

# Trends in Abortion in the United States, 1973–2008

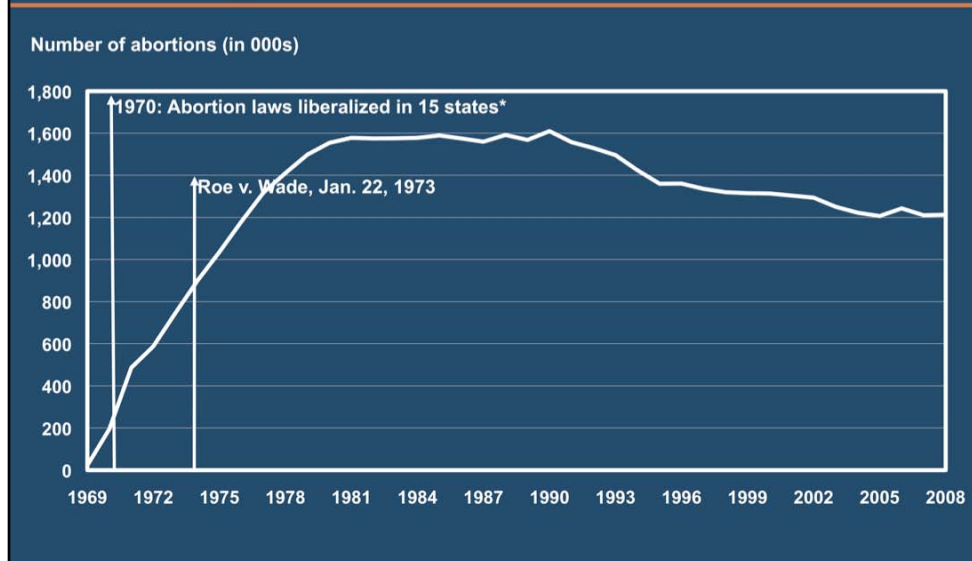
*Guttmacher Institute*

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Note: These slides were updated in January 2011 to reflect new national abortion rates and numbers.

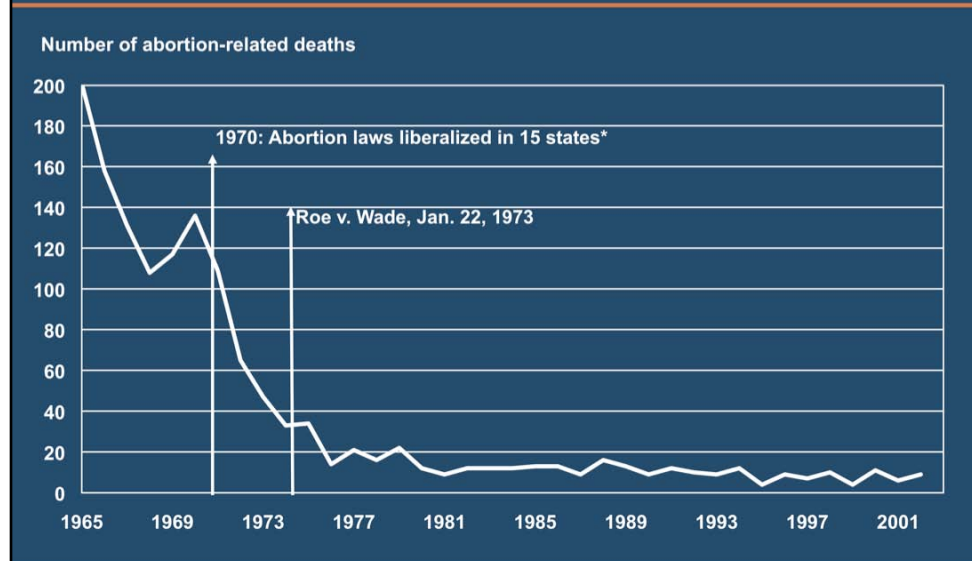
## The annual number of legal abortions increased through the 1970s, leveled off in the 1980s, fell in the 1990s and is now stable



\*By the end of 1970, four states had repealed their antiabortion laws, and 11 states had reformed them. The pre-1973 numbers listed are *legal* abortions.

Sources: **1969–1972:** Center for Disease Control (CDC) *Abortion Surveillance, Annual Summary, 1973*, Atlanta: CDC, 1973. **1973–2000:** Finer LB and Henshaw SK, Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):6–15. **2001–2002:** Finer LB and Henshaw SK, *Estimates of U.S. abortion incidence in 2001 and 2002*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 2005, <[http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2005/05/18/ab\\_incidence.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2005/05/18/ab_incidence.pdf)>, accessed May 17, 2005. **2003–2005:** Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16. **2006–2008:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

## Deaths associated with abortion declined dramatically after legalization

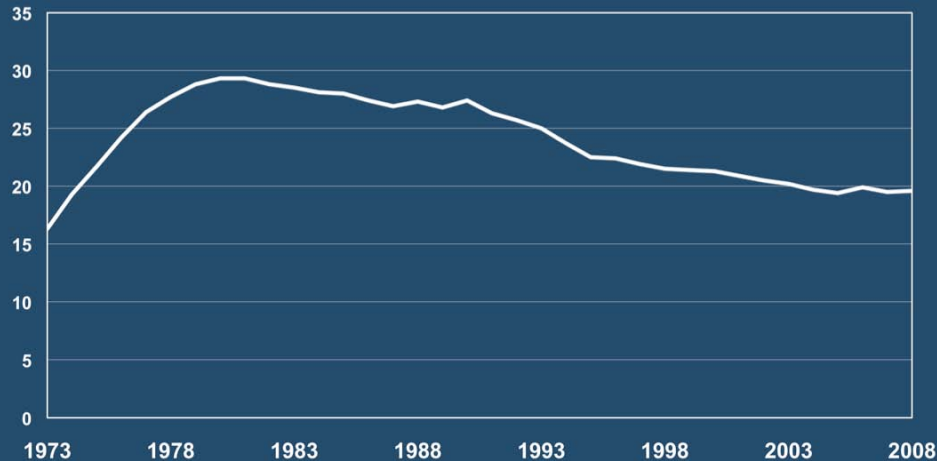


\*By the end of 1970, four states had repealed their antiabortion laws, and 11 states had reformed them.

