



THE INSTITUTE FOR PRO-LIFE ADVANCEMENT

an initiative of Students for Life of America

In December 2014 and January/February 2016, Students for Life commissioned several polls with the Barna Group. The questions we asked them to research revolved around the overall millennial views of the pro-life movement, abortion, and Planned Parenthood; the use of graphic/abortion victims imagery with millennials; as well as pastor views and involvement in our movement. The following paper is a summary of the first portion of that research as well as our unique experience at Students for Life starting and leading more than 1,000 millennial-lead pro-life groups on campuses nationwide.

VIEWS OF MILLENNIALS ABOUT PLANNED PARENTHOOD

INTRODUCTION

Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion business, has been receiving federal tax dollars for decades, but it has only begun to receive national attention once James O'Keefe, Lila Rose, David Daleiden and other investigative journalists were able to put them on the map for unsavory business practices with the use of undercover video projects starting in 2007.

Building on research conducted by other pro-life groups, such as Life Dynamics, in the past, Rose compiled a trove of undercover video projects that showed Planned Parenthood covering up rape and incest, aiding and abetting sex traffickers, taking money earmarked specifically to abort black babies, and skirting mandatory reporting laws. Students for Life of America (SFLA) helped to organize black pastors in 2008 to expose Planned Parenthood for the white supremacist beliefs of their founder, Margaret Sanger, and organize the first public press conferences calling for Planned Parenthood's defunding. Since 2008, SFLA continued our advocacy on campuses, which included the launch of our "Planned Parenthood Project" national tours in 2013 and the "We Don't Need Planned Parenthood" tour in 2016.

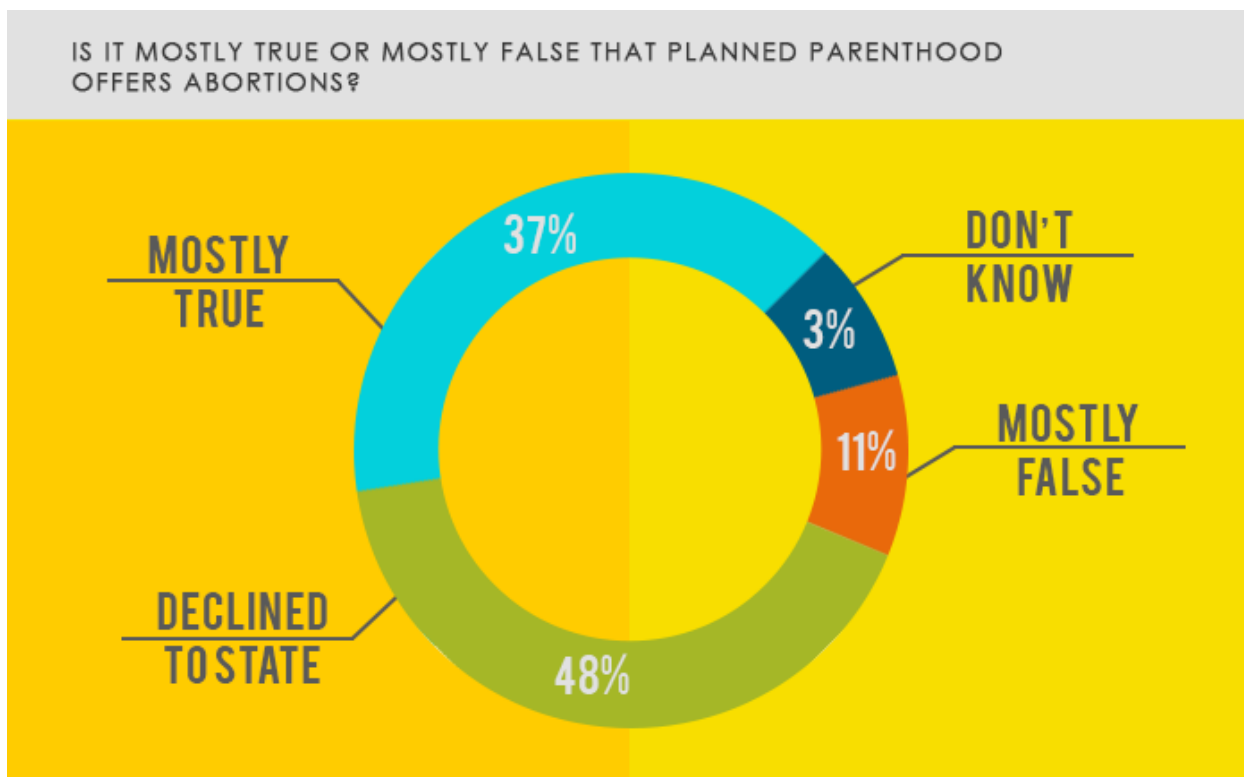
But it was David Daleiden's group, the Center for Medical Progress (CMP), which released undercover video footage of high-level Planned Parenthood executives casually discussing how to maximize profits from selling the body parts of aborted babies, that finally forced Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards to formally address the evidence and for Congress and multiple states to investigate the abortion industry on a massive scale.

