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**New Research Shows that Millions of American Women Lack Access  
to Full Range of Birth Control Methods**  
*Limited access is creating contraceptive deserts nationwide*

(Washington, DC)—New research released today from The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy shows that nearly 20 million American women eligible for publicly funded contraception live in contraceptive deserts—defined by their lack of reasonable access to public health care sites that offer the full range of contraceptive methods.

The [new research](#), which was developed, analyzed, and released by The National Campaign brings to light how limited access is to the full range of methods—especially the IUD and Implant—for women eligible for publicly funded contraception (as defined by the Guttmacher Institute). Among these women, only one in 50 has reasonable access (defined as at least one publicly funded clinic for every 1,000 women) to the full range of FDA-approved contraceptive methods.

“Over the past few years, we have seen tremendous gains in cost coverage for contraception, which is a huge win. However, coverage does not equal access,” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO of The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. “Today, we are releasing data showing that millions of women eligible for publicly funded contraception live in contraceptive deserts, which means they lack reasonable access to publicly funded health care sites offering the full range of contraceptive methods—especially the most effective methods. When women have the full range of access to all contraceptive methods, rates of unplanned pregnancy plummet. That is why we need to ensure that all women can easily access the contraceptive method right for them—no matter who they are or where they live.”

Though there has been significant progress made on ensuring that contraception is available for free or at very low cost for women, these new findings add a new element to the conversation about access. Time and transportation costs serve as ongoing barriers to accessing a myriad of services and support for women and families living at or near the poverty line, and these new findings show it to be true for contraception as well—especially the most effective methods of contraception.

These research findings can be viewed on a [searchable, interactive map](#) of the U.S. and provide a county-by-county break-down. Presented online, the maps provide users with metrics for every county in the nation and Puerto Rico.

Separate public opinion polling also released today by The National Campaign shows that the overwhelming majority of the American public (81% overall) say they would support efforts or advocate for full access for all women to all methods of contraception. The polling shows that the public is almost evenly split on whether they think that women in their community have access to the full range of contraceptive methods (45% agree that women have full access; 48%

disagree). The nationally representative telephone survey of 1,019 respondents was conducted for The National Campaign by [SSRS](#), an independent research company between September 28 and October 2, 2016.

Since peaking in 1991, the teen pregnancy rate in the U.S. has declined by 55% and rates of unplanned pregnancy among women of childbearing age have declined by 18% between 2008 and 2011. Despite this progress, nearly half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned and nearly one in four teens in the U.S. get pregnant before age 20. Disparities in rates persist: rates of teen and unplanned pregnancy remain significantly higher among low income women and women of color.

**About The National Campaign:** The National Campaign is a private, non-profit organization that seeks to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families by preventing teen and unplanned pregnancy. Please visit [www.TheNationalCampaign.org](http://www.TheNationalCampaign.org) to find out more about the new research and polling.

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