

# Moscow Region Duma Holds Conference to Combat Abortion Rates

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The Moscow Region Duma held a conference — titled “Therefore choose life, for both thou and thy seed” — to promote chastity among adolescents and lower the abortion rate, the Duma's official web portal reported Friday.

The conference was dedicated to combating the growing rate of abortion in Russia and preserving family, motherhood and childhood values. Attendees included deputies of the regional government, NGO representatives and members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The conference aims to use lectures, seminars and conferences to promote chastity amongst young students and to oppose abortion, the official website reported.

Spokesman Igor Bryntsalov drew attention to Russia's national security strategy that aims to protect human life and the institution of family and morality. The Moscow region has shown natural population growth, but the abortion rate remains high — at more than 29,000 in 2015, he was cited as saying by the official website.

There were 930,000 abortions in Russia as a whole in 2015, the report said, citing official

statistics.

Irina Soldatova, the deputy health minister of the Moscow region, said that 85 percent of the time, the decision to have an abortion is the independent choice of the woman and done for reasons other than health: housing problems, strained finances, absence of husband, other children present in the household.

According to Soldatova, Moscow is actively developing a network to provide medical, social and psychological care.

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