

## AN OPEN LETTER TO MY GENERATION ON BEING PRO-LIFE – Olivia Boyd

If you were to discover that I'm pro-life, you may immediately assume that I'm anti women's rights or that I wave placards at women who are struggling with a life-changing choice. There can be a stigma attached to the pro-life view because it's so heavily debated and divisive in the political sphere. But abortion isn't a political issue, it's a moral issue. We are becoming a generation that is awakening to the reality that it is a moral issue, and we have a responsibility to be a voice for life.

We are now aware more than ever of the developmental stages in the womb. Although in high school you may be taught that it's normal to have an abortion and the unborn life is not a real person, biology clearly demonstrates that a human life is living from the moment of conception. The baby's heartbeat starts around 16-21 days from conception. At seven weeks post-conception, the baby is already 16-18cm long, and at nine weeks they're practicing breathing motions. By week 11 most of their major organs have developed. Where our parents and grandparents may have been taught that a pregnancy was just a clump of cells, our generation have seen ultrasounds and read of how an unborn child can feel emotion. We know that this life within the womb is an unborn person, a separate body within a woman's body, and worthy of being protected.

With all the knowledge we now have, it's time for us to step forward and use our voice to defend the unborn life. A new cultural revolution needs to break out among our generation, one that seeks to protect the vulnerable and renew our thinking on the value of human life. Without it, we will cease to find hope for our shared future, and our own children will inherit a world that we have left to where the sanctity of life is no longer upheld.

Despite the biological facts and our moral responsibility, New Zealand's Abortion Act 2019 is one of the most extreme laws in the world. It allows termination up to birth and safeguards are almost non-existent. We as the future parents of New Zealanders need to stand up for our future children's rights. We need to ignite a movement in our generation. This starts when we begin learning, formulating our own ideas, and uniting our voices together.

So what can you do about this? If you want to practically have a voice, you can participate in a march for life to send a clear message that change is needed. Many thousands around the world are already joining the pro-life movement and holding peaceful marches in support of unborn life and their families. You can get behind the organisations who are already supporting women with unplanned pregnancies by providing counselling and options such as adoption. Help to raise awareness by staying informed and speak with your peers about our responsibility to work together to protect the unborn.

Let history remember our generation as one that helped to turn the tide of apathy and disregard for the unborn life, and that we fought for life in the womb to be valued and protected.