

Views on Women’s Reproductive Health

Findings from a Tennessee Statewide Survey among Black Adults

To: Interested Parties
From: PerryUndem Research/Communication
Date: February 1, 2017

I. Introduction

In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda (NBWRJA¹) commissioned PerryUndem Research/Communication to conduct a survey of Black adults in Tennessee on the topic of women’s reproductive health, sex education programs, and contraception.

The research shows that very large majorities of Black adults in Tennessee support a woman’s right to make her own decision on abortion and access to affordable, respectful care is critical. Large majorities of both Black women and men agree we should trust Black women to make their own decisions on this issue based on their circumstances. Nearly all respondents agree that a woman’s ability to control whether and when she has children is an important part of financial stability for herself and her family. Most Black adults in Tennessee also see contraception as part of basic health care and feel it should be included in health care coverage. Finally, a majority of respondents also support comprehensive sex education including topics such as birth control, all pregnancy options including abortion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. These findings cut across religion, party identification, and gender.

PerryUndem conducted a statewide survey among n = 500 Black adults, including 84 percent who are registered voters, in Tennessee from September 28 to October 31, 2016. The survey was administered by telephone by SSRS. The margin of sampling error for results is ± 6.7 percentage points. See a more detailed methodology summary at the end of this report.

¹ NEO Philanthropy is the fiscal sponsor for NBWRJA.

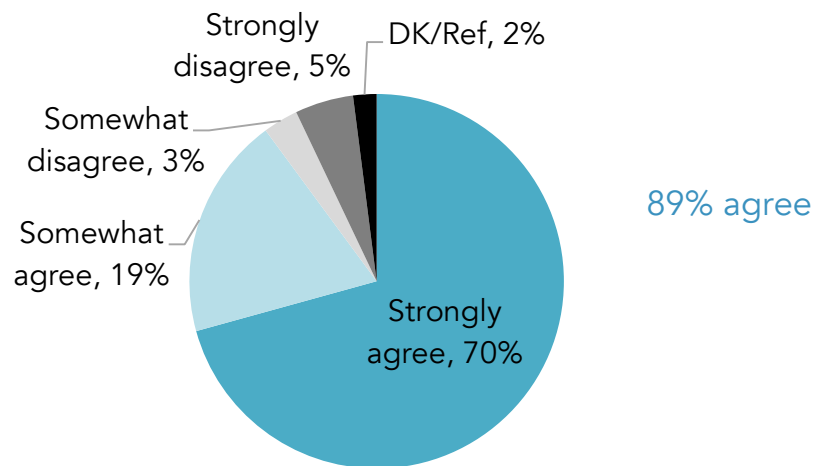
II. Key Findings

- A large majority of Black adults in Tennessee (89 percent) agrees each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if they may disagree with her reason. Similarly, 81 percent agree we should trust Black women to make personal decisions that are best for themselves and their families.
- An overwhelming majority (75 percent) do not want the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade* including 72 percent of those who self-identify as very religious.
- Nearly all Black adults in Tennessee (96 percent) believe a woman's ability to control whether or when she has children is an important part of financial stability for herself and her family.
- When it comes to access to abortion care, majorities want care to be directed by a doctor (96 percent), affordable (90 percent), in their community (86 percent), and respectful of a woman's decision (85 percent).
- Two-thirds (65 percent) say they pay attention to a political candidate's view on a woman's right to get an abortion.
- For a majority of Black adults in Tennessee, religious beliefs do not interfere with their views toward abortion. Three-quarters (75 percent) agree abortion should remain legal even if church leaders take a stance against abortion.
- In their personal lives, the vast majority (88 percent) would support a loved one who had an abortion, with 62 percent saying they would give "a lot of" support.
- A large majority of respondents (84 percent) considers birth control part of basic women's health care coverage. Similarly, 87 percent agree every woman should have access to the full range of pregnancy care including abortion. A large majority (91 percent) agrees a woman should be able to get birth control even if her boss disagrees.
- Majorities of Black adults also want comprehensive sex education in schools, including topics such as birth control (92 percent), pregnancy options including abortion (82 percent), sexual orientation (69 percent), and gender identity (65 percent).
- Eight in ten (84 percent) would take their own teenager to get birth control if they needed it; 62 percent say they would definitely take them.