**1965–1967:** National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1965: Vol. II—Mortality, Part A*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), 1967; NCHS, *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1966: Vol. II—Mortality, Part A*, Washington, DC: GPO, 1968; and NCHS, *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1967: Vol. II – Mortality, Part A*, Washington, D.C., GPO:1969. To distribute deaths categorized as “spontaneous or unspecified,” it was assumed that the ratio of deaths associated with spontaneous abortion to pregnancy and childbearing (excluding abortion and ectopic pregnancy) was the same as during 1968–1972 and 1965–1967, and that the remaining “unspecified deaths” were associated with induced abortion. **1968–1971:** Tietze C et al., The effect of legalization of abortion on population growth and public health, in: The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), *Abortion 1974–1975: Need and Services in the United States, Each State and Metropolitan Area*, New York: AGI, 1976, pp. 110–113. **1972–2000:** Strauss LT et al., Abortion Surveillance—United States, 2001, United States, 2004, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 2004, Vol. 53, No. SS-9. **2001–2002:** Strauss LT et al., Abortion Surveillance—United States, 2003, United States, 2006, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 2006, Vol.55, No. SS-11.

## The abortion rate rose following nationwide legalization, began to decline in the 1980s and is now stable

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15–44

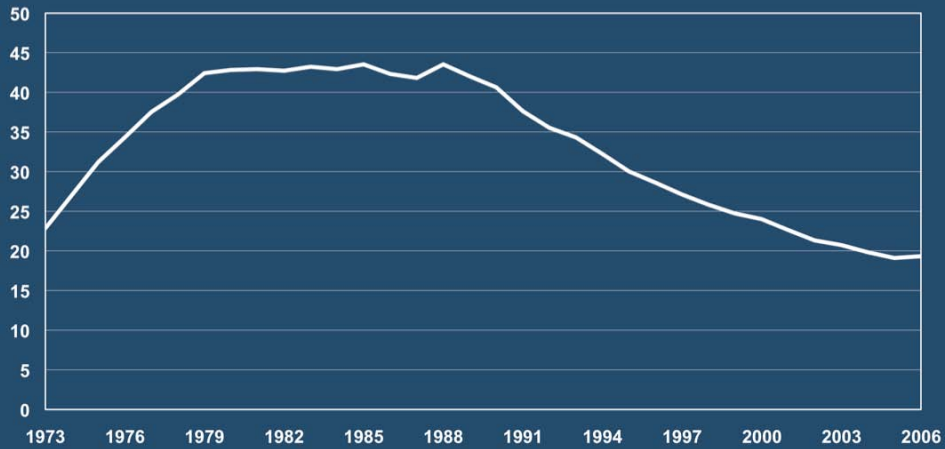


*Note:* Prior to the nationwide legalization of abortion, information on the number and rate of abortions was not gathered, and estimates of illegal and self-induced abortions varied widely. In the years immediately following the *Roe v. Wade* decision, the number of *legal* abortions grew rapidly for several reasons. The number of physicians trained and experienced in the procedure increased, and a nationwide network of outpatient abortion clinics developed that enabled women who would previously have had an illegal abortion, or would not have been able to obtain an abortion at all, to have a legal procedure in a medical facility.

*Sources:* **1969–1972:** Center for Disease Control (CDC) *Abortion Surveillance, Annual Summary, 1973*, Atlanta: CDC, 1973. **1973–2000:** Finer LB and Henshaw SK, Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):6–15. **2001–2002:** Finer LB and Henshaw SK, *Estimates of U.S. abortion incidence in 2001 and 2002*, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 2005, <[http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2005/05/18/ab\\_incidence.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2005/05/18/ab_incidence.pdf)>, accessed May 17, 2005. **2003–2005:** Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: Incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16. **2006–2008:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

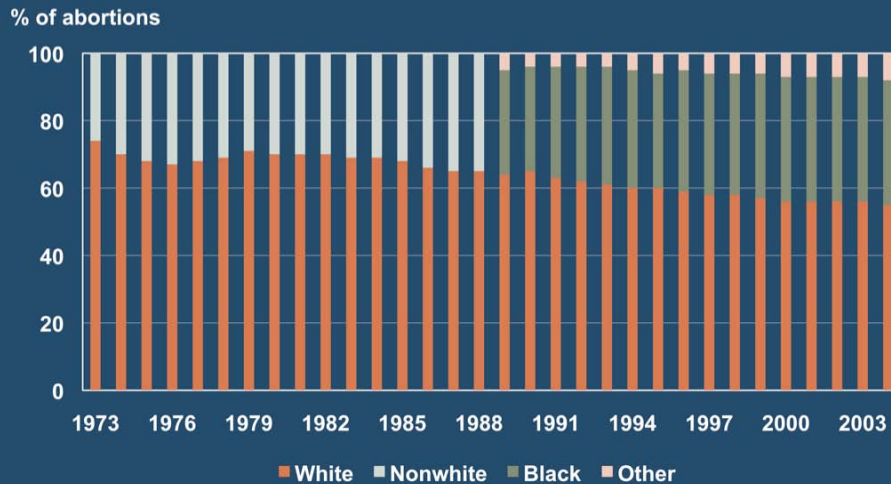
## The abortion rate among teenagers declined in the late 1980s and 1990s, and is now stable

