



## Christian Voices for Life

### Weekly Pro-Life

Education

Prayer

Action

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## Abortions Common Among Female Track Athletes

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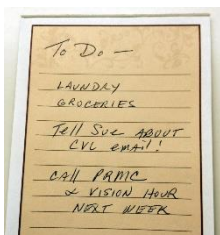
**Education:** “I literally don’t know another female track athlete who hasn’t had an abortion.” This shocking statement came from U.S. Olympic sprinter, Sanya Richards-Ross, in a recent interview with Maggie Grace of Sports Illustrated. (1) Ms. Ross had an abortion just before flying to Beijing for the 2008 Olympics. Although her doctor had advised no exercise for two weeks, she competed and won two medals. Later, however, she went from the heights of gold and bronze medals to “a depth of despair.” She wrote about her experiences in a book, *Chasing Grace: What the Quarter Mile has taught me about God and Life*. (1)

For any single female athlete, a pregnancy would clearly interfere with her ability to compete in important events, as well as affect what her family, church and colleagues would think of her. College athletes may be dependent on a track scholarship and be fearful of how their ability to compete will affect their education. Fortunately, Title IX, a federal law, protects students of all ages from sex-related discrimination. A pregnant athlete can continue to compete as long as she and her doctor agree it is safe for her to do so. She cannot be kicked off the team or lose her scholarship by reason of her pregnancy, as long as she otherwise participates. A “red shirt” season allows for an athlete to remain on the team, without competing because of medical reasons. Students for Life is an organization that works with students on both high school and college campuses. They not only educate students but have a Pregnant on Campus initiative to support pregnant students. This spring, they have helped two female athletes to choose life by educating them about their rights under Title IX.

1. “Olympian Reveals that Miseducation Leads to Abortions Among Athletes”, retrieved 6/21/17 from <http://studentsforlife.org/olympian-reveals-abortion-secret/>



**Prayer:** Dear Father God, please have mercy on young female athletes who may feel pressured to end a pregnancy in order to continue competing at their sport. Help them, and every pregnant woman to see their child as a precious gift, in spite of the difficulties that their pregnancy might cause. Help them to be well informed about their rights as a student athlete to be treated the same as any student athlete who is unable to compete for medical reasons. Help the parents and coaches of student athletes to accept a pregnancy and be supportive of the student, rather than pressuring her to abort.



**Action:** If you know a female student athlete or the parent of one, mention to them that you were surprised to learn that abortions were common among female athletes. Although you can understand a little of the pressure they might have been under, surely no athletic goal is worth sacrificing a child’s life. As much as you are proud of someone’s athletic ability, and want to encourage them to pursue excellence, make it clear that if one of the athlete’s teammates were to get pregnant, they should be aware of their rights

as a student athlete under Title IX, and deserve to have the support they need to continue their pregnancy.