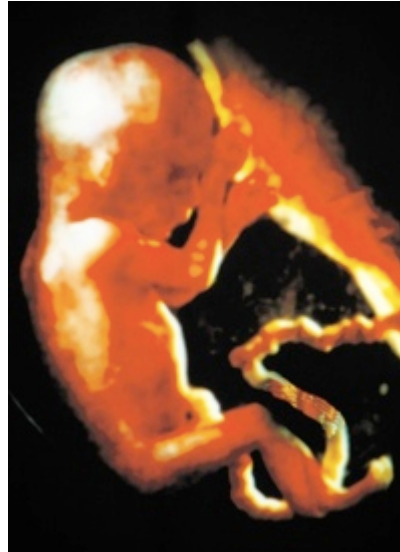




Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on November 10, 2009

HHS Promotes Embryo Donation

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has recently awarded \$2.18 million in grants to launch a public awareness campaign about embryo donation and adoption. The organizations receiving portions of the grant money are Baptist Health Foundation, Nightlight Christian Adoptions, the National Embryo Donation Center (NEDC), Bethany Christian Services, RESOLVE Inc., and Rosenberg Communications. Embryo donation is a process whereby a woman donates her unused embryos after she becomes pregnant by in-vitro fertilization (IVF). The donated embryos can then be adopted by another woman who also undergoes IVF and raises the child as her own.



“As part of [a]... public awareness campaign supported with grants funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, I am able to travel nationwide to educate people about embryo donation and adoption,” said Debby Frederes, Public Relations Manager for NEDC, in a press release. NEDC received \$476,225 of the HHS grant money and has received other public awareness grants since 2005. [OneNewsNow](#) reports that NEDC Medical Director Dr. Jeffrey Keenan said two campaigns are planned with the newest grant. The first will target doctors and other professionals. The second will be a more broad-based campaign “using media such as Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, Constant Contact, mass e-mails, Twitter, podcasts, webinars, and other web-based media” said Keenan. The HHS press release explains that Internet media “will complement traditional media, conferences, seminars and individualized counseling to promote ... embryo donation and adoption.”

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Rosenberg Communications, the only for-profit recipient of the grant money, received \$339,835 from HHS. It plans to contribute to the campaign with market research about current embryo donors to promote the idea among potential donors. It will also develop a marketing program and report its findings back to HHS. Bethany Christian Service will use its \$499,577 to provide counseling needs for embryo donors and adopters. Nightlight Christian Adoptions is using a portion of its \$500,000 to conduct “a law student essay competition to raise awareness and increase interest in embryo donation and adoption within the legal community.” It has also launched three new videos on the web at [embryoadooption.org](#). [RESOLVE, Inc.](#) announced that it will employ its \$367,127 to “develop a series of educational modules” targeted at training the staffs of fertility clinics about embryo donation.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is planning to finalize a document later this month that opposes embryo donation and adoption. [Independent Catholic News](#) reported the document, *Life-Giving Love in an Age of Technology*, states the Catholic Church’s stand on modern approaches to treating infertility. It says that reproductive treatments like in vitro fertilization, embryo donation and



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adoption, cloning and surrogacy, “are not legitimate ways to solve those problems.” The document goes on to explain the difference between ethical and non-ethical choices. It says the ethical alternatives such as medical or hormonal treatment and natural family planning “do not substitute for the married couple’s act of loving union; rather, they assist this act in reaching its potential for giving rise to a new human life.” The Conference will meet in Baltimore November 16 - 19 to debate the document, which will become official if approved by a two-thirds majority of bishops.



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