

Let's Talk About SEX

By Brittney Stuart and Gail Koch

"Sex: the thing that takes up the least amount of time and causes the most amount of trouble." – Actor John Barrymore

When it comes to sex, it boils down to this: Having sex is a choice, and the impact of your decision can affect you both emotionally and physically for years to come.

Obviously, abstinence is the safest form of protection. It prevents unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and yields no side affects as do some pills or injections. There are however, partially effective measures that greatly reduce the chance of pregnancy or infections. But remember that birth control pills or injections such as Depo-Provera are designed to decrease the chance of pregnancy, *not to protect from STDs*. Condoms are the next best thing in terms of preventing the spread of STDs. Condoms – if used correctly *each and every time* – only prove 97 percent effective in preventing pregnancy. Diaphragms and cervical caps are additional contraceptives, which have a better chance of effectiveness when used in combination with spermicides.

A sexually active teen who does not use contraceptives has a 90 percent chance of becoming pregnant within 365 days. Once a girl is pregnant, she is forced to make choices no college student should have to face.

Abortion may be considered the easy way out, but the option is not without repercussions. An abortion performed during the first two months of pregnancy generally costs between \$200 to \$400; after the first trimester it's \$550 to \$2,000. Abortion may be a tempo-

rary relief for a young woman, but there is often an overwhelming resurgence of guilt when she's ready to have children.

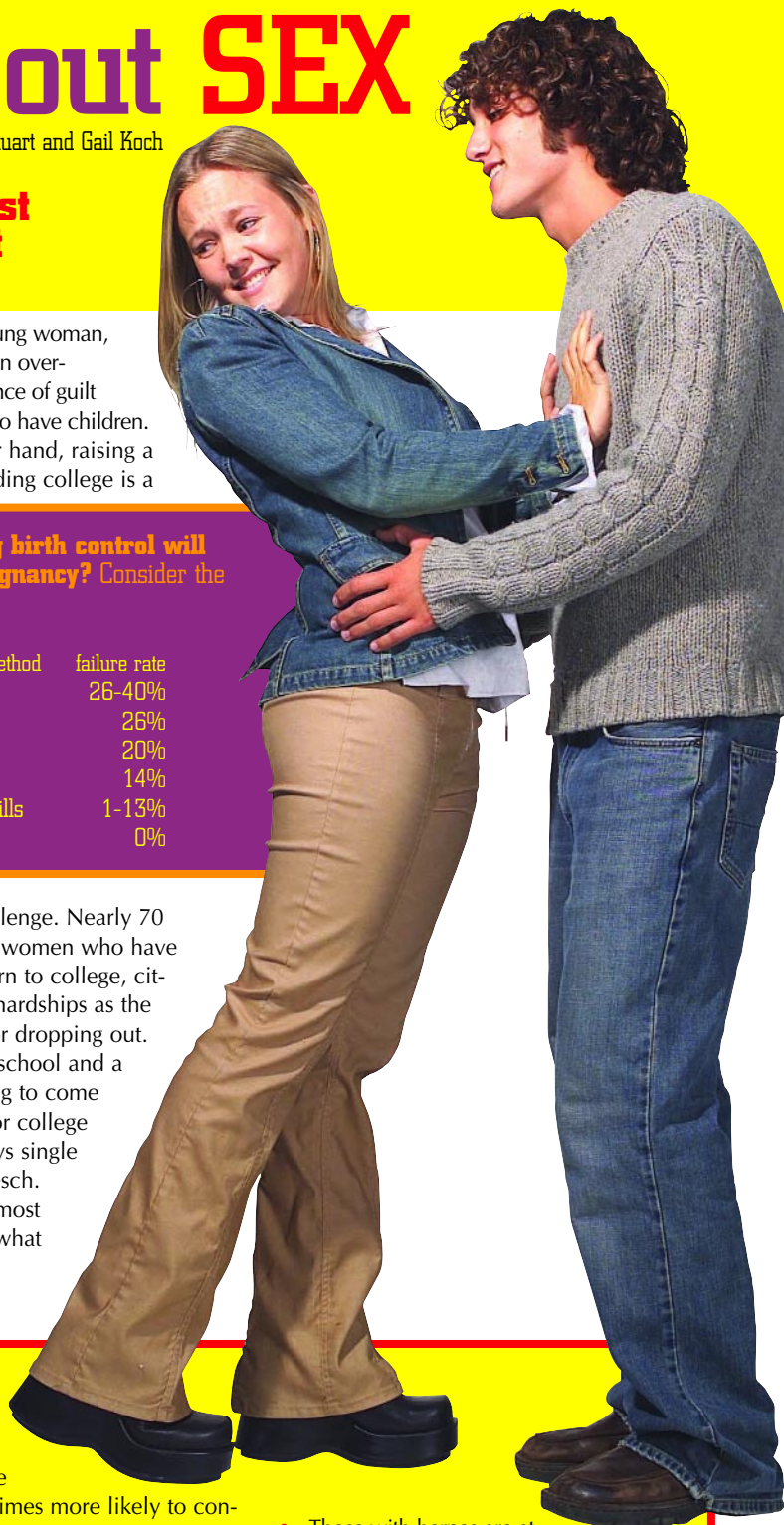
On the other hand, raising a child while attending college is a

Think using birth control will prevent pregnancy? Consider the odds...

Contraceptive method	failure rate
Sponge	26-40%
Spermicide	26%
Diaphragm	20%
Condom	14%
Birth Control Pills	1-13%
Abstinence	0%

monumental challenge. Nearly 70 percent of young women who have a child don't return to college, citing the financial hardships as the primary reason for dropping out.

"Balancing school and a family while trying to come up with money for college is hard work," says single mother Renee Hesch. "Lots of moms almost give up because what we try to do is hard." 🙄



Truth and Consequences

When it comes to sex, you've heard about AIDS and you know about the possibility of pregnancy, but did you also know that being sexually active puts you at risk of being exposed to more than 25 other types of sexually transmitted diseases? For instance....

Chlamydia

- Because the disease often goes undetected – 75% of women and 50% of men who are infected have no symptoms – it can lead to serious consequences, such as pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility and serious birth defects.

- Women with chlamydia are three to five times more likely to contract the HIV virus, if exposed.

Genital Herpes (Herpes Simplex Type 2 or HSV-2)

- The herpes virus often results in painful red ulcers on the genitals. However, most people with herpes have no symptoms, making it all the more likely that they will pass the disease along.
- Symptoms can be treated, but the infection cannot be cured.

- Those with herpes are at a higher risk of contracting HIV, if exposed.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

- People who've had more than four sexual partners are almost certain to be infected.
- Certain types of the virus have been tied to cervical cancer in women.

Source: Centers for Disease Control