

# CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

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*Established 1981*

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## Reminder: Safe Haven for Newborns Available

Have left,



you ever seen the logo at the perhaps in a fire station window, and wondered what it meant? This is the sign informing everyone that the building is a “Safe Surrender” location, where newborn infants at

risk of abandonment can be brought by a parent or person with lawful custody to safely surrender the infant within 72 hours of birth, with no questions asked. Please spread the message what this logo means and remind your family and friends that in all 50 states there is a “Safely Surrender your Baby” program.

Recently in Indiana a baby girl, with umbilical cord still attached, was brought and left in a Safe Haven Baby Box. The heated, insulated box was placed in the Coolspring Township Fire Department near Michigan City, Indiana, in 2016 to help protect newborns from being abandoned. “When this box was installed, we hoped that it would never be used, yet we’re thankful that it exists for cases just like the one Tuesday night,” Coolspring Fire Chief Mick Pawlik said. “We are grateful that the mother had this option and made this choice, and we remain concerned for her health.”

The United States does not keep statistics about the number of babies saved through safe haven laws, but experts have estimated the number to be in the thousands. Between 2004 and 2011, about 50 infants in Texas alone were surrendered under its safe haven law, according to the Dallas Morning News.

If you or someone you know would like more information about relinquishing a newborn baby, please call 1-866-99BABY1 or go to [www.SafeHavenLaw.com](http://www.SafeHavenLaw.com). For more info on

California’s program, visit:

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/Safe-Surrender-Baby>

## Groundbreaking Surgery May Prevent Worst Effects of Spina Bifida

by [Xavier Symons](#)

[A team of American surgeons](#) has pioneered a groundbreaking surgical technique that may prevent many of the severe health problems caused by spina bifida.

Spina bifida is congenital defect involving an abnormal development of the spine. It is caused by an incomplete closing of the backbone and membranes around the spinal cord and can lead to serious health problems such as impaired mobility, incontinence, and an accumulation of fluid on the brain. Many parents choose to terminate their pregnancy when they discover their child has this condition.

Yet surgeons from Baylor College of Medicine, led by gynecologist Dr Michael A. Belfort, are hopeful that they can stop some of the worst effects of spina bifida through an early intervention during pregnancy.

Rather than attempting an operation within the mother's body, the new technique involves a temporary removal of the womb that allows doctors better access to the spinal cord of the fetus.

Using a “fetoscope” and special surgical tools, doctors drain amniotic fluid from the back of the fetus and seal the skin over spinal cord to prevent further exposure. The womb is then inserted back into the mother.

Results from 28 cases in which the operation has been performed were reported in an August edition of the journal [Obstetrics and Gynecology](#). The intervention does not appear to have negative effects on the outcome of the pregnancy, and it vastly decreases the likelihood of mobility problems for the child. Fetuses

who receive the surgery are much less likely to need a shunt, though children still often need a catheter to pass urine.

<https://www.bioedge.org/bioethics/groundbreaking-surgery-may-prevent-worst-effects-of-spina-bifida/12491>

## Adult Stem Cells and Gene Therapy Save a Young Boy with Horrible Skin Condition

by David Prentice Ph.D

When people talk about something that “saved their skin,” they usually mean that it helped them out of a difficult situation. But a young boy in Germany has literally had his skin—and his life—saved through the use of genetically-engineered adult stem cells.

The boy suffered from a condition called [junctional epidermolysis bullosa](#), a severe and often lethal disease in which a mutation leaves the skin cells unable to interconnect and maintain epidermal integrity. The skin blisters and falls off, and the slightest touch or abrasion can leave a patch of skin gone and a painful, difficult-to-heal wound behind. There is no cure for the disease and little other than palliative care available for sufferers of the most severe forms.

Now researchers have combined use of adult stem cells with genetic engineering to successfully treat the young boy’s life-threatening condition. The boy’s doctors in Germany [called on Dr. Michele De Luca](#) at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in Italy to use a technique he has developed to correct the genetic problem and grow new skin.

Over many years, Dr. De Luca has developed a method to grow skin from a patient’s own epidermal adult stem cells, correct the genetic mutation in the laboratory, and use the genetically-engineered adult stem cells to grow healthy new skin. Dr. De Luca and his team took a tiny patch of skin from the boy, [isolated the epidermal stem cells and corrected the genetic problem in stem cell culture](#). Then they grew sheets of genetically-corrected skin and transplanted them onto the boy.

Reports called the boy’s recovery “stunning,” with successful replacement of 80 percent of his skin.

Before the procedure, the boy’s doctors tried several treatments to no avail. One doctor even said, “We had a lot of problems in the first days keeping this kid alive.” Yet within six months of starting the process, the boy was back in school.

His skin has remained healthy and completely blister-free. According to the published reports now 21 months after the boy’s transplant, he loves to show off his “new skin” and is enjoying school, playing soccer, and being a normal kid. [The research](#) has also taught scientists much about the possibilities of using adult stem cells in combination with gene therapy for treatment of diseases.