The first CMP videos were released in July 2015. SFLA conducted polling in February 2016, to gauge how Planned Parenthood was perceived by millennials in the wake of the scandal and to measure the damage the CMP videos inflicted on Planned Parenthood's brand.

STUDENTS FOR LIFE'S 2012 POLLING¹

Previously in 2012, SFLA conducted polling to gauge how millennials (aged 18-24) felt about Planned Parenthood and what they knew about the organization, allowing us to have helpful data for contrasting opinions before and after the CMP videos. In that poll, 66% percent of millennials had a favorable opinion of the abortion giant and only 11% had an unfavorable opinion.

The 2012 poll also asked if it was 'mostly true' or 'mostly false' that Planned Parenthood offers abortions. Here's what they said:



When asked whether taxpayer dollars should go to groups like Planned Parenthood, which provide family services as well as abortion, 53% said yes and 29% said no.

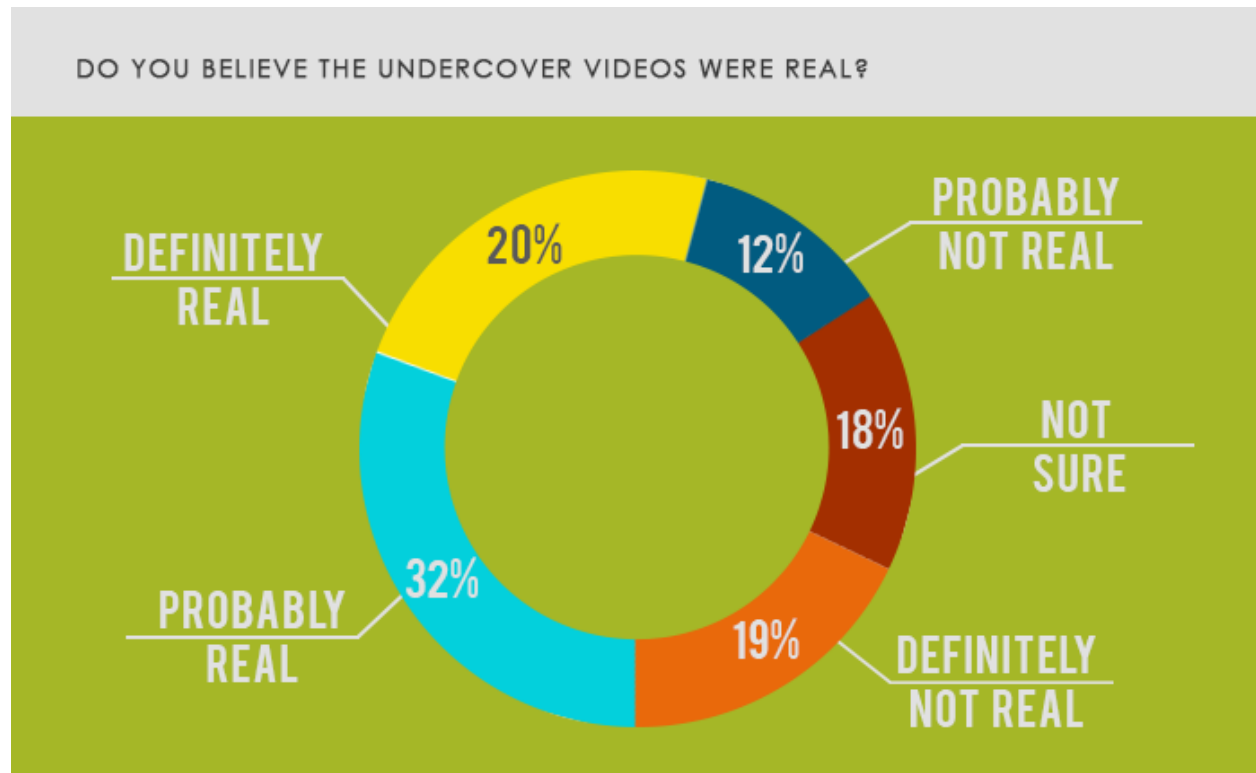
¹ <http://studentsforlife.org/sfla-releases-poll-results-on-young-people-abortion-and-the-2012-election/>

