

## Facts & Figures

### *Background information on unintended adolescent pregnancies and contraception*

The global Your Life campaign takes a revolutionary approach to sexual education. It is directed at young people and pursues the vision of a world where every pregnancy is wanted. Unintended adolescent pregnancies are critical public health issues as the statistics below demonstrate.

#### The scale of the problem

- Of all pregnancies that occur worldwide each year, more than 44% are unplanned. Of these, more than half end in abortion.<sup>1</sup>
- Around 25 million unsafe abortions are performed each year, most in low and middle-income countries. 4.7% to 13.2% of maternal deaths can be attributed to unsafe abortions. Unsafe abortions result in an estimated 7 million complications.<sup>2</sup>
- Many countries have a high rate of adolescent pregnancy. Each year an estimated 16 million women aged 15–19 years give birth<sup>3</sup> and two million girls under age 15 become pregnant.<sup>4</sup>
- For women in this age bracket, pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death globally. The majority of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.<sup>5</sup>

Further reading: important facts and figures

#### Unintended pregnancy

- An estimated 214 million women who want to avoid pregnancy are not using an effective contraceptive method.<sup>6</sup> 155 million women in developing regions don't use any.<sup>6</sup>
- While the use of contraceptives has increased in absolute numbers, it has not kept pace with population growth. This means the number of women with an unmet need for family planning is projected to change little between 2015 and 2030.<sup>7</sup>
- A high percentage of abortion-related deaths and injuries could be prevented through sexual education, the use of effective contraception<sup>8</sup>, and the provision of safe, legal abortions with adequate healthcare.<sup>9</sup>

### Adolescent pregnancy

- Adolescent pregnancy is often not the result of a deliberate choice, but rather the absence of choices. It is a consequence of little or no access to school, information and health care.<sup>10</sup>
- The absolute numbers of adolescent girls with a live birth before age 18 are highest in these five countries: India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Indonesia and Pakistan. The five countries with the highest prevalence of adolescent pregnancies are: Niger, Chad, Mali, Guinea and Mozambique.<sup>11</sup>
- Unintended pregnancy can drastically alter a young girl's life. It can ruin her education and diminish her future job prospects. She becomes more vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, and often her health is threatened as her body is still in development.<sup>12</sup>
- The many health problems associated with pregnancy during adolescence include anemia, HIV and other STIs, postpartum hemorrhage and mental disorders such as depression.<sup>13</sup>

### Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Each STI is a threat to the patient's health, making them more susceptible to HIV, infertility and other reproductive health problems.<sup>14</sup>
- Young people are more vulnerable to STIs than adults. Those who become sexually active at a young age are – on average - more likely to change partners and increase their exposure. Young people are also more reluctant than adults to seek treatment for STIs.<sup>15</sup>
- Sexual violence puts girls and young women at greater risk of HIV and other STIs,<sup>16</sup> e.g. when they're forced into commercial sex or transactional sex for money, shelter or food.<sup>17</sup>
- In 2018 alone, an estimated 510,000 young people in the age group 10 to 24 were newly infected with HIV. At the same time about 1,6 million adolescents aged 10 to 19 were living with HIV worldwide.<sup>18</sup>
- HIV is the second most common cause of death among adolescents worldwide.<sup>19</sup>

- A study of four African countries found that fear, shame and prohibitive costs are the most common reasons adolescents can't access sexual and reproductive health services.<sup>20</sup>

### U.S.-specific statistics

- Between 1991 and 2013, teenage pregnancies decreased by more than 50%. Despite this decline, the United States still has one of the highest teenage birth rates among developed countries.<sup>21</sup>
- In the United States, around 77 percent of teen pregnancies are unplanned.<sup>22</sup>
- Repeated teen pregnancy is common in the United States. In 2017, nearly one in six births was to teenaged girls who already had one or more children.<sup>23</sup>

### Disclaimer

Your Life/World Contraception Day content does not necessarily reflect the viewpoints of the partners of the WCD Coalition.

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### About Your Life

The global campaign Your Life is directed at young people and pursues the vision of a world where every pregnancy is wanted. The annual highlight of the ongoing activities is World Contraception Day on September 26. To support the campaign and its goals, sixteen international partners form the World Contraception Day Coalition, which is sponsored by Bayer.

The partners of the World Contraception Day Coalition are:

- Asia Pacific Council on Contraception (APCOC)
- Centro Latinoamericano Salud y Mujer (CELSAM)
- DSW (Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevoelkerung)
- EngenderHealth (EH)
- European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health (ESC)
- Family Planning 2020 (FP2020)
- International Federation of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology (FIGIJ)

- International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
- Marie Stopes International (MSI)
- Pathfinder International
- Population Services International (PSI)
- Population Council
- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Women Deliver (WD)

#### Your Life supports:

- 120 Under 40, an initiative by the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Every Woman Every Child (EWEC), a movement committed to the United Nations' Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health

The campaign has a dedicated website, [www.your-life.com](http://www.your-life.com), where young people can get accurate and unbiased information on contraception. The content is presented in a straightforward and relatable way, without judging or lecturing.

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