

# 5 Steps To a State-Wide Conference

A state-wide conference is a great way to provide training to students throughout your state.

**1. Recruiting students is the most important step.** Start recruiting as soon as you decide to do the conference. It doesn't matter if you have a great location, great speakers, great hotel rooms and great food if you don't have students. **Contact students who are in pro-life groups on their campuses, religious or political campus groups that may be interested and pro-life high school seniors (find them in Christian high schools or church youth groups).** Once you have a list of contacts stay in touch with them and on top of them until you see their smiling faces on the day of the conference. Get student leaders more committed by asking them to volunteer to staff the registration table, help with the meals or introduce the speakers. Make registration available online.

**2. Choose date, place, time and location.** Make sure it is a Saturday. The conference will probably run about one full day, from 9am-4pm for example. You may want to schedule a fun social activity, like a pro-life movie showing, for Friday night, provide hotel rooms for the attendees and then have the conference on Saturday.

If possible, hold the conference at a campus that won't charge for use of the rooms.

**3. Secure funding.** The good news is your conference should not cost much and fundraising for it won't be difficult. You will have a few different sources of funding for your conference. The attendees will pay a **conference fee**. This is beneficial for two reasons, it helps pay for the conference and payment means you have a real commitment. You will also seek out **sponsorships** from pro-life individuals or organizations to cover certain expenses like a meal at the conference or the hotel rooms for the students. It shouldn't be hard to get sponsorships, ask your state-wide pro-life organization or a pro-life politician. **Sell ads** in the conference book and **offer tables** at your conference for a fee.

**4. Book the speakers.** Decide which topics you want to address at your conference and start contacting speakers to cover those topics. **Many local pro-life leaders will come for free.** Pregnancy center volunteers, sidewalk counselors, post-abortive women, pro-life politicians and medical professionals all make great speakers. They can share their experiences, offer advice to students on reaching out to pregnant and post-abortive women and help them to better understand life issues. **Students for Life of America will send a staff member** to provide training in pro-life campus activism, recruitment, organization and fundraising. Include a list of your speakers in the press releases and press advisories you send out. The SFLA media guide has more information on getting media attention for your events.

**5. Hold the Conference.** Take lots of **pictures** and post them up on your website and facebook. If possible, arrange to have the conference video recorded. **Use the student leaders** you asked to volunteer in step one to make sure that everything runs smoothly. Your job is to give the opening and closing remarks, keep the conference on schedule and answer any press questions. **If you don't have a state-wide group already organized, this is a great time to start one.**