III. Detailed Findings

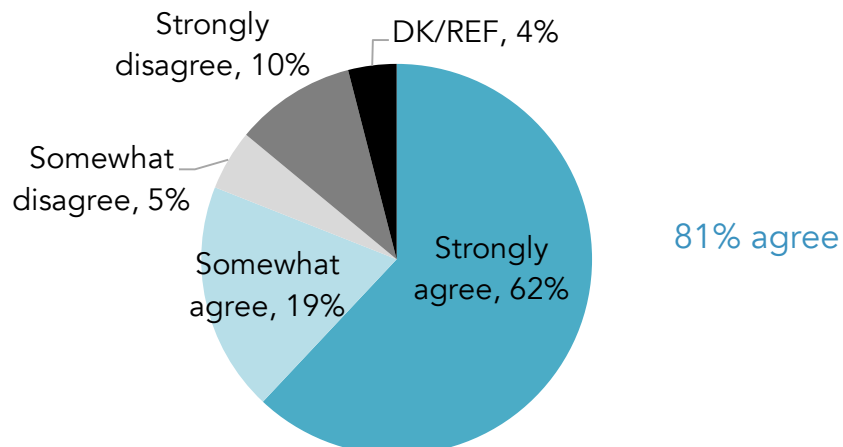
A large majority of Black adults in Tennessee hold firm views in support of a woman’s right to an abortion. Nearly nine in ten (89 percent) respondents agree with the statement: “Each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with her reasons.” (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with her reasons.



Eight in ten feel we should trust Black women to make decisions that are best for them. Six in ten (62 percent) agree strongly. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2: When it comes to abortion, we should trust Black women to make the important personal decisions that are best for themselves and their families.



Majorities across segments agree a woman should have a right to make her own decision and trust Black women to make the best decisions for themselves and their families, including conservatives and those who attend religious services regularly. (See Tables 1 and 1a.)

Table 1: Do you agree or disagree... (% Agree)

	A woman should have a right to make her own decision, even if I disagree with reasons.	We should trust Black women to make decisions that are best for themselves and their families.
Total	89	81
Men	86	79
Women	91	83
18-49 years old	94	89
50-64	87	80
65 +	81	67
High school or less	83	75
Some college	93	86
College +	95	89
<\$30K HH income	83	76
\$30K-75K	95	90
\$75K + (n=93)	97	81
Married or living w/ partner	89	81
Widowed/divorced/separated	88	80
Never married	88	84
Liberal	95	88
Moderate	87	84
Conservative	87	77
Religious service weekly or more	84	80
At least once a month	87	80
Less often/never	93	84
Registered to vote	90	81
Shelby County	87	81
Central TN	92	85
Central-East/West TN	88	77

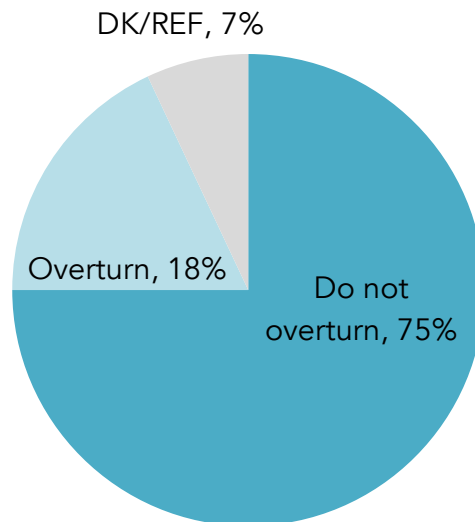
Table 1a: Do you agree or disagree... (% Agree) [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	A woman should have a right to make her own decision, even if I disagree with reasons.	We should trust Black women to make decisions that are best for themselves and their families.
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	84	80
Men (<i>n</i> =84)	80	79
Women	87	81
50 + years old	78	70
Some college or less	81	75
College +	97	95
<\$50K HH income	80	74
\$50K + (<i>n</i>=95)	96	90

