

9 Sweaty Teenage Boys

JOANNA WAGNER'S MONTHLY UPDATE



JANUARY 2014

Dear Friend,

Out of the corner of my eye, I could see figures flashing by. Then they circled back to our “Should Abortion Remain Legal?” poll table, which we had set up to create conversations at the University of Kansas (KU) in late September.

It was perfect timing. I was just finishing up a different conversation and turned to see nine sweaty cross country runners standing in front of me, all trying to figure out how to sign our poll. Noting the obvious, I asked,

Joanna: *So, y'all in the middle of a run?*

Runners: *Yep... Uh, can we sign this poll?*

Joanna: *Of course!*

As I began speaking to the first few who signed the poll, it became clear that this group of high school boys held a variety of views about abortion. However, most of them seemed to believe abortion should be legal. So, just as we train volunteers to do, I asked these gentlemen a follow-up question. I tried to give different boys a chance to speak, so as I directed the conversation it took on a lively classroom dynamic.

These runners and I made great progress in the short half hour we talked. They seemed to think as quickly as they could run, and it was an enjoyable challenge to keep them on their toes. Our conversation followed a predictable pattern: First, they began to see the importance of [answering the central question](#), “What is the unborn?” before determining whether circumstantial difficulties would justify killing the unborn. Then I was able to help them sort through confusion they had about whether [the unborn is a living, human organism](#). We were even able to talk about whether or not [unborn humans share the same right to life](#) as [the rest of us](#). Finally, we discussed the difficult question of whether a woman’s right to bodily autonomy is so strong that it would allow her to kill another valuable human being inside of her. (I will discuss this topic in a future newsletter.) By the end of this exchange, even the most vocal of the pro-choice runners agreed that a woman **does** have certain obligations to a child who is completely dependent on her.

These young men eventually had to finish their run, but they left thanking me for the conversation. I was thankful, too – these young men were willing to take the issue seriously! I was additionally grateful to God that He gave me the grace necessary to talk to so many people at once. I was grateful that the pro-life boys in the group, who simply listened in, now had an example to follow. I was grateful that some young ladies from the cross country team, who listened in, stayed afterward to ask more questions. And of course, I was very thankful that the whole group of runners was finishing their run substantially changed: They were thinking more clearly about abortion, and they had a reason to continue the discussion further.

Joanna



JUSTICE FOR ALL TRAINS THOUSANDS TO MAKE ABORTION UNTHINKABLE FOR MILLIONS, ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

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