

because

**life**

is a **right**

*not* a privilege

**YOUTH DEFENCE**

KEEPING IRELAND ABORTION FREE

We believe in **Direct Action**- a strategy of bringing truthful information about abortion to those who need it most. Abortion becomes acceptable when abortion campaigners and the media are allowed to deny the humanity of the unborn child and the real nature of abortion and no voice is raised for mothers and babies.

Our pro-life work is an effective counterbalance to deceitful pro-abortion propaganda. Many Irish people have revised their opinions on abortion because of our pro-life strategies. Direct Action involves Education, Public Demonstration, Campaigning and Communicating



Labhras explains the different methods of abortion to young women during a Street Session in Cork

**Education is the most important aspect of pro-life campaigning.**

Youth Defence's Street Sessions are our own innovation and have been taking place across Ireland since 1992. They remain the most effective way of bypassing the media to educate people about all aspects of abortion.

Our Street Sessions bring groups of young people into the major towns and cities of Ireland. We set up Life Information Stands which display information about the development of the child in the womb, descriptions of abortion methods, details of crisis pregnancy help centres, and other helpful medical and psychiatric information.

For a period of three hours we distribute thousands of pieces of pro-life literature, gather petitions and answer questions.

**“Educated, articulate**

We serve those who are the victims of abortion- a dead baby and a grieving mother. Every year 50 million children worldwide are murdered by abortion. 50 million little bodies are torn and crushed and then discarded as human refuse. 50 million human beings shown no mercy, granted no justice. You can help to prevent Ireland from adding to the worldwide sum of this suffering.

Abortion is the greatest destroyer of life in the world today. Sadly, it has now become acceptable to sacrifice children on the altar of choice. YD are fighting for those children. We want you to join us! It may be the most important thing you will ever do.

We recognise that women are often a second victim of the abortion industry. Many mothers are deliberately exploited and given misinformation to cause confusion during a crisis pregnancy.

**Youth Defence**

- Inform thousands of young women of the wonder of the developing baby in the womb and the horror of abortion.
- Save many women from being physically or psychologically destroyed by abortion.
- Offer comfort, and direct towards counselling, those women who are suffering as a result of abortion.
- Produce literature dealing with the need to protect mothers from abortion and telling of women hurt by abortion.



Nicole and her newborn baby girl, Sarah

**“Youth Defence exposes our hypocrisies and what we do to our unborn”**

John Drennan Irish Independent

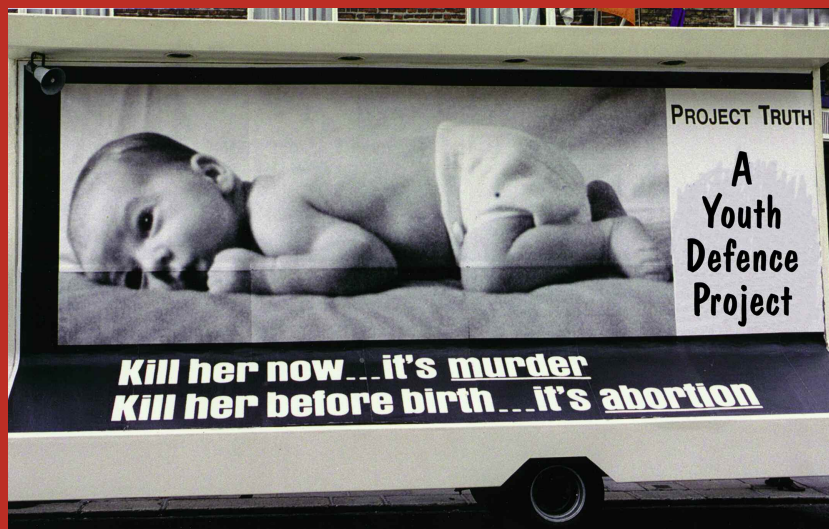


Most importantly, we meet and talk to people on an individual basis. This gives them the opportunity to ask questions which may have previously gone unanswered. Often a person who stopped to argue will leave with a newly found pro-life conviction.

