



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

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NEW POLLING SHOWS YOUNG WOMEN SEEK SEX AND RELATIONSHIP ADVICE FROM THEIR FATHERS

(Washington, D.C.) — New national polling conducted by Power to Decide shows that the majority of young women seek the advice of their fathers (over their mothers) about romantic relationships and sex. However, of the fathers surveyed, a majority questioned their influence on their daughters' views about relationships (66%) and sex (72%).

“Time and time again we see that young people look to their families as trusted adults,” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO, Power to Decide. “However, today’s survey results show that traditional roles of ‘mom speaks to daughter’ and ‘dad speaks to son’ no longer apply—if they ever did. Young women look to their fathers about sensitive issues and welcome their counsel. Dads play an important role in the lives of their children—including their daughters—and can provide positive guidance about sex, love, and relationships.”

Overall, most fathers do *not* view themselves as influential regarding their daughters' decisions about relationships and sex. However, compared to white fathers, fathers of color consider themselves more influential in their daughters' lives. While 32% of white fathers consider themselves very influential on their daughters' views on relationships and 21% consider themselves very influential on their daughters' views on sex:

- 43% of Latino fathers consider themselves very influential on their daughters' views on relationships; 23% on sex.
- 46% of African-American fathers considered themselves very influential on their daughters' views on relationships; 39% on sex.

Overall, fathers consider themselves more prepared to dispense advice to their daughters than they are to believe that they are influential.

- 54% of white fathers consider themselves very prepared to give relationship advice; 59% feel very prepared to give advice on sex, pregnancy, or birth control.
- 60% of Latino fathers consider themselves very prepared to give relationship advice to their daughters; 49% to give advice on sex, pregnancy, or birth control.
- 67% of African-American fathers consider themselves very prepared to give relationship advice to their daughters; 65% to give advice on sex, pregnancy, or birth control.

Only 22% of fathers surveyed consider themselves very influential on their daughters' views about sex and just 34% consider themselves very influential on their daughters' views about relationships. However, according to a nationally representative [survey](#) previously conducted by Power to Decide more than 90% of those surveyed agree that young people should have a trusted adult or network to provide them with information and guidance on such topics as sex, relationships, and contraception.

Data show how imperative it is that fathers be open to, and prepared for, questions from both their sons and daughters. The teen pregnancy rate has decreased over the past 20 years, however disparities remain among all racial/ethnic groups. Black teen girls are more than 2 ½ times higher than white teens to become pregnant, and although unplanned pregnancies among black women have declined 15%, still 64% of pregnancies among black women are unplanned. Latina teen pregnancy and birth rates are more than 1 ½ times higher than the national average. Power to Decide that roughly one in three Latinas will become pregnant by age 20 compared to roughly one in four teen girls overall.

Power to Decide conducted this research in conjunction with recent enhancements it made to its [Bedsider.org](#) property. Bedsider is the largest birth control support network in the country, welcomes more than 10 million visitors annually, and provides accurate and unbiased information on birth control and sexual health. Recently, Bedsider has made updates to increase its usefulness and relevance to its audience—making the site easier to navigate on mobile devices and helping visitors discover topics and content they find most interesting.

About the Polling: Data presented here are drawn from a national web survey, written by Power to Decide and conducted using Google Surveys, August 2017. Interviews were conducted among 1,012 fathers of daughters age 13-29 who volunteered to participate in Google online surveys and polls, and data are subsequently weighted to reflect the demographic composition of men and women ages 18 and older who are internet users. Google's reports state a margin of error of +/- 2.1% at the 95% confidence level, which provides a helpful indication of the variability in these results; however, we note that because the sample is based on those who initially self-selected for participation, this estimate rests on a specific set of statistical assumptions about the selected sample, rather than the standard methodology for random probability sampling. Numbers may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Power to Decide is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live, or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Please visit us at www.PowerToDecide.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.