



## Position Statement on Human Embryo and Fetal Tissue Research

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### A Focus on the Family Position Statement

**F**ocus on the Family adamantly opposes the use of human embryos or tissue from aborted babies in medical research. We regard it as unconscionable that preborn life is destroyed (or created) and used for purposes of scientific experimentation.

We further believe it to be one of the most profound signs of depravity in our society that government officials and leaders in the medical community have sanctioned this practice. For instance, in his first year in office President Clinton signed into law the National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act of 1993, which authorizes government-funded research using tissue from aborted babies. The American Medical Association, among other members of the medical and scientific communities, vigorously applauded this move.

One of Focus on the Family's guiding principles is respect for the sanctity of human life. We hold that each and every life is sacred, a precious and inviolable gift from our Creator, beginning at conception (fertilization). We also firmly believe that the taking of innocent life is a role specifically relegated to God and is, therefore, explicitly not the domain of man.

Further, Focus on the Family maintains that each individual, created in the image of the Creator, is of inestimable worth — regardless of age, health, birth status or perceived value to society. We steadfastly reject the notion that some lives are of greater value than others.

In fact, Focus on the Family is deeply committed to the defense of the disadvantaged, the downtrodden and the defenseless. Without question, the most vulnerable and victimized members of our culture today are unborn children. Therefore, we will continue to remain a strong and vibrant voice in defense of these little ones.

In addition, we reject the premise that the use of human embryos or aborted babies in such research is defensible on the basis that it may yield scientific breakthroughs to aid the living. This is a morally bankrupt rationalization of abortion. Indeed, we devalue all humanity when we prey on those least able to defend themselves for the supposed benefit of others.

Yet another insidious aspect to this matter is that fetal tissue research may actually help to "legitimize" abortion, or make it a more attractive option, in the minds of some. We believe it not only feasible but virtually inevitable that some mothers, undecided and agonizing over the issue of whether to carry their babies to term, may be convinced that aborting their children is an altruistic act that will provide long-term benefits for society.

Lastly, we believe the present situation will lead — and already has — to even further abuses. For instance, a panel of the National Institutes for Health has recently endorsed the concept of creating embryos out the womb for the express purpose of destroying them in laboratory experimentation. Other concerns surrounding embryo and fetal research include harvesting of eggs from aborted female babies to be used for egg donation to infertile women; cloning human embryos for destructive stem cell research or live birth; the development of human parthenogenesis enabling scientists to manipulate a woman's egg to produce a one-parent pregnancy of female children, and the creation of chimeras - humans who would also have animal genes useful in research models.

In light of these considerations, Focus on the Family calls on our government, as well as the medical and scientific communities, to abandon the hideous practice of human embryo and fetal organ/tissue experimentation. Instead, these institutions should resume their rightful roles as protectors and healers of the American citizenry, both the born and preborn.

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The complete text of this article is available at:

<http://family.org/cforum/fosi/bioethics/facts/a0027738.cfm>

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