



## Freedom to Exhale

The quarterly e-newsletter of Exhale

Issue #6, Autumn 2005

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1. Extra! Extra! Read All About It: ***“Exhale’s Talkline Calls Increase by 400%!”***

It’s been three months since Exhale increased access to our talkline on June 1, 2005. Now available for free, nationwide, in four languages, seven days a week, the talkline is experiencing a dramatic increase in call volume - 400% in just the first month! Our Spanish-language calls have risen significantly, as have calls from throughout the Bay Area and California.

Callers from Virginia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, Washington, Washington DC, Nebraska, Utah, Florida, Missouri, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Texas, Minnesota, and more found the after-abortion support they have been looking for.

Feedback submitted anonymously by a caller through Exhale’s new “Tell Your Story” feature on our website, describes her experience of calling the talkline as a “breath of fresh air.” Callers describe feeling relief at finding an outlet to talk freely with someone that “doesn’t have a religious or political agenda.”

An editorial in the Contra Costa Times on June 2 declared Exhale’s talkline valuable because “it recognizes that no matter where the nation or the neighbors are on the issue, abortions are still happening daily.” Associated Press writer Lisa Leff wrote in a nationally published story on May 31 that “Exhale...occupies a novel niche in a debate often marked by extremes.”

To read more about Exhale In the News, visit, <http://www.4exhale.org/news.htm>

The sheer number of women and men who call Exhale is a testament to the lack of spaces where people can talk freely about their personal experience with abortion. With your help, the Exhale talkline will continue to be a place of comfort and support.

Want to do something more? Sponsor-a-state and make sure the people you care about have access to Exhale! (<http://www.4exhale.org/donations.htm>)

Aspen Baker  
Executive Director

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## 2. Program News: Promoting Post-Abortion Health Throughout the Americas.

Beyond providing immediate support to women and men after an abortion through our talkline, Exhale trains reproductive health professionals on after-abortion counseling techniques and conducts public education to transform the stigma of abortion.

Exhale's training program builds the capacity of health professionals to improve each woman's experience of abortion. Exhale's approach prioritizes non-judgmental communication, cultural competency, language access and respect for the values and beliefs of women who have abortions.

### A. Regional Training in Chicago for Health Professionals - Register Today!

Exhale's next regional training for health professionals will be in Chicago, IL, October 17 - 18 and is hosted by Planned Parenthood Chicago Area.

Interested? Email [training@4exhale.org](mailto:training@4exhale.org) for more information or to register.

Exhale's Regional Two-Day Trainings are opportunities for professionals in the abortion provider community to increase their communication and counseling skills and share experiences and strategies with their peers. To date, Exhale has trained 40 practitioners from 15 states and more than 20 different organizations.

Our last training took place in Atlanta, Georgia, May 22 - 23 and was hosted by Summit Medical Associates. Here's what some participants said about their experience:

- \* "I had concerns regarding religion surrounding abortion. I feel like that has been answered and I'm comfortable counseling patients with this concern."
- \* "Diverse participants added so much to the discussions."
- \* "Thanks for an excellent workshop!"

### B. Talkline Counselor Trainings Starts September 13

Are you bilingual? Do you live in the S.F. Bay Area?

Become an after-abortion talkline counselor!

- \* Gain valuable counseling skills and experience
- \* Utilize your language skills to support women's health
- \* Provide a vital service to communities across the nation

To schedule an interview, email [programs@4exhale.org](mailto:programs@4exhale.org) or call 510-446-7900.

### C. Building After-Abortion Support Networks in Latin America

Exhale was invited by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America - International to conduct a training in Mexico City for health providers from throughout Latin America. Over two days in August, Exhale trained 24 participants, representing 12 different non-governmental organizations from Mexico, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru. The training focused on skill-building, cultural competency and self-care. The feedback included the following:

- \* "A very dynamic training. This can definitely be applied in my country."
- \* "Your methodology is excellent. Everything we did was very practical."
- \* "This experience was beautiful, satisfying, and enriching. I learned a huge amount of things. I leave very motivated to fulfill my work, share ideas, and try to keep improving more and more. Please continue these important workshops."

