



State Facts About Unintended Pregnancy: South Carolina

National Background and Context

Unintended pregnancy can have significant, negative consequences for individual women, their families and society as a whole. An extensive body of research links births resulting from unintended or closely spaced pregnancies to adverse maternal and child health outcomes and myriad social and economic challenges.(1,2) In 2011, the most recent year for which national-level data are available, 45% of all pregnancies in the United States were unintended, including three out of four pregnancies to women younger than 20, and there were 45 unintended pregnancies per every 1,000 women aged 15–44, a rate significantly higher than that in many other developed countries.(3,4) If current trends continue, more than half of all women in the United States will experience an unintended pregnancy by the time they reach age 45. And economically disadvantaged women are disproportionately affected by unintended pregnancy and its consequences: In 2011, the unintended pregnancy rate among women with a family income lower than the federal poverty level, at 112 per 1,000, was more than five times the rate among women with an income greater than 200% of poverty (20 per 1,000).(3)

In any given year, two-thirds of women in the United States at risk of unintended pregnancy use contraceptives consistently throughout the year.(5) These women account for only 5% of all unintended pregnancies, while the remaining 95% of unintended pregnancies are attributable to the one-third of women who do not use contraceptives or who use them inconsistently. Public programs—notably Medicaid and the Title X national family planning program—are central to women's access to affordable contraceptive services and supplies and their ability to use contraceptives effectively. In 2014, 7.8 million women received publicly funded family planning services; these services helped women avoid 2 million unintended pregnancies, which would likely have resulted in 914,000 unplanned births and nearly 680,000 abortions (the remainder would have resulted in miscarriages).(6) In the absence of publicly funded family planning services, the numbers of unintended pregnancies, unplanned births and abortions in the United States would have been 68% higher—and the pregnancy rate for adolescents aged 15–19 would have been 73% higher—than they currently are.(6)

Unintended pregnancies are also costly to the federal and state governments, resulting in \$21.0 billion in public expenditures in 2010.(7) Yet, these costs could have been considerably higher: By helping women avoid unintended pregnancies, publicly funded family planning services saved taxpayers \$13.6 billion in 2010, or \$7.09 for every \$1 spent.(8)

Incidence and Outcomes of Unintended Pregnancy in South Carolina

- In 2010, 50% of all pregnancies (42,000) in South Carolina were unintended.(9)
- South Carolina's unintended pregnancy rate in 2010 was 46 per 1,000 women aged 15–44. Nationally, rates among the states ranged from a low of 32 per 1,000 in New Hampshire to a high of 62 per 1,000 in Delaware.(9)
- The adolescent pregnancy rate in South Carolina was 48 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 in 2013. The national rate was 43 per 1,000, and state rates ranged from 22 per 1,000 in New Hampshire to 62 per 1,000 in New Mexico.(10) The majority (75%) of adolescent pregnancies in the United States are unintended, and adolescents account for about 15% of all unintended pregnancies annually.(3) Services are needed to support pregnant or parenting young people, regardless of the

planned or unintended nature of the pregnancy.

- In 2010, 57% of unintended pregnancies in South Carolina resulted in births and 29% in abortions; the remainder resulted in miscarriages.(9)

Public Cost of Unintended Pregnancy in South Carolina

- In 2010, 18,900 or 78.6% of unplanned births in South Carolina were publicly funded, compared with 68% nationally.(7)
- In South Carolina in 2010, the federal and state governments spent \$411.2 million on unintended pregnancies; of this, \$327.3 million was paid by the federal government and \$84.0 million was paid by the state.(7)
- The total public costs for unintended pregnancies in 2010 was \$26 per woman aged 15–44 in South Carolina, compared with \$201 per woman nationally.(7)

Preventing Unintended Pregnancy in South Carolina

- In 2014, 323,140 South Carolina women aged 13–44 were in need of publicly funded family planning services.(6)
- Publicly supported family planning centers in South Carolina served 100,600 female contraceptive clients in 2014. They met 31% of South Carolina women’s need for contraceptive services and supplies. Across the United States, such centers met 26% of need.(6)
- In 2010, public expenditures for family planning client services in South Carolina totaled \$33.7 million; this includes \$25 million through Medicaid and \$7 million through Title X.

Most states also use some of their own money (in addition to funds required to match federal grants) for family planning services. In 2010, South Carolina contributed \$1.6 million. (11)

- Publicly funded family planning centers in South Carolina helped avert 24,300 unintended pregnancies in 2014, which would have resulted in 11,800 unplanned births and 8,800 abortions.(6)
- By averting unintended pregnancies and other negative reproductive health outcomes, publicly funded family

planning services provided by safety-net health centers in South Carolina helped save the federal and state governments \$202 million in 2010.(8)

References

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