



#THXBIRTHCONTROL

JOIN THE NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF CONTRACEPTION ON NOVEMBER 16 **BY CHARREAH K. JACKSON**

Many of the educational and economic opportunities women enjoy today are the result of having full access to birth control. Each year The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy hosts Thanks, Birth Control Day to invite people to share how contraception has changed their lives. In 1972 it became legal for single folks to use the available methods. (Before then, only married couples could.) This year the organization is celebrating its twentieth anniversary—and a 48 percent decline in the teen pregnancy rate over the past two decades. “Deciding if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant is arguably one of the most important life decisions a woman will make,” says Ginny Ehrlich, who is the CEO of The National Campaign. “Since birth control has been made widely available, there has been a staggering increase in women’s wages, an increase in female college graduates and [an improvement] in family well-being.”

Get Involved

PRACTICE

Nearly 50 percent of pregnancies are unplanned, which could have a lifelong impact on mother and baby. Stay in the driver’s seat by committing to a birth control practice that works for your lifestyle. Sexual intercourse without contraception can lead to pregnancy.

PLEDGE

Being able to consult a trusted adult about sex drastically affects the likelihood of a young woman becoming pregnant. Take the online pledge at care2.com (click on “Petitions” and search for “Let’s Talk About Birth Control”) to speak with a young person about options. We can be the difference.

POST

Eighty percent of adults agree that if more people were comfortable discussing contraception, then more people would use it. Share how birth control has changed your life using the hashtag #thxbirthcontrol.

Popular Options

Birth control is much broader than the Pill. Bedsider.org breaks down other preferred methods. Visit the site to see the best choice for you



THE IUD This little T-shaped piece of plastic, which is implanted in the uterus, blocks sperm from fertilizing eggs. The IUD offers three to ten years of protection. Brands like the Mirena, Skyla and Liletta contain hormones. Paragard does not.



THE RING NuvaRing is a small, bendable ring that you insert into your vagina each month. Leave it in for three weeks and then take it out for one. The ring gives off hormones that stop your ovaries from releasing an egg.



THE SHOT Once you get Depo-Provera, your birth control is covered for three months. It can take between 12 weeks and 18 months after your last injection for fertility to return.

THE IMPLANT Nexplanon—a tiny rod (the size of a matchstick) that’s placed under the skin of your upper arm—prevents pregnancy for up to three years.

—C.K.J.