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15–19



Sources: **1973–1985:** The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), *U.S. teenage pregnancy statistics with comparative statistics for women aged 20–24*, New York: AGI, 2001. **1986–1996:** Henshaw SK and Feivelson D, Teenage abortion and pregnancy statistics by state, 1996, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 2000, 32(6):272–280, Table 1. **1997–1999:** Special tabulations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states and applied to the total number of abortions in Finer LB and Henshaw SK, Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):6–15, Table 1. **2001–2004:** Distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states and applied to the total number of abortions in Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16.

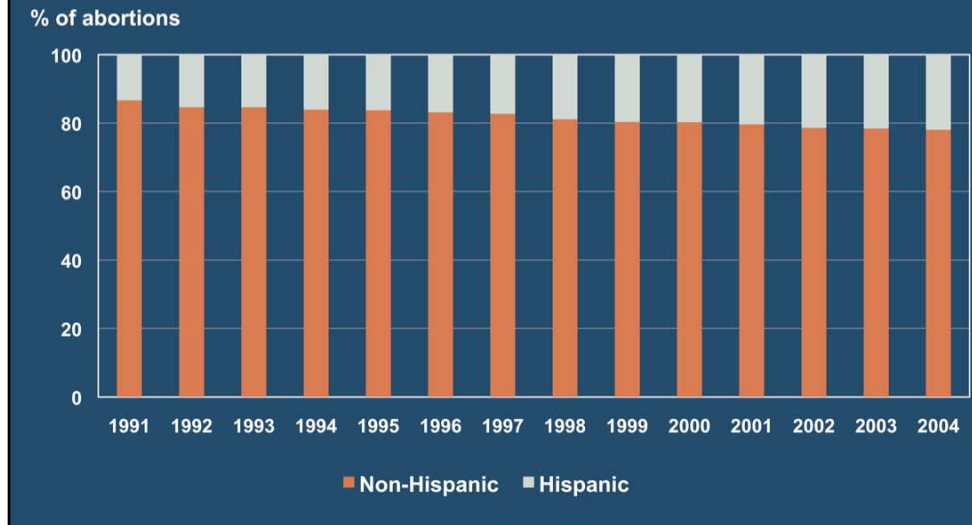
**White women account for the majority of abortions, but the proportion of abortions that are provided to white women has declined steadily**



*Note:* In 1989, the survey wording changed, and the nonwhite category was further refined into “black” and “other.”

*Sources:* **1973–1988:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, eds., *Abortion Factbook, 1992 Edition: Readings, Trends and State and Local Data to 1988*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1992, Table 3. **1989, 1993–1994, 1998–2004:** Special tabulations of distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states. **1990, 1995, 1997:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2001*, 121st ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001. **1991:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996*, 116th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1996. **1992:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1998*, 118th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1998. **1996:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2000*, 120th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

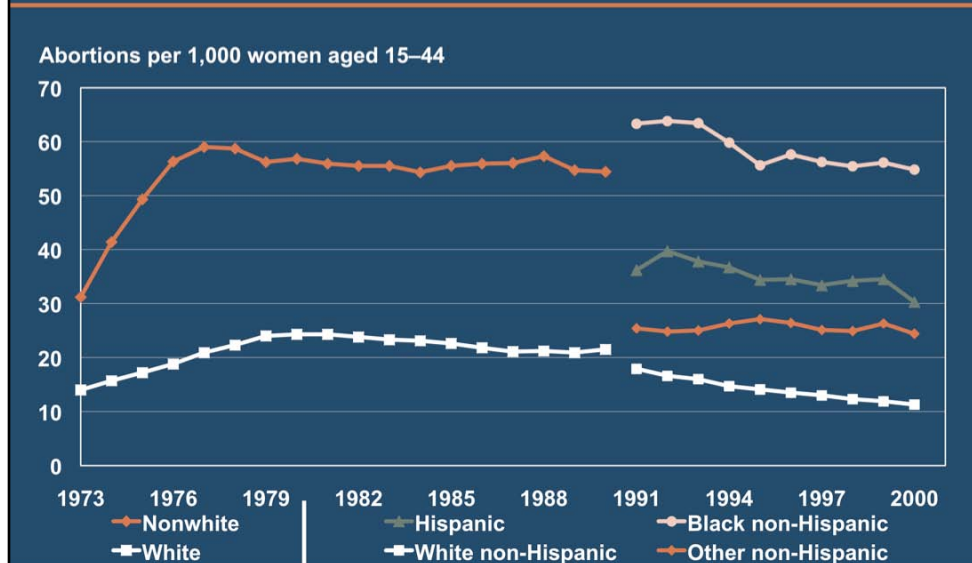
## The proportion of abortions obtained by Hispanic women increased between 1991 and 2004



*Note:* In 1991, the survey wording changed, and women were asked to identify themselves as white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, or Native American.

