

**Pro-Life Lexicon:**  
**FOR INFLUENCING AND WINNING**  
**Intentional Language for Compassionate and Consistent Life Messaging**  
**Created by: Karen Garnett**

**We're not only in a cultural battle; we're in a cultural war between life and death.**

“Regardless of the industry, a specific language exists... and that language matters.

Language is a crucial element in your brand strategy... Whoever owns the language owns the customer. Choose your words carefully.” – business and marketing brand strategist Jasmine Bina.

Dennis Peacocke, self-described former Marxist, is a Christian leader, writer, author, and the Founder and President of GoStrategic, an international non-profit organization that educates and equips leaders and others for effective service and leadership, who writes: *“Whoever controls the language controls the culture. . . The words we use to describe a situation or problem frame the way we approach it. It’s not bullets that ultimately win wars, it’s words. A bullet won’t make you die for someone, but the right word lodged within you will make you fearless. . . . The real warriors on either side of the issues wage war with words. . . . Unify their language and you have unified their power!”*

- Does the pro-life movement or industry have a “unified/common language lexicon” on important terms?
- Does your organization or chapter have a lexicon or style guide on important terms?

**Here is a current lexicon of preferred language terms, and we invite your consideration for your own lexicon.**

Note that we make some exceptions in our online ads that are going head-to-head against Planned Parenthood’s, since we are being “congruent with the mindset” of the woman who is currently pregnant and panicking, in order to be able to REACH her, and she is “used to” the Planned Parenthood language. There may be other applications as well, particularly when considering a specific audience. Stephanie Gray Connors and Lila Rose are among those who also use much of the below.

1. **“Unexpected pregnancy” rather than “unplanned”** – since the whole “planned” language is **“Planned Parenthood’s”** 100+ year cultural marketing ploy that every baby **HAS** to be “planned” by the mother/parents, and **“unplanned” = abortion**. Don’t buy into it, reinforce it, “give it to them”. God has a plan for every precious and unrepeatable life He co-creates. **Every** life has inherent dignity, meaning, and purpose.
2. Related to #1 – in addition to avoiding “unplanned pregnancy,” we **avoid saying “crisis pregnancy”** – yes, the Momma is experiencing crisis and is scared to death, but the innocent little **baby** is not the crisis, and therefore **“the pregnancy”** is not the crisis. She’s “in crisis” at this moment, but it is **not permanent**, and she can most definitely be HELPed through it.
3. **“Preborn baby/child” rather than “unborn”** – as a “stage of development,” e.g., “preschooler,” “pre-teen,” rather than “unschooler,” “un-teen,” “not schooler,” “not born.” Another application: “Preborn” is the stage of development of a present, living, and growing preborn child in his/her mother’s womb prior to his/her birth; “Unborn” truly is the “class” of human beings “not yet born” as in “generations to come.”
4. **“Pregnancy Help Center (PHC)” rather than crisis pregnancy center** (original language from the 70s/80s/90s) or pregnancy resource center (which was “the upgrade” from CPC). This is two-fold, including critical need for **“category awareness”** advertising and branding, since the watershed research study of 18-29-year-old women published by Charlotte Lozier Institute in 2015 revealed that only **46%** are even AWARE of the concept or existence of a PHC in their community, either as a “category” or an individual entity, compared to **93%** aware of Planned Parenthood/abortion facilities. With marketing-mindset **congruence at the time they are in crisis and**

**searching**, what they need is “HELP!!” when looking for HELP Right Now in their “emergency situation,” not “Resources!! I need Resources right now!!”

Heroic Media, as well as several other national pro-life organizations, made the shift to referring to them in our communications as Pregnancy Help Centers (PHCs). We have seen Pregnancy Care Centers, Women’s Care Centers, or Women’s Care Clinics as other terms, which directly counter Planned Parenthood’s “Care. No Matter What.” slogan. We are staying with Pregnancy Help Centers at this time, because the woman is really looking for “Help” initially, rather than looking for “Care” in her situation, and we can counter PP’s “Care. No Matter What.” with “Help. No Matter What.”

5. **“Having lost a child to abortion” or “experienced an abortion”** rather than “I am/she is/‘people who are/‘are you?’/‘is she?’ ‘post-abortive’” – based on feedback from hundreds of people who have suffered losses, to move away from an adjective “label,” and because it is “pro-life industry jargon,” not found in the dictionary, that the general population cannot relate to – especially the masses/millions we are trying to reach to help with healing and support. Analogies would be “child with Down Syndrome” or “child in foster care” rather than “Down syndrome child”, “Down’s baby” or “foster care kid” or “foster child”.

--> Note that in 2019, the leaders of the Abortion Recovery Coalition network of healing ministries within our movement voted to move away from the term “post-abortive.”

For further consideration, Life Perspectives / Abortion Changes You / Miscarriage Hurts has in recent years coined / introduced “experienced reproductive loss” as an overall-encompassing term to reach the broader community, based on input from licensed professional counselors, and is finding many new doors beginning to open that had previously not been accessible.

6. **“Healing after abortion” rather than “post-abortion healing”** for similar reasons as #5. Softer, gentler, broader reach, and for entry points of discussion for those who may be suffering and in most need of help to be introduced / connected to healing resources. “Reproductive grief care” is also being seen.
7. Similarly, based on consistent feedback from birth and adoptive parents – **“Placing a child for adoption”** or “making an adoption plan” or “helping create a family through the gift of adoption” **rather than “giving a child up”** or “putting a child up” for adoption or “giving your baby away.”
8. “Abortion supporter” or “abortion advocate” or **“pro-abortion” rather than “pro-choice”** – since “pro-choice” was a carefully crafted, deliberate “euphemism” created by the abortion industry, all the more reason for us to “choose not to adopt”; and more importantly, because the “choice” to end an innocent preborn human child’s life is not a legitimate choice. Do not allow the abortion side to get away with the “right to choose” euphemism.
9. **“Abortion facility” or “abortion business” rather than “abortion clinic”** – since abortion is not legitimate health care that would be received at a legitimate “medical clinic,” and abortion is most definitely a lucrative business / industry. [Note: We understand and support the language use and purpose of **CheckMyClinic.org** and encourage it as an excellent resource.]
10. **“Abortionist” or “abortion provider” rather than “abortion doctor”** – since, per #8 and #9, abortion is not legitimate health care, and abortionists are in complete violation of the Hippocratic Oath doctors pledge to “Do No Harm.”
11. The **“Pro-Life Industry” rather than the “Pro-Life Movement”** (PLM) – we don’t use this one all the time, but you will find best times where it would be best applicable. The abortion industry is truly an **industry**. And the “PLM” is now 51+ years strong, consisting of THOUSANDS of pro-life organizations. We are an industry, going head-to- head against Planned Parenthood and the abortion industry, daily.

**FOR THE TOTAL VICTORY!!**