



Family Planning Perspectives  
Volume 28, Number 3, May/June 1996

## Early Predictors of Nonmarital First Pregnancy and Abortion

By J. Richard Udry, Judith Kovenock and Naomi M. Morris

Most research on abortion has focused on women's characteristics at the time of the procedure, but individuals' behavior may also be shaped by their experiences from younger ages. This study uses longitudinal data on 351 California white women aged 27-30 in 1990-1991 to identify characteristics in childhood and adolescence that predict who will have a nonmarital first pregnancy and, of those who do, which women will seek an abortion. Bivariate analyses reveal that psychosocial characteristics indicating a strong sense of autonomy, such as feeling it is important not to be tied down and engaging in socially undesirable behavior, are significantly associated with the likelihood of having a nonmarital first pregnancy (odds ratios of 1.7 and 1.5, respectively), but family characteristics are not. However, among women who have a first pregnancy out of wedlock, the odds of having an abortion are mostly influenced by family rather than psychological characteristics, particularly having been a good student and having a well-educated mother (2.0 and 1.7).

(Family Planning Perspectives, **28**:113-116, 1996)

[Full text in PDF](#)

- » [article in pdf](#)
- » [table of contents](#)
- » [search the FPP archive](#)
- » [guidelines for authors](#)