



Briefly...

Policy Brief: Facts About Contraception

As elected officials, candidates, and pundits grapple with issues related to contraception, The National Campaign thought it would be helpful to offer a few key facts about unplanned pregnancy and contraception in the United States:

- A recent report found that 99 percent of American women who have ever had sex have used contraception at some point in their lives,¹ including 98 percent of Catholic women who have ever had sex.²
- Almost half (49%) of pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned, and almost half of these end in abortion (43%).³
- Contraception is an effective method for reducing unplanned pregnancy in the first place and, consequently abortion.
- Contraceptive services at publicly-funded clinics in 2008 helped to avert some 973,000 unintended pregnancies, which would have resulted in 433,000 unplanned births and 406,000 abortions.⁴
- A June 2011 survey from Public Religion Research Institute found that approximately eight in 10 (82%) Americans favor expanding access to birth control for women who cannot afford it, compared to only 16 percent who oppose it. Support is strong across all demographic, religious, and political groups, including the Tea Party.⁵
- A Gallup poll of evangelicals⁶ found that 90% supported contraception. In fact, 90% of the Board of The National Association of Evangelicals also supports contraception.⁷
- Two recent studies estimate that unplanned pregnancy costs taxpayers at least \$11 billion annually.^{8,9}
- In a recent survey of young adults, 85 percent agree that policymakers who are opposed to abortion should be strong supporters of birth control.¹⁰
- A recent study shows that if we were able to shift sexually active young women by even 15 percent from using no birth control at all to at least using something, both unplanned pregnancy and abortion would decrease by 6 percent. Further shifts towards more effective long-acting methods and towards more consistent and correct contraceptive use could reduce unplanned pregnancy and abortion by 27 percent which translates into approximately 600,000 fewer unplanned pregnancies and 200,000 fewer abortions each year.¹¹
- There is overwhelming evidence that providing publicly-funded contraceptive services for low-income women directly and powerfully reduces Medicaid costs. In 2008, the average cost for one Medicaid-covered birth was \$12,613. In comparison, the annual per-client cost for contraceptive care was \$257. For every dollar invested in contraception, the nation saves \$3.74 in Medicaid expenditures.¹²

About The National Campaign

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy seeks to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families. Our specific strategy is to prevent teen pregnancy and unplanned pregnancy among single, young adults. We support a combination of responsible values and behavior by both men and women and responsible policies in both the public and private sectors. If we are successful, child and family well-being will improve.

SOURCES

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