortion and forced to grieve secretly. I see the strength, I see the courage. Yes I empathise with the challenge, and the heartache, but I also see, tangibly within my two girls, the potential, what could be.

Society screams that by fighting for the life of vulnerable babies we are fighting against adult rights. But where do our rights lie when our babies are birthed from medical complications prior to 23 weeks and yet deemed not worth resuscitating—and we have no choice in the matter.

So, today I am choosing to declare life over these women and their situations, and furthermore, speak life for the babies that cannot yet speak. I know from seeing my kids growing they are immensely grateful. I'm choosing to be hated if it means standing for the Lillys and the Islas, because I know they have the potential to be the Mother Therasas, or the Florence Nightingales of this world, and who am I to stop that.



Baby Isla

What do euthanasia and assisted suicide laws do?

Euthanasia & assisted suicide laws create exceptions to our laws on homicide. They create a situation where the law accepts that some people can be killed or helped to suicide. This is the case whether or not the enabling law formally amends the criminal code or not. They then attempt to define and restrict the exceptions to defined circumstances and persons.

They protect the doctors involved from prosecution. They create the proposition that some lives are worth the protection of the law and some are not.

What words should we use when talking about end of life issues?

Often in debates on the subject of euthanasia and assisted suicide those arguing for change in the law to accommodate such actions use euphemisms to describe these actions.

Phrases like, 'dignity in dying', 'death with dignity', 'assisted dying' etc. amongst others serve to provide a softer and less confronting view. Who doesn't want assistance when they die and who doesn't want to die a dignified death, right?

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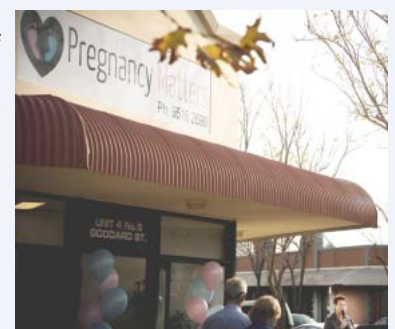
A new pregnancy centre for Rockingham

Friday, June 16 saw the opening of the second 'Pregnancy Matters' centre in WA. The new facility in Rockingham will provide pregnancy testing, counselling, parenting classes and practical support, as well as post abortion counselling, all free of charge.

The facility, which was officially opened by the Hon. Nick Goiran MLC, will provide counselling and support services to pregnant women in the Rockingham region.

Pregnancy Matters is run entirely on donations. Currently, the centre is fundraising for an ultrasound machine. If you would like to make a donation to support this much needed resource centre, please visit pregnancymatters.org.au or call (08) 9518 1572.

The centre is also accepting donations of new and used (good quality) items, including baby clothes, blankets, cots, prams, etc. If you have any items you wish to donate to mothers and families in need, please call the above number.



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But we don't need a lethal injection nor to ingest a lethal drug to achieve a 'death with dignity' and good medical care provides us with great assistance in our need.

Let us speak the truth using accurate terms. These are serious concerns; they demand truth!

What is palliative care?

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual (World Health Organization).

Can palliative care relieve all pain?

Specialist palliative care teams are able to address the person's physical pain and other symptoms and to respond to their

psycho-social, emotional, spiritual and cultural needs so that they are able to live and die well with dignity in most cases. However, a small minority of patients experience refractory symptoms such as agitated delirium, difficulties breathing, pain and convulsions.

Refractory symptoms are defined as: "pain or other symptoms for which all possible treatment has failed, or it is estimated that no methods are available for palliation within the time frame and the risk-benefit ratio that the patient can tolerate."

Some situations and some diseases do present difficulties in pain and symptom management, but these are rare. This is not to say, as some have falsely claimed, that palliative care is ineffective in some cases.

Where refractory symptoms are present specialist palliative care services apply palliative sedation therapy which involves medicating a person so that their conscious state is reduced to a level where the pain and symptoms are well managed. In some even rarer cases, such sedation might be deep and continuous.

What can I do to prevent euthanasia becoming law in WA?

As you are probably aware, an inquiry in to legalising euthanasia and assisted suicide has been commissioned by Premier Mark McGowan. It seems that this will be the first step towards legalising medically assisted dying in our state.

Proponents of euthanasia and assisted suicide are working hard to make their voices heard. If we are to prevent assisted dying laws being enacted in our state, we must act proactively before it is too late.

Some practical ways you can help advocate for dignity of life in the face of death include:

- ◆ Visit or write to your local Members of Parliament. Outline the reasons why they should not support euthanasia and assisted suicide, and share reliable information on these issues with them. Do not underestimate the influence that personal contact from local constituents can have!
- ◆ When you contact your MP, ask them where they personally stand on any proposed legislation. Please then pass on their response to the CDHL, so we can understand where individual politicians stand and provide further appropriate material to them.
- ◆ Educate yourself and other people. It is important that we understand the myths and reality surrounding medically assisted dying. Some good resources are given on this page:
- ◆ Finally, but most importantly, the most powerful way to win hearts and minds in the euthanasia debate is not with words alone, but with deeds. We must witness to the dignity and value of every human life in all our actions. All of us must make a real effort to show real love and care to everyone, especially those who are often forgotten by society: the elderly, mentally and physically sick, and disabled. Only in this way, will other people be able to come to understand the true meaning of human dignity.

Tracts:

'**If people were dogs and other false arguments for euthanasia**', available from **Life Ministries** (08 9344 7396), or can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.lifeministries.org.au/pamphlets/if-people-were-dogs-and-other-false-arguments-for-euthanasia/>

'**Real care, love and compassion--The alternative to euthanasia** (Australian Catholic Bishops Council) can be viewed and downloaded at www.catholic.org.au/bishops-commission-for-pastoral-life/alternative-to-euthanasia

Other Web Resources:

HOPE: No Euthanasia, see <http://noeuthanasia.org.au/>

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, see

<http://alexshadenberg.blogspot.com.au/>

Not Dead Yet, see <http://notdeadyet.org/>

Euthanasia Free NZ, see <http://euthanasiadebate.org.nz/>



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12th August | 7.30pm-9.30pm
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 UNTIL 4TH AUGUST.

FOR MORE INFO
 PLEASE CONTACT
 ALISSA ON 9200 7040.



Can you please help us?

The CDHL is in need of some more volunteers to help with the mailing out of our newsletters. If you can help stuff envelopes with us a few times a year, we would greatly appreciate it! Morning tea and plenty of good company is provided. Please contact Johanna: johanna@cdhl.org.au for more information