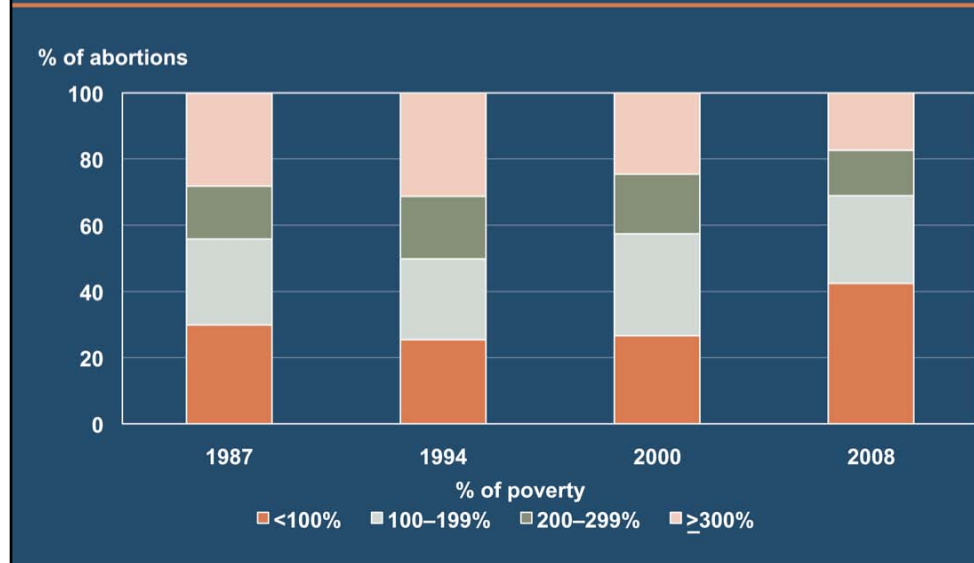
*Sources:* **1973–1988:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, eds., *Abortion Factbook, 1992 Edition: Readings, Trends and State and Local Data to 1988*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1992, Table 3. **1989, 1993–1994, 1998–2004:** Special tabulations of distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states. **1990, 1995, 1997:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2001*, 121st ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001. **1991:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996*, 116th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1996. **1992:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1998*, 118th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1998. **1996:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2000*, 120th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

## Abortion rates are highest among black and Hispanic women



Sources: **1973–1988:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, eds., *Abortion Factbook, 1992 Edition: Readings, Trends and State and Local Data to 1988*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1992, Table 3. **1989, 1993–1994, 1998–2000:** Special tabulations of population numbers obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau and distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states. **1990, 1995, 1997:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2001*, 121st ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001. **1991:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996*, 116th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1996. **1992:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1998*, 118th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1998. **1996:** U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2000*, 120th ed., Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

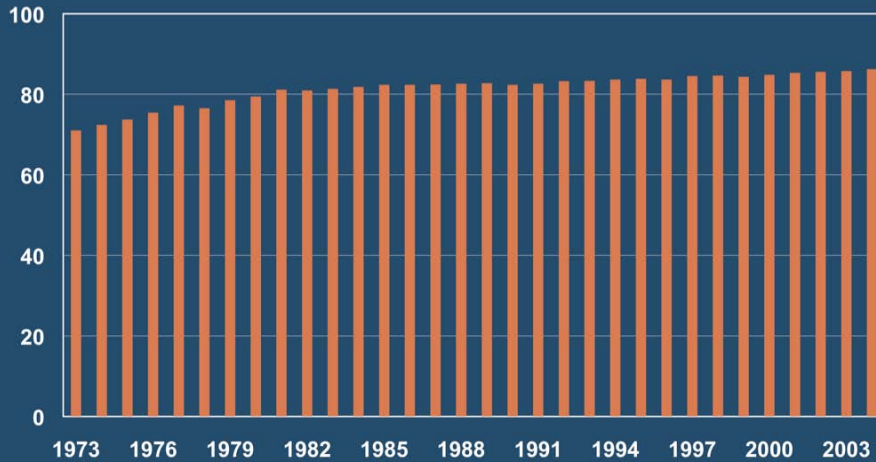
## Poor and low-income women account for an increasing share of U.S. abortions



Sources: **1987:** Special tabulations of the Alan Guttmacher Institute's Abortion Patient Survey. **1994, 2000:** Jones RK, Darroch JE and Henshaw SK, Patterns in the socioeconomic characteristics of women obtaining abortions in 2000–2001, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2002, 34(5):226–235, Table 1. **2008:** Jones RK, Finer LB and Singh S, Characteristics of U.S. abortion patients, 2008, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2010.

## More than 80% of women having abortions are unmarried

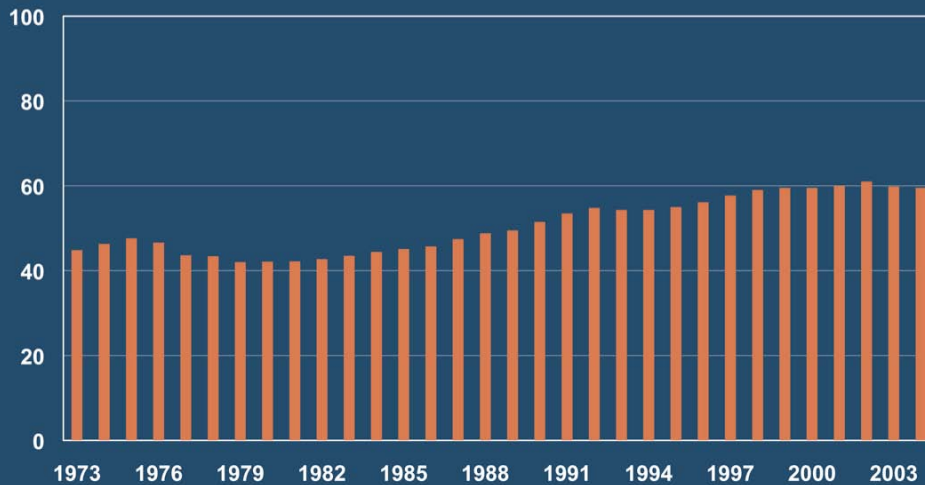
% of abortions obtained by unmarried women



Sources: **1973–1996:** Henshaw SK et al., *Readings on Induced Abortion, Volume 2: A World Review 2000*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), 2001, Table 7. **1997–2004:** Special distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states.

