

LIFE NETWORK of Southern Illinois

A Pregnancy Resource Center

Spring, 2026

From Executive Director, Debbie Geist

There's no doubt about it; unplanned pregnancies can be emotionally, physically, and spiritually challenging for EVERYONE involved. In moments of crisis or surprise, mothers often experience a wide range of feelings such as fear, anxiety, confusion, and guilt. While much attention is frequently given to the mother's physical and emotional well-being, the father's perspective is often overlooked. Cultural expectations can pressure fathers to withdraw from decision-making roles, based on the notion that since it is not their body, it is not their choice. Their lack of legal authority to impact the outcome of the pregnancy, leads many fathers to say, "I support whatever decision you make," even when it concerns their own child. As a result, fathers may feel unheard and helpless, adding additional stress to an already overwhelming situation.

Why does this matter? Studies show that a father's support strongly affects a mother's decision to continue her pregnancy. At Life Network, we certainly find this to be true. If a father is actively committed and involved, the mother is more likely to proceed with the pregnancy. Supportive fathers help create an environment filled with excitement and hope, easing the stress of single parenthood, fostering a sense of partnership, and providing a more stable environment for the child, regardless of living arrangements. When fathers join in decision-making, attend ultrasounds or participate in parenting classes, they not only gain valuable knowledge, but also provide the mother with the reassurance she needs. This joint approach represents the ideal scenario.

However, many times that support system is nonexistent, making the thought of continuing a crisis pregnancy much more challenging. Without adequate support or assistance, women can face deep emotional and practical struggles. The absence of a supportive partner or access to essential resources can heighten feelings of isolation, anxiety, and uncertainty. In such situations, mothers may find it difficult to make well-informed, life affirming decisions about their future and their baby's future. Dealing with pregnancy on their own can put a strain on both physical and mental health, while limited financial means can make the circumstances feel unbearable.

So, what's the answer? As a Christian ministry, inspired by Jesus' teachings on compassion and nonjudgement support, Life Network's mission is to provide care and assistance to those in need. We believe when it comes to the issue of "Life" every family member is equally valued. Therefore, we strive to support both mothers and fathers during all stages of pregnancy and beyond. For moms, we offer compassionate counseling, education about pregnancy options, limited medical services, prenatal resources/parenting classes, material assistance, and community referrals for healthcare needs. We help them navigate complex emotions while providing a safe and unbiased environment.

For dads, Life Network recognizes the positive impact they can have when it comes to life-affirming choices about their child's birth and future. If fathers are engaged and involved from the beginning, they're more likely to stay involved over time. To support them, we offer resources that help build practical parenting skills, focusing on fatherhood, partner support, and personal growth. We encourage them to share their emotions and reassure them that feeling overwhelmed or unprepared is normal. Unfortunately, fathers are often excluded, which diminishes the valuable role they have in promoting healthy child development and reduces the necessary emotional support they give mothers.

We understand that this approach can be difficult, especially in an unexpected pregnancy, but we are dedicated to helping both parents become involved, well-informed, and confident in their parenting abilities. By supporting both mothers and fathers, Life Network encourages open communication, promotes shared responsibility, and ensures that BOTH parents are prepared to meet the challenges and celebrate the joys of parenthood together.



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort 2 Corinthians 1:3

MISSION STATEMENT

Waterloo Office
618.939.4224
722 N Market Street
Waterloo IL 62298

Life Network of Southern Illinois is a Christ-Centered ministry committed to upholding the sanctity of human life.
www.mylifenet.org

Red Bud Office
618.282.4225
324 N Main Street
Red Bud IL 62278

<https://supportmylifenet.com>

Client Stories

Michelle Schweiger, RN, Director of Client Services

Isn't life a beautiful, unpredictable, sometimes messy adventure? No matter what the mess though, God is right there in it with us. And I say, "Praised Be" for that fact! There's no doubt that life can get messy, and we see in our clients sometimes just HOW messy life can get.

Sadly, in 2025 we had a few clients choose abortion, largely due to messy circumstances. We grieved with one client who took Ru486 at home and became quite distraught about what to do with her baby's remains. We worked with another overwhelmed young mother who went to Hope Clinic in Granite City for an abortion so that she wouldn't have the trauma of passing the baby at home and seeing it.

