

CHILD MARRIAGE

AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)



12,000,000

**12 million girls
a year are married
before the age of 18.**

- Child marriage leads to early pregnancy which can have a negative impact on adolescent girls' health.
- Child marriage is often driven by a desire to control girls' sexuality, which limits their choice and agency.

ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY

- Teen pregnancy is a cause and consequence of child marriage: 90% of births to adolescent girls take place within marriage.
- Every year 21 million girls aged 15 – 19 become pregnant in developing countries.
- 27% of pregnant adolescent girls sought abortions in 2016.



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

- Complications arising from pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death and morbidity for 15 – 19 year old girls.
- 86% of obstetric fistulas occur in girls under 18.
- Babies of child brides are more at risk of stunting and lower birth weight.



CONTRACEPTION

- Married adolescent girls have the lowest use of, and the highest unmet need for, contraception.
- Adolescents face particular barriers to access, including provider stigma, misinformation, and age discriminatory laws and policies.
- This leads to high unplanned pregnancy rates as well as STIs including HIV.



HIV/AIDS

- Globally, young women are twice as likely to acquire HIV as young men.
- Some child brides may be at particular risk of HIV due to frequent unprotected sex with sexually experienced, older husbands.



Solutions

EDUCATION CURRICULA MUST GO BEYOND BIOLOGY AND INCLUDE COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION. Young people need to learn about relationships, respect for the opposite sex and sexual pleasure.

INVOLVING HUSBANDS, PARENTS, COMMUNITIES IS KEY. Social norms around gender inequality and girls' sexuality will only change if we engage all levels of society.

SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD BE TRAINED IN YOUTH FRIENDLY SERVICE PROVISION including respect and confidentiality. Services should be affordable, offer convenient hours and be in discreet locations.

END CHILD MARRIAGE TO HELP GIRLS FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL.

www.GirlsNotBrides.org

[#EndChildMarriage](https://twitter.com/EndChildMarriage)



GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage