



## Abortion Access in the U.S. and Pennsylvania - What's at Risk

As you know, on May 2, a draft majority opinion in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (JWHO) case was leaked to the press. The leaked opinion states what we most feared: Justice Samuel Alito writes, "Roe was egregiously wrong from the start" and "we hold that Roe and Casey must be overruled."

**We expect that when the case is decided in the coming days, Roe's federal protections for the right to access abortion will no longer exist. Should that happen, more than 36 million women and other people who can become pregnant, residing in 26 mostly southern and Midwestern states, could lose access to abortion.**

Regardless of what happens at the U.S. Supreme Court, access to abortion is already too far out of reach for too many, including in Pennsylvania. Inequity in abortion access stems in large part from systemic racism that pervades our society and institutions, including our health care system. Other forms of discrimination and systemic failures – affecting LGBTQ+ people, people who live in rural areas, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities – also contribute to this inequity.

**While abortion will still be legal in Pennsylvania if Roe is overturned, there are already multiple barriers in place to make access harder, including:**



Health plans offered in the state's health exchange under the Affordable Care Act can only cover abortion in cases of life endangerment, or in cases of rape or incest, unless individuals purchase an optional rider at an additional cost.



The parent of a minor must consent before an abortion is provided. If young people cannot or do not want to obtain parental consent, they must petition a judge for permission.



A patient must receive state-directed counseling that includes information designed to discourage the patient from having an abortion, and then wait 24 hours before the procedure.



Insurance policies for public employees cover abortion only in cases of life endangerment; rape, or incest.

The Pennsylvania legislature frequently introduces bills aimed at severely restricting the rights of those seeking abortions. We currently have a governor in PA that uses a veto pen against anti-abortion legislation, but the future of abortion access in our state is not guaranteed.

**Furthermore, Pennsylvania Senate Bill 956, the No Right to Abortion Constitutional Amendment, is the most extreme and dangerous bill ever to be introduced by the PA legislature. If passed, and later approved by voters, it could not be vetoed by the governor or protected by a state court. Access to abortion in PA would be drastically restricted or eliminated, even in cases of rape, incest, or life-threatening conditions.**



The outcomes of these measures in Harrisburg would be profoundly devastating to our patients and all individuals seeking the essential health care they need. The number of people dealing with obstacles to care - including out of state travel - will skyrocket. The people most harmed by abortion restrictions are and will continue to be Black, Latino, Indigenous, and other people of color, a product of this country's legacy of racism and discrimination.

Here are two things you can do right now to help PPSP and our coalition partners protect abortion:



**Educate your friends! Encourage everyone you know to register to vote, and tell them what is at stake with SB 956.**



**Support abortion funds, which help remove financial and logistical barriers for people seeking abortions:**

- [National Network of Abortion Funds](#)
- [Support Abortion Patients at PPSP](#)



## **Sex Education is a Right!**

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All young people have the right to access the sex education and health care they need to achieve the futures they desire for themselves. Yet far too many young people don't receive the sexual health information, education, and access to the care they need to live healthy lives—often based on who they are and where they live. This is especially true for youth of color, LGBTQIA+ young people, young people who are immigrants, those with lower incomes, those living in rural areas, those with disabilities, and systems-involved youth.



Here in Pennsylvania, there is no standardized sex education curriculum for schools; there are no requirements to present medically accurate information if sex education is offered; and only one lesson on STI and HIV prevention--stressing the importance of abstinence - is mandated. Further, there are no safeguards to prevent stigma toward LGBTQIA+ students, parenting teens, or youth who have experienced sexual trauma. Decisions about curriculum, including whether to offer sex education at all, are at the discretion of individual schools and districts.



**PPSP recognizes that sex education is about so much more than risk reduction and disease prevention. Our curriculum includes information about abstinence along with tools to build healthy relationships, use contraception, practice affirmative consent, and prevent STDs. PPSP's dedicated educators provide affirming, fact-based programs, resources, and support to young people and communities who might not otherwise have access to high-quality sex education.**



We offer a range of programs aimed at equipping young people with the information and tools they need so they can have healthy relationships, make healthy decisions, and have positive health outcomes. We serve approximately 3,500 participants every year through the following:

- Community Education classes offered in partnership with schools and community organizations;
- Health Resource Centers in two School District of Philadelphia High Schools, which provide counseling and safer-sex materials;
- The Achieving Independence Center for youth transitioning out of foster care;
- SPOT (Space to be Proud and Open Together) after school programs for LGBTQIA+ youth;
- Workshops for Youth-Serving Professionals, and
- Parent and Trusted-Adult programs.

**Thanks in part to your investment in PPSP, we will continue to work toward a world where all young people—no matter where they live or how they identify—get equitable access to the education and care they deserve.**

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about our range of Education programs and resources.



## PPSP's Spring Soiree →

On Friday, May 20th PPSP held our first in-person event since 2019 at the Philander Chase Knox Estate in Valley Forge National Park. The event featured a silent and live auction with a fantastic array of goods and services from businesses across Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. Our Spring Soiree brought together more than 150 supporters and staff to celebrate the vital programs and services provided by PPSP each year.

**The event was a huge success, raising more than \$125,000 for PPSP.**

