



Bixby Center
for Global
Reproductive
Health

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ANSIRH
ADVANCING NEW STANDARDS IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

For more information about the Turnaway Study and detailed references, visit:
ansirh.org/turnaway

TURNAWAY STUDY

Long-term study shows that restricting abortion harms women



WHAT IS THE TURNAWAY STUDY?

The Turnaway Study is the first study to rigorously examine the effects of receiving versus being denied a wanted abortion on women and their children. Nearly 1,000 women seeking abortion from 30 facilities around the country participated. Researchers conducted interviews over 5 years and compared the trajectories of the women who received a wanted abortion to those who were turned away because they were past the facility's gestational age limit.

As legislators pass more and more laws to restrict access to abortion care, it's important to document what happens to women who are unable to obtain an abortion. It's essential that data from this study is considered in the ongoing public policy debate.

ABORTION DOES NOT HARM WOMEN.

- ▶ Abortion does not increase women's risk of having suicidal thoughts, or the chance of developing PTSD, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, or lower life satisfaction.
- ▶ Abortion does not increase women's use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

WOMEN ARE CONFIDENT IN THEIR DECISION TO HAVE AN ABORTION.

- ▶ 95% of women said abortion was the right decision for them.



THE TURNAWAY

We estimate that **more than 4,000 women are denied wanted abortions** due to facilities' gestational limits every year. As more states pass gestational limit laws, **thousands more will be affected.**

- ▶ Women who received a wanted abortion were more likely to have a positive outlook on the future and achieve aspirational life plans within 1 year.

WOMEN SEEK ABORTIONS FOR MANY REASONS.

- ▶ Most women gave multiple reasons for seeking abortion, including finances, timing, issues with a partner, and the need to focus on their other children. The outcomes for women denied abortions bear out their concerns.
- ▶ Most women who sought abortion after 20 weeks were delayed because they did not realize they were pregnant. Once women are delayed, financial and logistical barriers push them even later in pregnancy.



OUT-OF-POCKET

Out-of-pocket costs for women whose insurance or Medicaid did not cover abortion were **\$575**.

For more than half, out-of-pocket costs were equivalent to **more than one-third of their monthly personal income**.

It cost closer to **two-thirds of their monthly personal income** for those receiving abortions **after 20 weeks**.

BEING DENIED AN ABORTION REDUCES WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S FINANCIAL SECURITY AND SAFETY.

- ▶ Women denied an abortion had almost 4 times greater odds of a household income below the federal poverty level and 3 times greater odds of being unemployed.
- ▶ There was an increased likelihood that women didn't have enough money to pay for basic family necessities like food, housing and transportation if they were denied an abortion.
- ▶ Women unable to terminate unwanted pregnancies were more likely to stay in contact with violent partners, putting them and their children at greater risk than if they had received the abortion.
- ▶ Continuing an unwanted pregnancy and giving birth is associated with more serious health problems than abortion.

WHEN WOMEN HAVE CONTROL OVER THE TIMING OF PREGNANCIES, CHILDREN BENEFIT.

- ▶ Existing children of women denied abortions were more than 3 times more likely to live in households below the federal poverty level and they were less likely to achieve developmental milestones than the existing children of women who received abortions.

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