

How the Trump Administration Is Turning Our Nation's Family Planning and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs into a Tool of the Pronatalist Movement

Donald Trump and other leaders in his administration have made it clear that they want women to have more babies — a goal that is strongly aligned with the far-right [pronatalist movement](#), which believes it is the government's responsibility to increase birth rates.

But instead of focusing on strengthening and expanding programs that would empower women and help them raise a child, the administration has decided that one of the most straightforward paths to creating more babies is to annihilate legal rights and programs that help women control if and when they want to become pregnant.

Presumably, their logic is that by restricting access to family planning methods such as birth control and evidence-based pregnancy prevention, it will become more likely that women have unintended pregnancies, thus leading to more babies.

In this, the Trump administration is being guided by extreme ideological roadmaps — specifically the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 and a more recent report called [Saving America by Saving the Family](#). Project 2025 is a [playbook](#) on how to use executive power to implement a vision of society that relies on fixed and narrowly defined gender roles, and the Trump administration has already implemented more than [50% of this agenda](#).

Their newer report, *Saving America*, argues that feminism, and the freedoms that women gained as a result, have led to the “dissolution” of the American family. The authors suggest a number of policies that could help coerce women to get married young and opt out of education and the workforce to stay home and raise kids, including restructuring federal programs aimed at helping women control when and if they want to become pregnant.

The Trump administration has taken up the charge laid out in this latest report, and is attempting to restructure our nation's family planning and teen pregnancy prevention programs to achieve the report's extremist aims.

Restructuring Title X to Focus on Forming Traditional Marriage and Families, Instead of Helping People Obtain the Birth Control They Need

The authors of the Heritage Foundation report claim that "the explosion of birth control" contributed greatly to what they see as the decline in the American family.¹ They propose restructuring the [federal Title X program](#), the nation's long-standing family planning program, which since its founding in 1970 has been focused on providing low- and no-cost birth control and sexual health care alongside other preventive health care to women with lower incomes.

Not six months after the Heritage Foundation's recommendation came out, the Trump administration did exactly what the report suggested.²

In [April 2026](#), the administration released new program eligibility criteria for the Title X program that are written to hijack the program and give grants to entities that further the pronatalist ideological agenda.

The new eligibility criteria claim to be seeking innovative approaches to a range of goals, none of which includes preventing unintended pregnancies, which is one of the primary purposes of the Title X program. The 64-page document only references contraception once, and it is in a way that disparages it, including giving contraception as an example of "the overreliance on pharmaceutical and surgical treatments."³

Instead, the redefined program is focused on "support[ing] family formation"⁴ — a coded term that that is intended to dissuade women from using birth control and to persuade them to have children. It also requires applicants seeking funding through Title X to ensure that any reproductive health counseling they provide "affirm[s] marriage and parenthood as meaningful and valued components of adult life...."⁵

The Trump administration's changes to the program overall make it clear that the administration is moving

the goals of the program away from making birth control accessible, and instead toward methods like the "fertility awareness method" that are proven to be less effective at preventing unwanted pregnancy.⁶

Taking "Prevention" out of "Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program"

For sixteen years, the Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) program has helped provide young people, and young women especially, with the resources and education to help them prevent and control unwanted pregnancies. This has allowed countless young people the freedom to choose how they want to spend their early adult years.

The success of this program is unimpeachable. The teen pregnancy rate has plummeted since the start of this program,⁷ meaning that more young women are getting the opportunity to pursue their goals without worrying about unintended pregnancies.

Rather than see this as a win, pronatalists, including within the Trump administration and at the Heritage Foundation, see this as a missed opportunity.

Their solution, which was announced in July 2026, is to completely reshape the Teen Pregnancy Prevention program. The Trump administration canceled \$80 million for effective teen pregnancy prevention programs; grantees reported that they were told their grants were being canceled because they do not align with agency priorities.⁸ The Trump administration then diverted the money to grant programs that emphasize family formation and "affirm marriage and parenthood."⁹ They are also using the program to push misinformation about birth control,¹⁰ while simultaneously promoting harmful and [ineffective](#) abstinence-only-until-marriage messaging.

This ideological content masquerading as public health programming has no basis in evidence. By emphasizing ineffective abstinence-only education, discouraging the use of hormonal birth control, and promoting childbearing, the new teen pregnancy prevention programs will likely lead to *more* unintended teen pregnancies.

This is straight out of the far-right pronatalist ideology: The Heritage Foundation *Saving America* report

repeatedly bemoans women for marrying and having children later in life. The authors of the report state explicitly that America should “Teach young people that graduating from high school, getting married, and having children—in that order—is a near-guarantee of life success.”¹¹

Nothing about a career. Nothing about higher education. Nothing about travel. Just pushing women to get married and have children at younger ages.