## Abortion-Suicide Link

*Suicide Rate for Women Having Abortions is Six Times Higher than Women Who Gave Birth*

by Cecelia Cody

Recently I participated in a forum on suicide, and was asked to speak on the Abortion-Suicide Link. I’d like to share my research. First a few statistics:

- Suicide rates among women of childbearing age are approximately 11.3 per 100,000
- Post-abortion women have a rate of 34.7 per 100K,
- Interestingly, women who have given birth have a suicide rate of 5.9 per 100K.

The statistics for teenagers who have abortions are even more disturbing. Teen girls are 10 times more likely to commit suicide if they have had an abortion in the last six months than girls who have not had an abortion, and 2-4 times more likely to commit suicide after abortion, compared to adult women.

Perhaps one reason for the strong abortion-suicide link exists in the fact that in many ways abortion is like suicide. A person who threatens suicide is actually crying out for help. So are women who contemplate abortion. Both are in a state of despair. Both are lonely. Both feel faced by insurmountable odds.

To those who look deeply, and care deeply, it is clear that people who express a desire for suicide or abortion are really crying out for help. They are crying out for the support and encouragement to

choose life, cherish life, and rejoice in life. They are crying out for an infusion of hope.

Just as a suicidal person is crying out for help when she tells others she wishes she were dead, so a woman who is distressed over a pregnancy is crying out for help when she tells others she is considering abortion. In both cases, the desperate person is reaching out in the hope that someone will announce they truly care, and will truly help them. They need to see the value of life, their own as well as their child's, reflected in the love of those who would help them preserve that life. They need to hear that they are strong enough to triumph in the life that is theirs, and that whenever they grow weak, we will be there to strengthen them and even carry them.

This requires us to engage in "costly love," a love that demands a real sacrifice of time, energy, and resources. Anything less, they will interpret as "You don't really care." Anything less, and they will be right.

## 40-Days for Life Update

40-Days for Life has just completed the Fall 2017 campaign, and celebrated 10 years! Below are a few statistics of the milestones reached since 40 Days for Life began in 2007:

- 5,251 total campaigns
- 741 cities
- 47 countries
- 750,000 individual participants
- 19,000 churches
- **13,998 lives saved from abortion**
- 170 abortion workers quit their jobs
- 90 abortion facilities closed
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The Spring Campaign begins Wednesday, February 14, 2018. Consider joining the movement that is saving lives right there on the sidewalk, the final defense for our precious pre-born brothers and sisters.

To read some of the stories visit the website: <https://40daysforlife.com/> or consider reading the book also titled 40-Days-for-Life by David Bereit and Shawn Carney, also available on the website <https://40daysforlifegear.com/collections/frontpage/products/40-days-for-life-book-expanded-edition> or at amazon.com.

## Mall Table “Special Visitor”

by Cecelia Cody, Administrative Director

Almost everyone is familiar with the “Precious Preborn” fetal model of a 10-12 week baby. We distribute at least 25 of these “babies” at every table event we do. These “babies” have saved lives. Occasionally one of these “babies” will come back and visit our table some months later and we hear stories of where the “Precious Preborn” has traveled, including Bible Studies and church youth groups, school classrooms and playgrounds; one “Precious Preborn” has even been to a Cub Scout den meeting in San Francisco.

At our November mall table, a lady showed us a special “precious preborn.” Many years ago a fetal model very similar to our current one, made of hard plastic (the current one is much softer and pliable) was created by a very dear friend of California Right to Life – Patricia Driscoll. The mall table visitor still carries in her purse one of these “first generation – precious preborns.” She told us she has carried this “baby” in her purse for probably at least 15 years. It was so heartwarming to receive such a “special visitor” at our table. Imagine how many lives may have been saved by this lady’s “Precious Preborn.”



***Blessed Christmas Season to all.  
“For unto us a Child is born”***

## Calendar of Events

*For the latest updates of events see  
[www.calendarforlife.org](http://www.calendarforlife.org)*

**MARCH FOR LIFE** – Washington D.C., January 19, 2018. For info: <http://marchforlife.org/mfl-2018/>

**ONELIFE LA (Los Angeles) - Saturday, January 20, 2018 12 noon.** The walk will begin at La Placita/Olvera St., ending at LA Historic Park. *Celebrate the beauty and dignity of every human life from conception to natural death.* Visit: [onelifela.org](http://onelifela.org).

**40 Days for Life Walk for Life Gala with Alan Keyes, Friday, January 26 from 7-9pm** (VIP Reception at 6pm), JW Marriott Union Square located at 515 Mason St., San Francisco. For more information, visit <https://40daysforlife.com/GALA/>

**WALK FOR LIFE – WEST COAST San Francisco – Saturday, January 27, 2018**  
See: <http://www.walkforlifewc.com/>

**STUDENTS FOR LIFE – West Coast Conference – Sunday, January 28, 2018 – St. Mary Cathedral, San Francisco.** To register visit: <http://sflalive.org/>