

**CENSORED**

# Pressure describes it all for today's teenagers

## Pregnancy affects many teens each year

**Birth control** - Nearly, hundreds of sexually active teenagers do not use birth control. If birth control is used, it is used irregularly. The 50 percent who have never used birth control run a high risk of getting pregnant. "I've had many a girl tell me she gave her pills to a friend because she wouldn't be needing them herself that week," says a nurse who works with pregnant teens (Spectrum Digest, May 1982). "When an education is offered, it too often is confined to diagrams of the uterus and ovary. A lot of kids have seen a lot of diagrams. What they don't know is how to use birth control."

Even with the availability of birth control, many teens do not use it. "It's as if being pregnant makes one immortal," says Linda Nessel, who works with the Pregnancy Water program at the YWCA. "There are a lot of girls who don't use birth control, and it's not because they don't want to."

Although many teenagers do use birth control, the consequences of teenage pregnancy are alarming. The risk of death to babies born of teenage mothers is nearly two times greater than the risk to babies born of women in their 20's, according to Planned Parenthood. Teenagers are

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TEEN ABORTIONS, 1976-1980

AGE	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Total	15,000	14,762	17,785	21,267	21,071
Under 15	257	256	260	283	262
15-17	1,945	2,229	2,894	3,071	2,876
18-19	2,400	2,247	2,566	2,800	2,787

**Teenage sexual activity** - Other statistics concern teenage pregnancy and abortion. The rate of sexual activity in the United States is alarmingly high. In 1980, 15 percent of teenagers were sexually active, up from 10 percent in 1970. The average age of teenagers who become sexually active is 17.5 years old.

**Teenage divorce** - 75 percent of teenagers who get married divorce within two years.

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