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10,000 legal abortions each year

AT LEAST 10,000 legal abortions are carried out in Hongkong each year, representing the termination of about 12½ per cent of all registered pregnancies, according to the anti-abortion Birthright Society.

But a spokesman for the society, Mr Bernard Chan, said the figure did not include the illegal abortions carried out both here and across the border in China.

He urged that women be provided with more support services so they could keep their babies.

Mr Chan said his society saw only 20 women last year who sought to continue their pregnancy instead of aborting the babies. Half the women were students and the

rest were factory women, mostly unmarried.

Speaking at the "Pro-Life Walk" yesterday aimed to arouse public awareness for respect for the lives of unborn babies, Mr Chan said the society was formed in 1973 when the Government relaxed abortion laws.

Legal abortions can be made up to 12 weeks of pregnancy on health grounds and require the endorsement of registered doctors.

The Family Planning Association said that out of 4,099 applications to terminate pregnancies in 1986-87, a total of 1,642 were rejected.