Fighting for Women’s Freedoms and Futures: Now and Forever

The vision laid out by the Heritage Foundation and embraced by the Trump administration may appear overwhelming, but these policies are not inevitable—and they are not going unchallenged.

Across the country, reproductive rights advocates, health care providers, legal organizations, state and federal officials and policymakers, and everyday people are fighting to protect the freedom to decide if, when, and how to build a family, which is essential to women’s equality.

[Reproductive rights organizations](#), [family planning providers](#), and [state attorneys general](#), are all challenging the administration’s changes to Title X through the courts. Reproductive health organizations and local governments have [successfully fought back](#) so far against its efforts to reshape the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program, with a federal judge saying the program’s focus on “body literacy” “appears to elevate fertility and marital procreation over well-tested forms of contraception and pregnancy prevention.”¹²

For decades, access to birth control, evidence-based sex education, and comprehensive reproductive health care have helped people avoid unintended pregnancies and given young people greater freedom to pursue education, careers, relationships, and the lives they envision for themselves on equal terms. The progress we have made is real. The fact that the far-right movement is working so aggressively to reverse it is not a sign that their vision is inevitable—it is a reminder of how transformative women’s freedom and autonomy have been.

At the National Women’s Law Center, we will continue exposing the policies and ideology behind these attacks while working alongside our partners to defend the rights and freedoms that generations of women and advocates have fought to secure. The future of gender justice is not predetermined. Every effort to protect reproductive rights, every legal challenge, and every person who refuses to accept a rollback of hard-won equality protections is part of the fight to ensure that everyone has the freedom to decide what their families look like.

- 1 Roger Severino et al., *Saving America by Saving the Family: A Foundation for the Next 250 Years* 63, The Heritage Found. (Jan. 8, 2026), <https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/SR323.pdf>.
- 2 The changes made to the Title X program also implement a recommendation from Project 2025: “HHS should require clinics it funds under Title X (family planning) to provide information to customers about the importance of marriage to family and personal well-being. . . .” The Heritage Found., *Mandate for Leadership 2025: The Conservative Promise* 480 (2023).
- 3 U.S. Dep’t of Health and Hum. Servs., *Notice of Funding Opportunity: Title X Family Planning Services Grants* 12, https://files.simpler.grants.gov/opportunities/770eae58-b245-4431-a4b8-7b1aca9e917f/attachments/5e3ac609-8998-466a-a8b6-c3d7d49a2e6c/2027_Title_X_Services_NOFO_PA-FPH-27-001_PDF.pdf (last visited Sept. 3, 2026).
- 4 *Id.* at 3.
- 5 *Id.* at 14.
- 6 Studies have overwhelmingly shown that “fertility awareness methods” are less effective than IUDs, implants, and oral contraceptive pills, and, unlike barrier methods of birth control (like condoms), “fertility awareness” does not protect against HIV or other sexually transmitted infections. See *Fertility Awareness-Based Methods to Prevent Pregnancy*, KFF (Oct. 16, 2025), <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/fertility-awareness-based-methods-to-prevent-pregnancy/>.
- 7 See Brady E. Hamilton, Michelle J.K. Osterman & Elizabeth C.W. Gregory, *Births: Provisional Data for 2025*, Ctrs. for Medicare & Medicaid Servs., Nat’l Vital Stats. Sys. (April 2026), <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr043.pdf>.
- 8 Kelcie Moseley-Morris, *Federal Health Agency Cancels Most of Its Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grants*, Stateline (June 26, 2026), <https://stateline.org/2026/06/26/federal-health-agency-cancels-most-of-its-teen-pregnancy-prevention-grants/>.
- 9 U.S. Dep’t of Health and Hum. Servs., *Replicating Effective Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Programs* 11, https://files.simpler.grants.gov/opportunities/e20d082c-6b5d-4f4e-bfb5-01cf2b0d70fd/attachments/273fd6c8-b66c-46d9-bdf8-52b5b67d730b/AH-TP1-26-001_TPP_Tier_1_Replication.pdf (last visited Sept. 3, 2026).
- 10 Programs must now educate girls on the alleged “advantages and disadvantages of ovarian suppression” – a new term this administration has concocted for hormonal birth control. *Id.* at 10.
- 11 Roger Severino et al., *Saving America by Saving the Family: A Foundation for the Next 250 Years* 103, The Heritage Found. (Jan. 8, 2026), <https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/SR323.pdf>.
- 12 *Hennepin County, Minnesota et al., v. United States Department of Health and Human Services*, et al., No. 26-cv-2460, at *2 (D. D.C. Aug. 19, 2026). The judge also said of the Trump administration’s new program focus: “[A]n educational initiative that counsels teens on how to avoid pregnancy without discussing the realities of unprotected intercourse and its alternatives would seem to defy social reality, common sense, and scientific evidence alike.” *Id.* at 3.