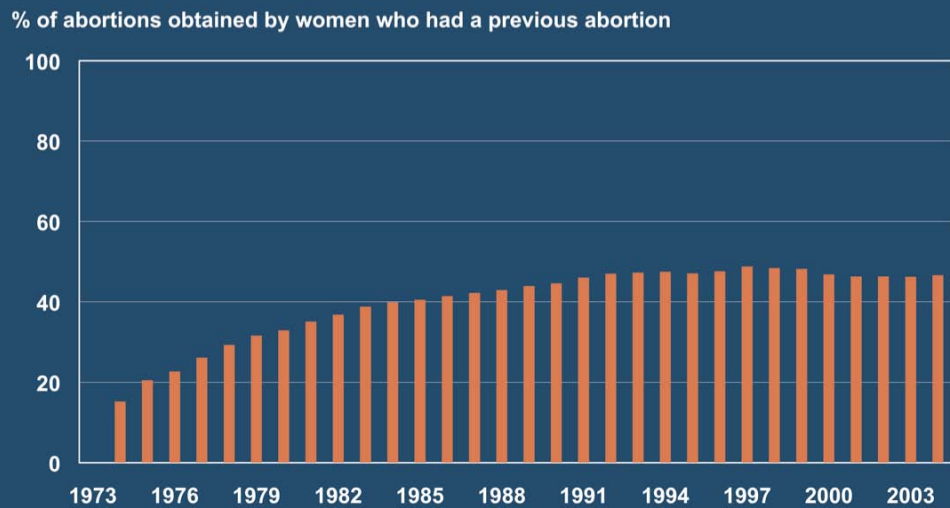
## Since 1990, a majority of women having abortions have been mothers

% of abortions obtained by women who were mothers



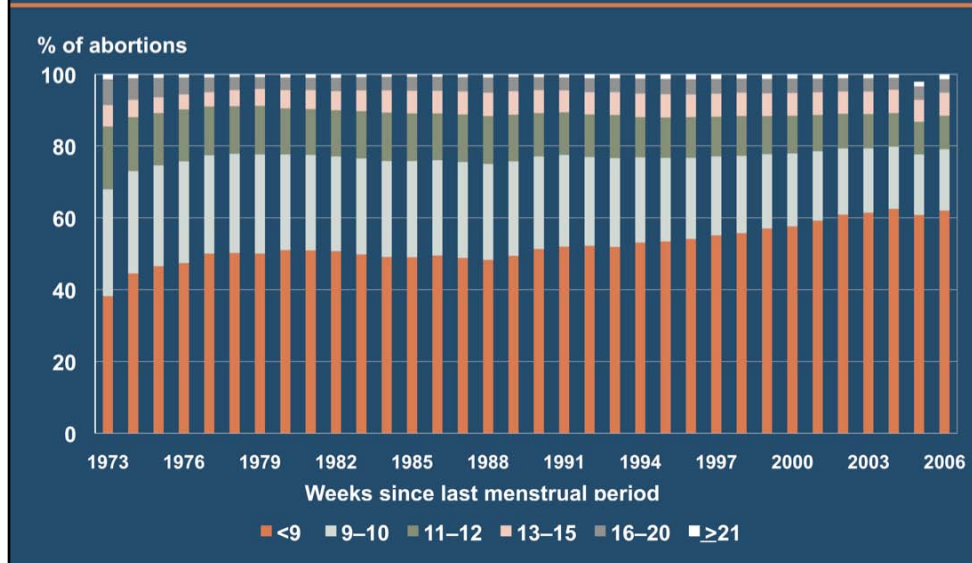
Sources: **1973–1996:** Henshaw SK et al., *Readings on Induced Abortion, Volume 2: A World Review 2000*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), 2001, Table 6. **1997–2004:** Special distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states.

## Many women obtaining abortions have had a previous abortion, but the proportion has stabilized over time



Sources: **1973–1996:** Henshaw SK et al., *Readings on Induced Abortion, Volume 2: A World Review 2000*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), 2001, Table 6. **1997–2004:** Special distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states.