STUDENTS FOR LIFE'S 2016 POLLING

While the pro-life movement had spent over eight years exposing Planned Parenthood by means of undercover videos before the Center for Medical Progress came on the scene, it was CMP videos that ultimately drove home the reality of Planned Parenthood's criminal activity and launched the conversation into the national spotlight. Students for Life investigated the question of how many millennials had heard of the CMP videos and what effect the videos had on their perception of Planned Parenthood.

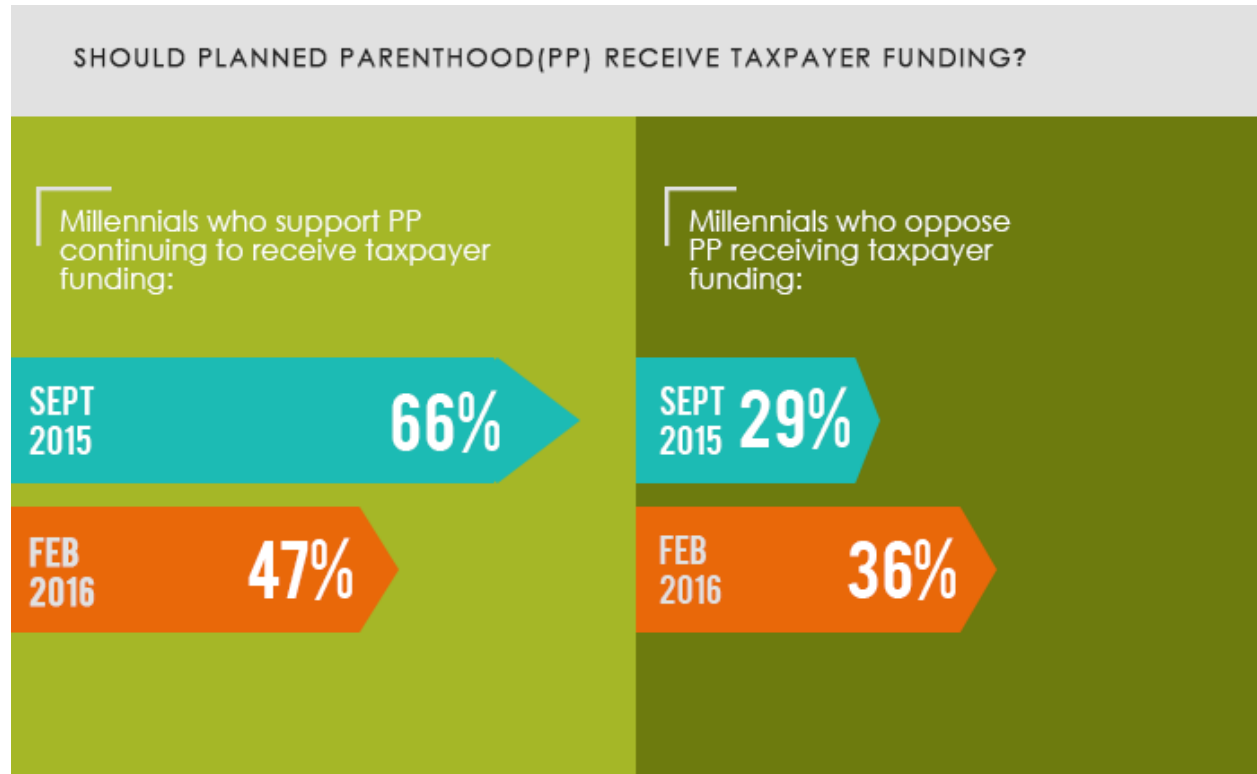
Polling conducted in February 2016,² (about 7 months after the first CMP video was released), revealed that approximately half (54%) of the 803 millennials surveyed had heard about or seen the Planned Parenthood undercover videos.