Street Sessions have, on many occasions, changed young women's minds who were considering abortion. They are essential.

This kind of educational pro-life work is universally effective, whether it takes place in a small town, a busy city or at university or college events.

YD's Street Sessions are the only organised, consistent, public pro-life presence from which the Irish people can receive real information about abortion. **Join us on one today!**



**Project Truth Advertising Campaign :** YD's Project Truth displayed 110 billboards around the country.

The radio ad recorded for the campaign was controversially banned on the basis that it was political!

Collecting signatures against abortion: YD has collected over 300,000 signatures for life

people, the vibrant voice of Ireland's future"

The Evening Herald

## GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT



### Public Demonstrations

**Rally for Life 6 June 1992** - From the beginning it was obvious that YD was a different kind of pro-life group, being streetwise, vocal and very active. Our rallies in 1992 were the major factor in displaying the extent of pro-life feeling in the country

**Public Demonstration is an indication of public feeling.** Youth Defence organised and gave a structured voice to the pro-life majority in Ireland. Our public demonstrations include rallies like those in 1992 which brought tens of thousands of people onto the street; a annual commemoration for babies killed by abortion, which has received front page media coverage because of it's dramatic and innovative nature; and pickets on organisations and politicians who campaign for legal abortion.

In 1998, following 230 daily pickets, the abortion referral agency, Marie Stopes, left the premises they had occupied for 20 years.

## Campaigning

Youth Defence has campaigned ceaselessly since its foundation in 1992 to obtain a pro-life referendum and to oppose any attempt to introduce legislation for abortion. Our campaigns include high profile targeting of politicians who have responsibility for legalising abortion.

Political commentators have accredited Youth Defence action with the prevention of abortion legislation. *Project Truth* and the *Right Words Campaign* are examples of our highly successful use of pro-life advertising. We have also organised nationwide door-to-door canvasses and brought the pro-life movement together to lobby for a referendum.

**Sorcha and others campaigning for life** Our monthly Pro-Life Action Days are both innovative and colourful, using beautiful photos of preborn babies.



The Holy Father gives Niamh a gift of a rosary during Youth Defence's private audience in Castelgandolfo. He spoke with Niamh and John of his concern for Ireland saying, "Ireland is under attack" and urged Youth Defence to continue in their work. This tremendous honour was of great encouragement to Youth Defence.

In August of 1995, Niamh Nic Mhathuna and John Heaney of Youth Defence received an invitation to attend the private Mass celebrated by His Holiness, Pope John Paul II in Castelgandolfo in Rome.

After Mass the Holy Father spoke to Niamh and John in private audience and stressed the importance of Youth Defence's pro-life work. He spoke of the "good young people of Ireland" and of his love and affection for them and urged Youth Defence to "Continue in your apostolate and be courageous."

Following this tremendous event, Niamh and John met with Padre Cristiano-Mario Charlot, the Secretary of the Pontifical Academy for Life, who said in his letter of recommendation "that it is God's will to give effective daily help to Youth Defence in its good and just combat for the full defence of the lives of our brothers and sisters as they come to birth."

## "Continue in your apostolate and be courageous"

His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, Castelgandolfo Rome. August 1995

YD MEETS THE HOLY FATHER



## Communications

YD have become expert in pro-life communications. We produce a wide range of leaflets, cards, posters, videos, CD's and other materials designed specifically for the Irish public. We publish a bi-monthly magazine - *Solas* - which is distributed widely. Our *International Pro-Life Activists Conferences* have been acclaimed for their imaginative format and motivational powers.

Members of YD have appeared on all of the major current affairs programmes on TV and Radio. Our speakers are frequently asked to participate in University and College debates and we have regular information stands at third level institutions. We are also invited to give very successful multimedia demonstrations in secondary schools. Our websites have won accolades from surfers, not only in Ireland, but throughout the world.