## Nearly 90% of abortions occur in the first three months of pregnancy



Note: numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

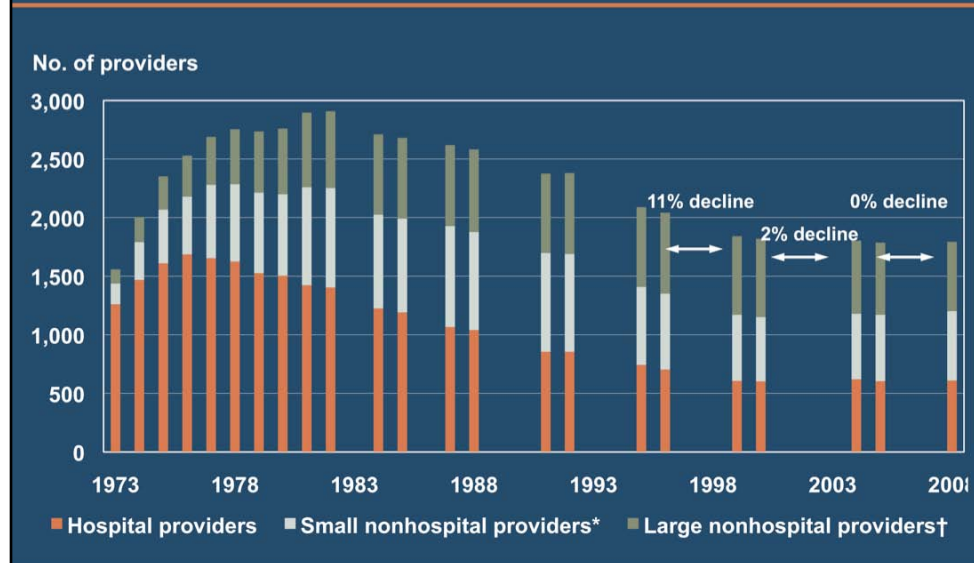
Sources: **1973–1988:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, eds., *Abortion Factbook, 1992 Edition: Readings, Trends and State and Local Data to 1988*, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1992, Table 5. **1989–2006:** Special distributions published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adjusted for year-to-year changes in the reporting states.

## Incidence of early medication abortion, 2008

- Early medication abortion accounted for 17% (199,000) of all abortions performed in nonhospital facilities, an increase from 6% in 2001
- An estimated one-quarter of eligible abortions (those performed up to nine weeks) were early medication abortions
- 59% of all known providers offered this service, compared with 33% in early 2001

**Source:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

## The number of U.S. abortion providers declined steadily between 1982 and 2000, but appears to have been stable in recent years



\*Sites providing fewer than 400 abortions per year.

†Sites providing 400 or more abortions per year.

**Sources:** 1973–1979, 1981, 1984, 1987, 1991, 1995, 1999: Special tabulations of The Alan Guttmacher Institute’s Abortion Provider Surveys. 1980: Henshaw SK et al., Abortion services in the United States, 1979 and 1980, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1982, 14(1):5–15, Table 5. 1982: Henshaw SK, Forrest JD and Blaine E, Abortion services in the United States, 1981 and 1982, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1984, 16(3):119–127, Table 4. 1985: Henshaw SK et al., Abortion services in the United States, 1985, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1987, 19(2):63–70, Table 5. 1988: Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, Abortion services in the United States, 1987 and 1988, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1990, 22(3):102–108 & 142, Table 7. 1992: Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, Abortion services in the United States, 1991 and 1992, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1994, 26(3):100–106 & 112, Table 5. 1996: Henshaw SK, Abortion services in the United States, 1995–1996, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1998, 30(6):263–267 & 287, Table 6. 2000: Finer LB and Henshaw SK, Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):6–15, Table 3. 2003–2005: Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16. 2006–2008: Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

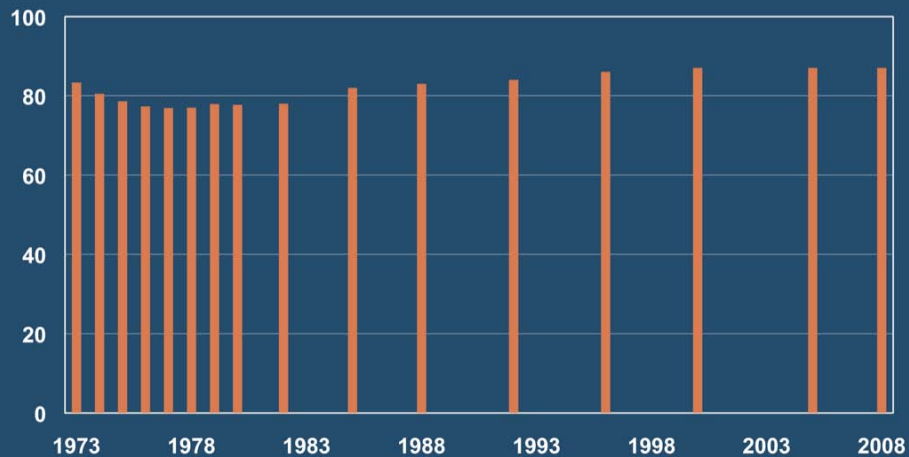
## Facilities providing only medication abortion had a significant impact

- A minimum of 9% of all providers (164) offered only early medication abortion; most were nonspecialized clinics or physicians' offices with small caseloads.

**Source:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

## The percentage of U.S. counties with no abortion provider remains high

% of counties with no provider

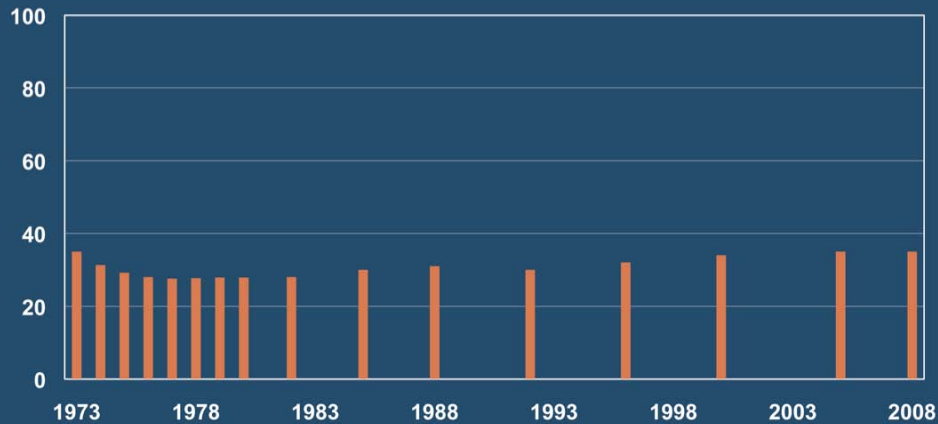


Sources: **1973–1980:** Henshaw SK et al., Abortion services in the United States, 1979 and 1980, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1982, 14(1):5–15, Table 3.