### D. Transforming Abortion Stigma

In newspapers, on the radio and T.V., and in publications, nationwide, Exhale is creating a social climate where each person's unique experience with abortion is respected, supported and free from stigma.

To read recent press articles featuring Exhale, visit [www.4exhale.org/news](http://www.4exhale.org/news).

The Center for American Progress, a Washington D.C.-based think tank, published a column by Exhale's Executive Director, Aspen Baker, titled "Overcoming Stigma: Talking Freely About Abortion." The first edition of Our Truths/Nuestras Verdades, a bilingual abortion zine, is now available and features an article by Ms. Baker, titled "Our Truths Will be Told."

To read these articles, visit Exhale's home page, [www.4exhale.org](http://www.4exhale.org).

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### 3. Support Exhale: Sponsor-a-State!

50 States X \$50 = free after-abortion talkline access for women and girls nationwide!

Help Exhale raise \$2,500 by sponsoring a state close to your heart. We're a third of the way there and need your help to sponsor the remaining 33 states!

Thanks to our current state sponsors!

- Melissa Montoya - California
- Heather Kirlin and John Green - Oregon and Arizona
- Heather Newell - Colorado
- Katy Yanda - New Mexico
- Annie Burke - Texas
- Julie Davidson-Gomez - Louisiana
- Teresa Freeman - Mississippi
- Alexis Smith - Tennessee

Sandy Minella - Illinois  
Deborah Baker - Wisconsin  
Bess Bendet - Pennsylvania  
Joan Franciosa August & Amy Moy - New York  
Pat Foley - Connecticut  
Karen Topakian - Rhode Island  
Aspen Baker - Alaska  
Inger Brinck - Virginia

The following states need your help:

Washington, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire Vermont, and Hawaii.

To sponsor-a-state, follow the directions here:

<http://www.4exhale.org/donations.htm>. Be sure to note which state you are sponsoring!

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#### 4. Special Thanks to our Expansion Party Contributors

Exhale had a fun, inspiring pre-expansion celebration on May 31 at Oak Plaza Restaurant in downtown Oakland. We would like to thank the California Endowment for sponsoring the event and the following businesses for their contributions:

Ann's Cool Jools, Angelic Aromas, Argania Salon, Festoon Salon, Mountain Hardware Rubicon Bakery, Timbuk2, and Turn It Up Productions.

Exhale would like to express our deep appreciation to Autodesk, The California Endowment and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence for their recent grants to Exhale.

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#### 5. Exhale's Growing Leadership Team

Exhale is incredibly pleased to welcome a number of new leaders into our organization.

Our new Program Director, Jessica Meyer, started August 1, 2005. Jessica comes to Exhale with a background in health and theology. She is currently finishing up a Certificate of Theological Studies, covering theology, ethics, history, and sacred texts, from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. Previously, she worked for almost seven years at Health Initiatives for Youth (HIFY). At HIFY, she led several programs, including a comprehensive health book for young women, *A Young Woman's Survival Guide*; several workshops for young people on sexual health topics; and trainings for health and social service providers on youth health. Jessica has lived all

over the country, including Wisconsin, Tennessee, Minnesota (where she graduated from Carleton College in 1996), and California. You can reach her at Jessica@4exhale.org.

Our previous Program Director and Exhale co-founder Carolina De Robertis, has moved into a part-time position as a Training and Outreach Associate, so she can attend graduate school full-time. Carolina will continue to conduct trainings and outreach activities in Latina communities throughout the Bay Area. You can reach her by email, Carolina@4exhale.org.

Exhale welcomes the following three new board members:

Julie Davidson-Gómez, Nonprofit Organizational Consultant and Life Coach  
Susan Osborne, Director of Quality and Patient Services, Choice Medical Group; Co-founder, bdi consulting  
Jennifer Rudy, MPH, Program Associate, The California Endowment

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## 6. Contact Exhale

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Bus: 510-446-7900  
Fax: 309-410-1127  
www.4exhale.org  
info@4exhale.org

After-Abortion Talkline: 1-866-4 EXHALE  
Monday - Friday, 5 p.m. - 10 p.m. Pacific  
Saturday - Sunday, 12 p.m. - 10 p.m. Pacific  
Counseling available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Cantonese