Dear God, have mercy on us.

We were humbled to work with a client that made a very difficult decision regarding her pregnancy, a situation that none of us would want to face. She reached out to us shortly after deciding, seeking help and post-abortion counseling. The healing journey is not complete, but much progress toward accepting God's forgiveness and trusting in HIS plan has been made. It's a beautiful thing. **Dear God, thank you for your grace.**

One of our couples, who have good jobs and a stable relationship, weren't sure they were ready for a baby. They were afraid to have a baby but also afraid they would regret it if they chose to terminate. We did an ultrasound and after seeing that little heartbeat, they were less inclined to abort but still undecided. The outcome was still unpredictable. Happily, they have embraced the idea of parenthood, despite their fears. Now when they come for parenting classes, they seem excited. **Oh Lord, we praise you.**

A married Christian couple with children experiencing a "surprise" pregnancy came in for services and admitted to considering abortion because their house was already full and their finances stretched. If married Christian couples entertain the idea of abortion, then no doubt those in "messier" life circumstances will consider it as well. Let us continue to pray, trusting in God to help us manage the messes.

I am worn out from sobbing. All night I flood my bed with weeping, drenching it with my tears. The Lord has heard my plea; the Lord will answer my prayer. Psalm 6:6,9

MEDICAL UPDATE

Julie Stuart, RN, Nurse Manager

One of the services that Life Network provides for our clients is STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) testing and treatment. Since the start of that program in 2006, the State of Illinois has provided the supplies, tested our samples, and provided the treatment protocol for our STI clients at no cost to us. At the end of last year, I received notification that, effective January 1, 2026, the state would no longer continue our STI testing and treatment agreement forcing us to suspend that service until we could make other arrangements. After finding out that many other Pregnancy Resource Centers in Illinois received the same letter, I wondered if this was more of a political issue and not due to budget constraints as mentioned in the letter. If you think about it, we were saving the state money because we worked for free (for the state) gathering the sample and then treating the clients. Do they care more about politics than people?

But GOD...Fortunately, other pregnancy centers had discovered Center for Disease Detection (CDD) located in San Antonio, TX, and let us know about them. Long story short, we are in the process of partnering with CDD. They will perform the testing for us and provide the supplies for said testing. Now, we do have to pay for the testing, but it is a very reasonable amount. And, we have found a pharmacy who will work with us to provide the antibiotics for our clients, at a reduced cost. We have seen GOD working and providing firsthand through this transition. GOD is faithful and did not let us down.

Psalm 100:5
Psalm 119:90
I Thessalonians 5:24



What's Happening in Red Bud?

Peggy Buettner, Satellite Manager

Christ's love is always what we strive to show our clients at Life Network. Many of them have not experienced God's love because they have not been raised in a Christian home. Sometimes, on their first visit they are apprehensive and not sure what to expect, so it takes them a while to open up and share their story. Once they realize that we are a safe place and we gain their trust, it is amazing to see the change that comes over them. They begin to smile more, tell us about what is going on in their lives and let us know how thankful they are for all the services we offer. We always let them know that it's because of this community and our faithful donors that we are able to continue offering assistance and resources.

One example of the amazing support we get from this community happened a few months ago at Christmas. The Material Works, a local company in Red Bud, reached out to us to ask if there was a way they could bless one of our families by adopting them for the holidays. They generously showered the kids with toys and clothes, purchased much needed personal items for the mom and even provided food so the family could enjoy a Christmas meal. Our client was overwhelmed with gratitude and once again saw Christ's love in action.

We are thankful for the community we live in that is always ready to help our families whenever there is a need. We couldn't do what we do without all the support we receive from our donors.

"These things will last forever - faith, hope and love - and the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13



SAVE THE DATE

*Lighting
The
Way*

LIFE NETWORK
of Southern Illinois
Annual Fundraising Banquet

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026

**** RESERVATIONS REQUIRED ****

Please call 618.939.4224 if you would like to host a table or attend the Banquet.

