

Cynthia Dailard; Outspoken Women's Health Advocate

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Cynthia Dailard, 38, a senior public policy associate at the Guttmacher Institute, a nonprofit research and advocacy group on women's sexual and reproductive health issues, died Dec. 24 at George Washington University Hospital. She suffered cardiac arrest, probably caused by a previously undetected congenital heart defect, according to her family.

Mrs. Dailard worked at Guttmacher's Washington office since 1998. She wrote articles and spoke out prolifically on such matters as family planning, adolescent sexual behavior and favoring insurance coverage for contraception.

Cory Richards, a senior vice president at Guttmacher, said Mrs. Dailard's most recent large study, "Contraception Counts," was released in February and addressed state efforts to help prevent unwanted pregnancies.

Looking at funding, policies toward contraception and other guideposts in all states, the study ranked California first, followed by Alaska, South Carolina, Alabama and New York. Richards said the study "has the potential to be influential in terms of state-level advocacy."

Before joining Guttmacher, Mrs. Dailard was associate director for domestic policy for President Bill Clinton, legislative assistant and counsel for Sen. Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine) and a fellow at the National Women's Law Center.

She was a board member of the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association.

Mrs. Dailard was critical of a national movement to encourage abstinence-only pledges by teenagers without more comprehensive instruction in sexual health. She said those teenagers who vow chastity are less likely to use contraception when they have sex.

"It's hard to keep a condom in your pocket when you've promised not to have sex," she said.

Cynthia Boles was a native of Syosset, N.Y., and a 1990 graduate of Harvard University. She was a 1994 graduate of the University of California at Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law. She lived in Washington.

Survivors include her husband of 14 years, Scott Dailard, and their two daughters, Miranda Dailard and Julia Dailard, all of Washington; her mother, Ellen Boles of Syosset; a sister, Sandra Boles of Potomac; and a grandmother.

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