Of those who had heard about or seen the videos, **52% said they believed the videos were definitely or probably real.** In an age of advanced technology and Photoshop, in our experience, millennials tend to be less likely than previous generations to believe that pictures or videos are real. Nevertheless, the CMP videos gained credibility among most millennials who had seen them.



² Polling conducted by Barna Group and commissioned by Students for Life. Millennials defined as those born between 1985 and 1998 (ages 18-31 at time of polling).

Although only a slight majority of millennials report believing the CMP videos are real, **a market shift in millennials’ opinion on taxpayer funding for the abortion business has occurred.** A Quinnipiac [poll conducted](#) September 2015, found that 66% of millennials said Planned Parenthood should continue to receive federal funding, while 29% opposed continued funding. SFLA-funded polling with the Barna Group five months later found that **47% of millennials said Planned Parenthood should “definitely” or “mostly” receive federal funding, while 36% opposed federal funding.** That is a **19-point decrease among millennials** who believe Planned Parenthood should receive taxpayer funding.



This survey was conducted shortly after charges (*one of which has since been dropped*) were filed in Texas against David Daleiden. At that time, **the two most common stories heard by these millennials were that the individuals who took the videos faced legal charges (34%) and that the videos were edited (30%).** That these pieces of information were apparently the most widely-disseminated on the issue is further evidence that the narrative controlled by the media pushes storylines favorable to the abortion industry-- a trend that must be corrected.

WHERE WE MUST GO FROM HERE

While the CMP videos did receive an enormous amount of earned media, the story didn’t reach half of millennials where they are: on social media, with their friends, on campus, and on their

phones. This is where the pro-life movement must be active to break through the pro-abortion echo chamber.

Additionally, [The Polling Company](#) did a survey late in 2015 on Planned Parenthood's image and came to this conclusion:

When we communicate three basic truths about Planned Parenthood being the nation's top abortion provider, that: senior officials there have been shown on video to be discussing the harvesting and trafficking of aborted baby body parts, and; engage in one-sided partisan electioneering, support for the organizations and their taxpayer funding tumbles. Planned Parenthood is not going to spend their millions telling the public about these practices but we can. And if we do, we do what is right morally and sound politically.

And, even though the following numbers aren't broken down by age group, the result is a clear indication that when people see the videos and learn the truth, they turn against Planned Parenthood:

After answering a series of questions on the baby body parts expose and hearing that Planned Parenthood is the nation's largest abortion provider, receives a half billion dollars from the government each year, spends millions of dollars in partisan political activities and was recently exposed on video as bartering the cost of baby body parts and fetal tissue, a 54%-majority say they are "mostly negative" toward Planned Parenthood. Public opinion toward Planned Parenthood shifts dramatically after respondents learn basic truths about the group.

The takeaway we can glean from polling on American perceptions of Planned Parenthood is that exposing Planned Parenthood's unsavory activity is effective and finding new ways to expose the abortion behemoth yields progress. When Americans see what happens behind the closed doors of Planned Parenthood facilities across the country, their support drops dramatically as they realize Planned Parenthood's *modus operandi* is incongruous with the image they project of being an advocate for women's health.