**1982:** Henshaw SK, Forrest JD and Blaine E, Abortion services in the United States, 1981 and 1982, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1984, 16(3):119–127, Table 3. **1985:** Henshaw SK et al., Abortion services in the United States, 1985, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1987, 19(2):63–70, Table 2. **1988:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, Abortion services in the United States, 1987 and 1988, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1990, 22(3):102–108 & 142, Table 5. **1992:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, Abortion services in the United States, 1991 and 1992, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1994, 26(3):100–106 & 112. **1996:** Henshaw SK, Abortion services in the United States, 1995–1996, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1998, 30(6):263–267 & 287, Table 3. **2000:** Finer LB and Henshaw SK, Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):6–15, Table 3. **2003–2005:** Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16. **2006–2008:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

## About one-third of women live in a county with no abortion provider

% of women aged 15–44 with no provider in their county



Sources: **1973–1980:** Henshaw SK et al., Abortion services in the United States, 1979 and 1980, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1982, 14(1):5–15, Table 3.

**1982:** Henshaw SK, Forrest JD and Blaine E, Abortion services in the United States, 1981 and 1982, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1984, 16(3):119–127, Table 3.

**1985:** Henshaw SK et al., Abortion services in the United States, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1987, 19(2):63–70, Table 2.

**1988:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, Abortion services in the United States, 1987 and 1988, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1990, 22(3):102–108 & 142, Table 5.

**1992:** Henshaw SK and Van Vort J, Abortion services in the United States, 1991 and 1992, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1994, 26(3):100–106 & 112.

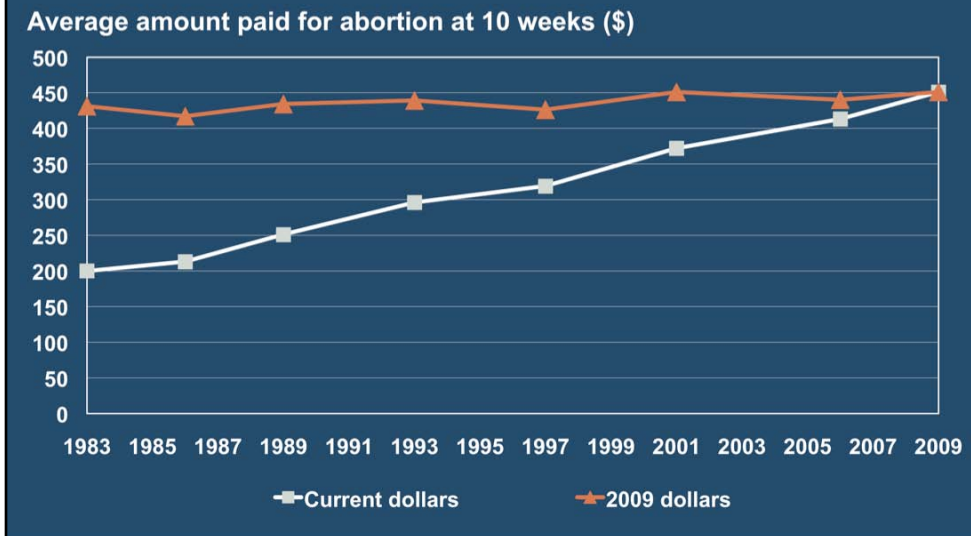
**1996:** Henshaw SK, Abortion services in the United States, 1995–1996, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1998, 30(6):263–267 & 287, Table 3.

**2000:** Finer LB and Henshaw SK, Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):6–15, Table 3.

**2003–2005:** Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16.

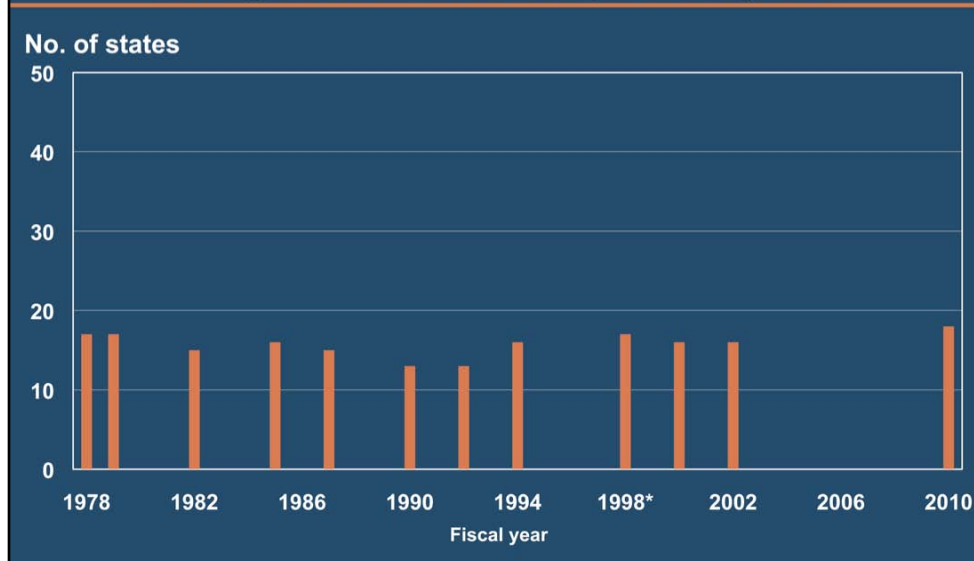
**2006–2008:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