Thursday, April 9, 2026

The Falls Banquet Center | 300 Admiral Weinel Blvd

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Rebekah Hagan

Rebekah Hagan is one of today's leading voices on unplanned pregnancies, chemical abortion, and abortion pill reversal. When Rebekah was faced with her second unplanned pregnancy, she was terrified and began a chemical abortion that changed her life forever. Her journey took a remarkable turn when she became one of the first women to attempt abortion pill reversal. Her story is one of hope and redemption and has inspired thousands.



Center Needs

- | | |
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| Aveeno Lotion | Infant Toys |
| Aveeno Wash | Children's Board Books |
| Gentle Ease Formula | Children's Flouride Free Toothpaste |
| Girls Pull-ups sizes 4T-5T & 5T-6T | Children's Board Books |
| Similac Pro-Total Comfort Infant Formula | Walmart Gift Cards (used to purchase special formula/needs for clients) |



Shop our Amazon List!



Shop our Walmart List!



BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

2025 TOTAL RAISED: \$35,300.22

If you haven't received a bottle at your church, please contact us or stop by one of our offices!



EVERY PENNY MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Gifts have been received

In Memory of

Mike Behnen, Robert Bielefeld, Renda Chase, Matthew Dannenberg, Carl Gavach, Paul Kronst, Vernon & Jane Lucht, Ezekiel Neptune, Dennis Rodenberg, Terry Romay, Nel Saul and Gladys Wittenauer-Thiele

Gifts have been received

In Honor of

Anonymous

Baby Bartimaeus Hayter

2025 LIFE TRIVIA NIGHT * \$17,000 RAISED

THANK YOU to our Trivia Sponsors:

Anonymous
LifechurchX

MA Technologies LLC
George R Kutterer Council 6165
Knights of Columbus, Columbia
First Baptist Church of Columbia

Hart & Associates, P.C.
Red Bud Industries

Thank you to everyone who came out for the evening! We appreciate your continued support!



2025 STATISTICS



CLASSES
333



CHILDBIRTH & BREASTFEEDING CLASSES
30



ULTRASOUNDS PERFORMED
33



TOTAL CLIENT VISITS/PHONE CALLS, ETC.
3,110



NUMBER OF SUPPLIES GIVEN
1,439



PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING SESSIONS
16



PREGNANCY TESTS PERFORMED
50



STI TREATMENT & TESTING
31



460 HOURS SERVED

WE HAVE BEEN ABUNDANTLY BLESSED...



Life Network is 100% donor funded. Thank you!!!



Our Babies

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| Leon | Lilah | William |
| Faye | Kash | Kaia |
| Zion | Alexander | Charlotte |
| Elizabeth | Brooklyn | Trenton |
| Isabella | Evangeline | Elizabeth |
| Leiani Mae | Payton | Gemma |
| Matthew | Zayden | |

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

722 N. Market St.
Waterloo IL 62298



LIFE NETWORK
of Southern Illinois

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Waterloo, IL
62298



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Peggy Buettner
Satellite Manager

Sara Duguay
Financial Administrative Assistant

PARTNER WITH US

PRAY:

- Become a Prayer Partner! When staff or clients are in need of prayer, we'll send you an email. Sign up by emailing nurse@mylifenet.net

DONATE:

- Website - <http://supportmylifenet.com> or QR code →
- Mail, Call or Come Into the Office - We accept credit cards, checks and cash



Member of
CARE NET

Heartbeat
INTERNATIONAL

National Fatherhood Initiative

NIFLA
NATIONAL INSTITUTE of FAMILY & LIFE ADVOCATES

SAVE THE DATES:

* **LIFE NETWORK TRIVIA NIGHT**

Fall Date to Be Determined

* **PRO-LIFE EVENTS**

Illinois March for Life, 03.19.2026

Capitol, Springfield IL 1P

40 Days for Life, 02.18—03.29.2026

Sign up to pray: 618.520.1255 or

email at fvh40days@yahoo.com

Pray at the Fairview Heights

Planned Parenthood fence

United for Life

WATERLOO 3rd Saturday each month starting March 21st, 10-11A, Rt 3 & IL Ave.

(Barb 618.578.8697)

RED BUD 1st Saturday each month

Apr-Oct, 10-11A, 4-way Stop

(Robin 618.792.1051)