SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS: Fact Sheet

Youth Reproductive Health and Education

• Comprehensive sex education is associated with a 50% lower risk of teen pregnancy (Kohler, Manhart, & Lafferty, 2008).
• 15-24 year olds represent ¼ of the sexually active population, but represent nearly ½ of the new cases of STIs each year (Weinstock, Berman, & Cates, W, 2004).
• Nearly 7% of 15-19 year olds become pregnant each year (Kost & Henshaw, 2012).
• The teen pregnancy rate in the U.S. is one of the highest in the developed world – for example, it is more than twice as high as the teen pregnancy rate in Canada (McKay & Barrett, 2010).
• Compared to teens in Western European countries, teens in the U.S. have a similar level of sexual activity, but are less likely to use contraceptives (Santelli, Sandfort, & Orr, 2008).
• 55% of 7th-12th graders say that they’ve looked up health information online (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010). But that information is often inaccurate: a study of 177 sexual health websites found that 46% contained inaccurate information about contraceptives and 35% contained inaccurate information about abortion (Buhi et al., 2010).

Family and Pregnancy Planning

• 51% of all pregnancies in the United States were unintended in 2008 (Finer, & Zolna, 2014).
• The 2006-2010 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) found that 11% of women of childbearing age and at-risk for unintended pregnancy were not currently using contraception (Jones, Mosher, & Daniels, 2012).
• A woman’s ability to effectively delay and plan pregnancies can positively affect many elements of well-being, including education, employment and income, family stability, and mental health (Guttmacher Institute, 2014a).
• In 2012, 20 million women needed publicly-funded contraception. There were 8,400 safety net providers to help meet this need, but 57% of these providers were unable to stock certain methods of contraception due to cost (Guttmacher Institute, 2014b).
• 89% of all U.S. Counties have no identifiable abortion clinic (Guttmacher Institute, 2014c).
• 58% of abortion patients say they would have liked to have had their abortion earlier. 26% of women who experienced a delay in obtaining an abortion cite the time it took to raise money as the reason for the delay (Finer, Frohwirth, Dauphinee, Singh, & Moore, 2006).