## The inflation-adjusted cost of an abortion has remained relatively stable over time, despite increased restrictions and a decline in demand



Source: Henshaw SK, The accessibility of abortion services in the United States, 2000, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2003, 35(1):16–24, Table 2. **2003–2005:** Jones RK et al., Abortion in the United States: incidence and access to services, 2005, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2008, 40(1):6–16. **2006–2008:** Jones and Kooistra K, Abortion incidence and services in the United States, 2008, *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2011, 43(1):41–50.

## The number of states covering medically necessary abortions for women on Medicaid has changed little over the past 20 years

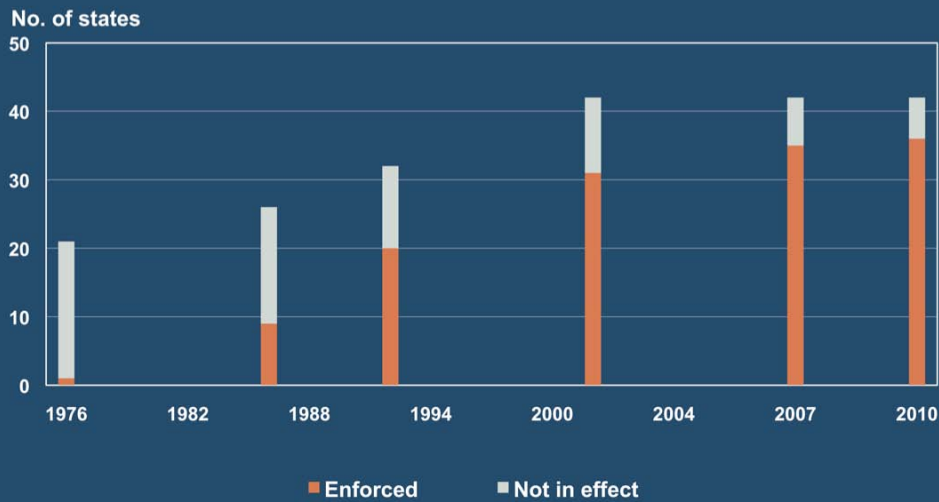


\*Arkansas funded only from January 1, 1998, to June 30, 1998.

\*\*Includes 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Sources: **1978:** Gold RB, Medicaid in FY78: states fund abortions, U.S. covers other 'family planning' services, *Family Planning/Population Reporter*, 1980, 9(2):28–34; **1979:** Gold RB, States spent \$74.7 million for 'family planning' services under Medicaid program in FY79, *Family Planning/Population Reporter*, 1981, 10(2):32–38; **1982:** Nestor B and Gold RB, Public funding of contraceptive, sterilization and abortion services, 1982, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1984, 16(3):128–133; **1985:** Gold RB and Macias J, Public funding of contraceptive, sterilization and abortion services, 1985, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1986, 18(6):259–264; **1987:** Gold RB and Guardado S, Public funding of family planning, sterilization and abortion services, 1987, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1988, 20(5):228–233; **1990:** Gold RB and Daley D, Public funding of contraceptive, sterilization and abortion services, fiscal year 1990, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1991, 23(5):204–211; **1992:** Daley D and Gold RB, Public funding for contraceptive, sterilization and abortion services, fiscal year 1992, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1993, 25(6):244–251; **1994:** Sollom T, Gold RB and Saul R, Public funding for contraceptive, sterilization and abortion services, 1994, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1996, 28(4):166–173; **1998-2000:** The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), The status of major abortion-related laws in the states, 2000; **2010:** *State Funding of Abortion Under Medicaid*, State Policies in Brief, Washington DC: Guttmacher Institute, 2010 <[http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/spib\\_SFAM.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/spib_SFAM.pdf)>, accessed Dec. 20, 2010.

## 36 states mandate parental involvement in a minor's decision to have an abortion



*Note:* Some state courts have enjoined the enforcement of laws whose restrictions they say violate their states' constitutions.

\*Includes all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

*Sources:* **1986:** The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), Family planning, contraception, voluntary sterilization and abortion: an analysis of laws and policies in the United States, each state and jurisdiction (as of October 1, 1976 with 1978 addenda), New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), 1976. Unpublished AGI memorandum, December, 1990. Unpublished AGI Memorandum, October, 2002. **1992:** Unpublished AGI memorandum October, 1992. **2002:** Guttmacher Institute, Parental Involvement in Minors' Abortions, *State Policies in Brief*, 2003, <[http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/spib\\_PIMA.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/spib_PIMA.pdf)>, accessed Jan. 6, 2003. **2007:** Guttmacher Institute, Parental Involvement in Minors' Abortions, *State Policies in Brief*, 2007, <[http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib\\_PIMA.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_PIMA.pdf)>, accessed Oct. 4, 2007. **2010:** Guttmacher Institute, Parental Involvement in Minors' Abortions, *State Policies in Brief*, 2010 <[http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib\\_PIMA.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_PIMA.pdf)>, accessed Dec. 20, 2010.

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