Abortion Laws and HIV in the US

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Together, we can change the course of the HIV epidemic…one woman at a time.

#onewomanatatime #thewellproject

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Abortion Rights Around the Globe

- Intentional termination of pregnancy
- Wide variety of abortion laws around the world
  - Prohibited under any circumstances
    - Even to save pregnant person’s life (e.g., Honduras)
  - Allowed under most circumstances
    - Limits on time since last period (e.g., Netherlands: 24 weeks = *fetal viability*; Austria: 12 weeks)
  - No different from other procedures
    - Covered by national health insurance (e.g., Canada)

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Abortion Rights in the US – Federal

- **Roe v. Wade**
  - 1973 Supreme Court decision
  - Woman’s right to privacy
  - Abortion legal until 12 weeks after last period

- Further decisions on abortion rights
  - No total ban until fetal viability (about 24 weeks)

- **Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization**
  - 2022 Supreme Court decision
    - No federal right to abortion
    - Each state can pass its own laws
  - Could be used to restrict other privacy-based rights
Abortion Rights in the US – States

• Some states
  – Old abortion laws and new “trigger” laws went into effect

• Other states
  – Enact explicit protections for abortion

• Examples
  – Texas
    • All abortions banned except to safe pregnant person’s life
  – Vermont
    • No restrictions at all
  – Middle ground
    • Exceptions for rape, limitations on pregnancy duration

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Abortion Rights in the US – States

• Restrictive laws being challenged in court
  ― Law often put on hold (*injunction*) during court process

• Rapidly changing laws
  ― Current information:
    • Abortion Finder's [state-by-state abortion guide](http://example.com)
    • Center for Reproductive Rights' [map](http://example.com)

• Laws making it illegal to help people get abortion
  ― Example: Idaho
    • Effect: young people forced to carry unwanted pregnancy to term

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Abortion Rights in the US – Youth

• Don’t threaten pregnant person themselves
• Make it illegal to help young person get abortion
  — This may include providing information
  — May not apply if parents agree to abortion
    • But: young people may fear parents’ reaction to their pregnancy
• Restrictions on sex education
  — Lack of information on contraception makes need for abortion more likely
    • “Abstinence-only” education
    • Lack of information on HIV prevention or same-sex relationships
If You Want to Help

• **Support organizations that advocate for a person's right to make decisions about their own body**
  — Includes right to choose
  — Includes transgender rights
  — Direct help may also be needed

• **Advocate for evidence-based sex education**
  — Equips young people with facts on HIV, STI and pregnancy prevention
  — Meanwhile: provide information yourself, if possible
    • E.g., through youth groups or other venues
To learn more about this topic, please read the full fact sheet:

- Abortion Laws and HIV in the US

For more fact sheets and to connect to our community of women living with HIV, visit:

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- www.facebook.com/thewellproject
- www.twitter.com/thewellproject
- www.instagram.com/thewellprojecthiv