

Teen Endangerment: Two-Parent Notice for Abortion

[HB 1383](#) - [Rep. Miller](#) (R-124, Lake Ozark)

These are dangerous measures that can threaten teens' health and safety.

House Bill 1383 creates additional administrative barriers beyond the existing one-parent consent requirement before anyone under the age of 18 may get an abortion. They require the consenting parent to notify the other custodial parent in writing prior to an abortion.

We all want our teens to be safe. Planned Parenthood strongly encourages teens to talk with their parents about reproductive health issues, including abortion, and research shows that most parents are involved in their teens' abortion decisions. But in the real world, parental involvement is not an option for every teen, especially if she lives in an abusive environment or is pregnant as a result of rape or incest.

Major medical groups oppose laws that endanger pregnant teens' health and safety. Parental consent and notification laws are opposed by major medical groups including the American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Public Health Association because research has shown they do not increase parental involvement and do not foster healthy communication. In fact, these laws can be detrimental to pregnant teens' health and safety because research shows such laws can delay access to services and/or force a teen to take measures into their own hands.

Unfortunately, not all teens come from homes where good family communication is possible. Most teens facing an unintended pregnancy do go to their parents. However, some teens face violent or abusive parents and do not feel safe talking to their parents about an unintended pregnancy. The state cannot legislate healthy family communication. This bill could cause scared teens to put their safety at risk and do something desperate that would endanger their health.

House Bill 1383 could come between pregnant teens and the health care they need. This measure could cause medical care to be delayed, threatening teens' health.

The Missouri Legislature should focus on ensuring our teens have comprehensive, medically accurate sex education. Teens who receive sex education are likelier to wait longer to have sex for the first time, and likelier to use contraception if and when they do. (Guttmacher)

Investing in sex education prevents unintended pregnancy and makes good fiscal sense. Unintended pregnancies cost U.S. families \$11 billion a year. (Guttmacher) If we want our country to be fiscally responsible, we must invest in sex education and family planning services. If those giving birth during their teen years instead had their children during adulthood, taxpayers would save about \$1,600 per person each year. (National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy) For every dollar invested in family planning, taxpayers save approximately \$7. (Guttmacher)