Eoghan De Faoite speaking for life. YD are regularly invited to participate in conferences, college debates and radio, television and newspaper interviews

**"Most visible of the anti-abortion groups, fearless, commitment beyond doubt"**

Mary Cummins The Irish Times

# ACHIEVEMENTS

- Attracting more than 5,000 young people to work for the defence of life throughout Ireland
- Producing the best researched and most widely read *pro-life literature* for Ireland and ensuring that this information is as widely distributed as possible.
- Organising our hugely successful annual *National Pro-Life Information Roadshows*, reaching at least 22 towns every year.
- Designing Ireland's first pro-life *interactive website*, which receives almost 700,000 hits every year.
- Maintaining a pro-life majority in Ireland by informing a huge portion of the population as to the reality of abortion through our *educational work*
- Giving a voice to this majority, through *public demonstrations* and *organised campaigns*. Focused campaigns have ensured that abortion legislation has not been enacted.
- Organising Ireland's first nationwide pro-life *advertising campaigns*, which included bus advertising, billboards, radio ads and booklets. Since then other advertising campaigns have been produced regularly.
- Preparing and publishing a *water-tight, non-compromisory wording* for a pro-life referendum
- Giving mothers with a *crisis pregnancy* the information they need to protect both mother and child.
- Holding *conferences, media courses and training weekends* to produce articulate and confident pro-life activists
- Organising *public meetings* to educate those who have not yet heard the pro-life message
- Establishing an effective pro-life presence in colleges - through our affiliate *Ultrasound* - and giving multimedia presentations and talks in *secondary schools*
- Contributing *comprehensive submissions* to the Green and White Paper Committees on Abortion
- *Defending the right to life* of the unborn child in the infamous 'C' case
- Assisting the foundation of *Precious Life* in the North, and *Youth Defence Australia*, who are putting abortion back on the agenda in their own countries.
- Founding *Youth Defence International* to form an international movement of young people dedicated to re-establishing a pro-life culture.

FIGHTING FOR LIFE



Answering questions during our weekly Street Information Sessions



A demonstration during the 2nd International Pro-life Activists Conference organised by YD



Reading YD pro-life literature received at one of our Annual National Information Roadshows

## Youth Defence - the cutting edge of the pro-life movement

Carol Coulter Irish Times

We began protecting life in February of 1992 when seven young people came together in Dublin to form Youth Defence. At that time, the X case posed a very real and terrible threat to unborn babies, and voices were not being in defence of these children.

We saw a slick, organised lobby, who didn't represent the majority of Irish people, screaming for a right to legal abortion. We felt it was time to put an end to the madness.

It was time for young people to make their voices heard against abortion. Youth Defence is Ireland's largest and most successful pro-life organisation.



**Making a stand for life.** Youth Defence organise young people to work together against abortion. We work together to keep Ireland abortion free

## “Something new and exciting which the media can't dismiss”

### Nick Lowry Brandsma Review



YD holds very successful **International Pro-life Activists Conferences** which attract visitors from around the globe. They are now considered a must-do on the pro-life calendar.

#### *We exist to protect life from the moment of conception*

- YD works to educate the Irish people as to the reality of abortion with emphasis on the distribution of factual pro-life information on a nationwide basis.
- Young people are a powerful voice in defence of unborn children. YD organises Irish youth in an effective lobby for the unborn.
- YD are a consistent and determined voice for the voiceless, ensuring that Irish politicians are made aware of majority opposition to abortion.
- YD believes in the power of action. Belief without action is like a body without breath. The time to act is now, before Ireland joins the rest of the world in the slaughter of innocent children.
- The Supreme Court decision in the X case sought to legalise abortion. YD lobbies to ensure that abortion legislation is not brought forward
- YD campaign for a properly worded referendum which will establish full protection for unborn children from the moment of conception. We reject the undemocratic proposal of abortion legislation which can only provide for some form of legal abortion.



**YOUTHDEFENCE**