

## 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 the 208 million pregnancies that occur worldwide each year, more than 41% are unplanned. Of these, nearly half end in abortion.<sup>1</sup>
- Around 22 million unsafe abortions are performed each year, mostly in low and middle income countries. They result in 47,000 deaths and over 5 million complications.<sup>2</sup>
- Many countries have a high rate of adolescent pregnancy. An estimated 16 million women aged 15-19 years give birth each year.<sup>3</sup>
- For women in this age bracket, pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death. The majority of these deaths occur in low and middle income countries.<sup>4</sup>

Further reading: important facts and figures

#### Unintended pregnancy

- An estimated 225 million women who want to avoid pregnancy are not using an effective contraceptive method.<sup>5</sup>
- While the use of contraceptives has increased in absolute numbers, it has not kept pace with population growth. This means rates of contraceptive use are effectively unchanged since 2008.<sup>6</sup>
- A high percentage of abortion-related deaths and injury could be prevented through sexual education, the use of effective contraception<sup>7</sup>, and the provision of safe, legal abortions with adequate healthcare.<sup>8</sup>

### Adolescent pregnancy

- Millions of girls are coerced into unwanted sex or marriage. In some countries, nearly one in two women has been forced into sex.<sup>9</sup>
- 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>
- Half of all adolescent births occur in just seven countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and the United States.<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 her health often suffers, in particular 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. So too does sexual coercion – including promises of money, gifts and upward mobility – which can motivate young women to have unprotected sex with older men.<sup>16</sup>
- Despite making up only 18% of the world's population, young people account for 42% of new HIV infections.<sup>17</sup>
- HIV is the second most common cause of death among adolescents worldwide. Between 2000 and 2012, HIV-related deaths increased by over 300%.<sup>18</sup>



- Many young people don't understand how HIV is transmitted or how it can be prevented.<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

- In the United States, around 75 percent of teen pregnancies are unplanned.<sup>21</sup>
- 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>22</sup>
- Repeated teen pregnancy is common in the United States. In 2013, nearly one in five 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, fourteen international partners created 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)
- Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)
- 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)
- The Population Council
- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- 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.

References:

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<sup>2</sup> WHO, (2015). Preventing unsafe abortion, Fact sheet N° 388, URL: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs388/en/> [07/08/2015].

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Statistics Division, (2015). *Demographic Yearbook 2013*. New York, NY: United Nations, URL: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2013/Table10.pdf> [07/08/2015].

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<sup>4</sup> WHO, (2015). Adolescent pregnancy, Fact sheet N° 364, URL: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs364/en/> [07/08/2015].

<sup>5</sup> Singh, S., Darroch J.E., Ashford L.S., (2014). *Adding It Up: The Costs and Benefits of Investing in Sexual and Reproductive Health 2014*, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 4-10, URL: <https://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/AddingItUp2014.html> [07/08/2015].

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Bradley, Sarah E.K., Trevor N. Croft, and Shea O. Rutstein, (2011). *The Impact of Contraceptive Failure*

on Unintended Births and Induced Abortions: Estimates and Strategies for Reduction. DHS Analytical Studies 2011, No. 22., Calverton, Maryland, USA: ICF Macro., URL: <http://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/AS22/AS22.pdf> [23/08/2017]

<sup>8</sup> WHO, (2015). Preventing unsafe abortion, Fact sheet N° 388, URL: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs388/en/> [07/08/2015].

<sup>9</sup> IPPF, (2013). Young people's rights, URL: <http://www.ippf.org/our-work/what-we-do/adolescents/rights> [07/08/2015].

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> WHO, (2015). Maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, URL: [http://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/topics/maternal/adolescent\\_pregnancy/en/](http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/topics/maternal/adolescent_pregnancy/en/) [07/08/2015].

<sup>12</sup> UNFPA, (2013). State of World Population 2013, URL: <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/state-world-population-2013-0> [07/08/2015].

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (2014). Reported STDs in the United States, URL: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/newsroom/docs/STD-Trends-508.pdf> [07/08/2015].

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