

## Young Women's Access

**In a healthy community**, young women routinely receive comprehensive education about sex and sexuality that is age appropriate and includes medically accurate information about the health benefits and side effects of all contraceptives as they relate to both pregnancy and risk reduction for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In a healthy community, young women learn that abstinence is the only sure way to avoid pregnancy and STIs, but in a way that acknowledges those young people who are already sexually active. And, in a healthy community, young women have access to confidential reproductive health services that offer the full range of contraceptive options, including emergency contraception, without parental involvement.

**Getting Started:** There are laws and policies at the federal, state, and local levels that have an impact on your community's ability to provide young women with the contraceptive information and services they need. Before moving ahead on this checklist, refer to the Plan A Grassroots Toolkit for tips on how to find out about the laws and policies in your area. This information will be critical in helping you assess the unique situation in your community.

- 1. Are there any women's clinics in your community that serve young people?
- 2. Are there any clinics in your area that offer youth-friendly services?
- 3. Do young people under age 18 in your community have access to confidential contraceptive services without parental consent or notification?
- 4. How do schools in your community treat young women who become pregnant and then give birth?
- 5. Do public schools in your community teach comprehensive, medically accurate, age-appropriate sexuality education?
- 6. Does your community have clinics at high schools that offer confidential family planning information and contraceptives?
- 7. Do local colleges offer contraceptives, including emergency contraception, at their health centers?
- 8. Do student health plans at local colleges cover the cost of contraception in the same way as other prescriptions?

### "I want to go further..."

- 1. Are statistics kept on teen sexual activity in your community?
- 2. What is the rate of teen sexual activity in your community?
- 3. What is the teen pregnancy rate in your community?
- 4. What is the rate of sexually transmitted infections among young people in your community?