General Views on the Right to Abortion

A large majority of Black adults in Tennessee do not want to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned. Three-quarters (75 percent) say they do not want to see the decision overturned. (See Figure 3.)

*Figure 3: In 1973, the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision established a woman’s constitutional right to have an abortion. Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not?*



Majorities across all demographic groups do not want to overturn *Roe*. (See Tables 2 and 2a.)

Table 2: Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not?

	Do not overturn	Overturn
Total	75	18
Men	76	17
Women	73	20
18-49 years old	84	14
50-64	71	21
65 +	61	25
High school or less	64	26
Some college	80	12
College +	88	11
<\$30K HH income	62	26
\$30K-75K	88	8
\$75K + (n=93)	89	8
Married or living w/ partner	76	16
Widowed/divorced/separated	75	18
Never married	72	23
Liberal	85	12
Moderate	74	17
Conservative	65	29
Religious service weekly or more	72	22
At least once a month	74	20
Less often/never	75	14
Registered to vote	75	19
Shelby County	75	20
Central TN	76	19
Central-East/West TN	72	16

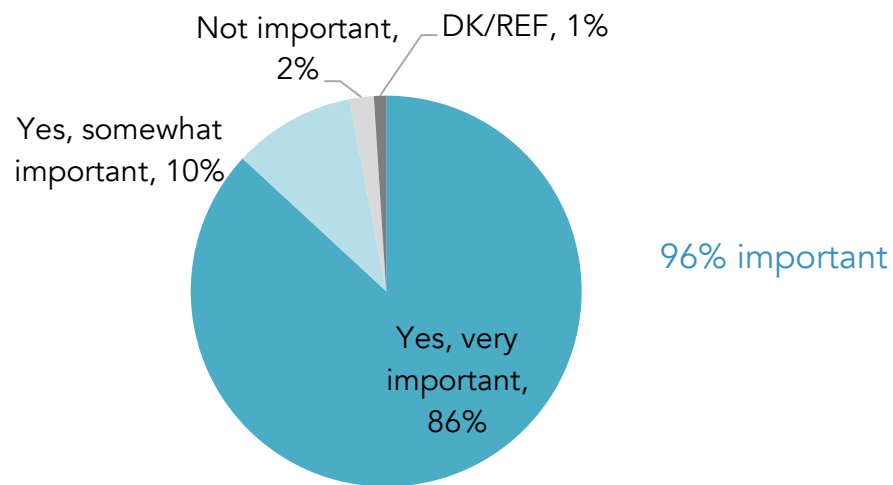
Table 2a: Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not? [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Do not overturn	Overturn
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	72	22
Men (<i>n</i> =84)	72	23
Women	72	22
50 + years old	68	24
Some college or less	69	24
College +	81	17
<\$50K HH income	72	22
\$50K + (<i>n</i> =95)	82	15

Views about Abortion Care and Access

An overwhelming majority of Black adults in Tennessee (96 percent) feel a woman's ability to control whether or when she has children is an important part of her financial stability. Eighty-six percent say this is very important. (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4: Do you think a woman's ability to control whether or when she has children is an important part of financial stability for herself and her family?



Majorities of women (98 percent) and men (95 percent) both agree a woman's ability to control whether or when she can have children is an important part of financial stability. (See Tables 3 and 3a.)

Table 3: Do you think a woman’s ability to control whether or when she has children is an important part of financial stability for herself and her family?

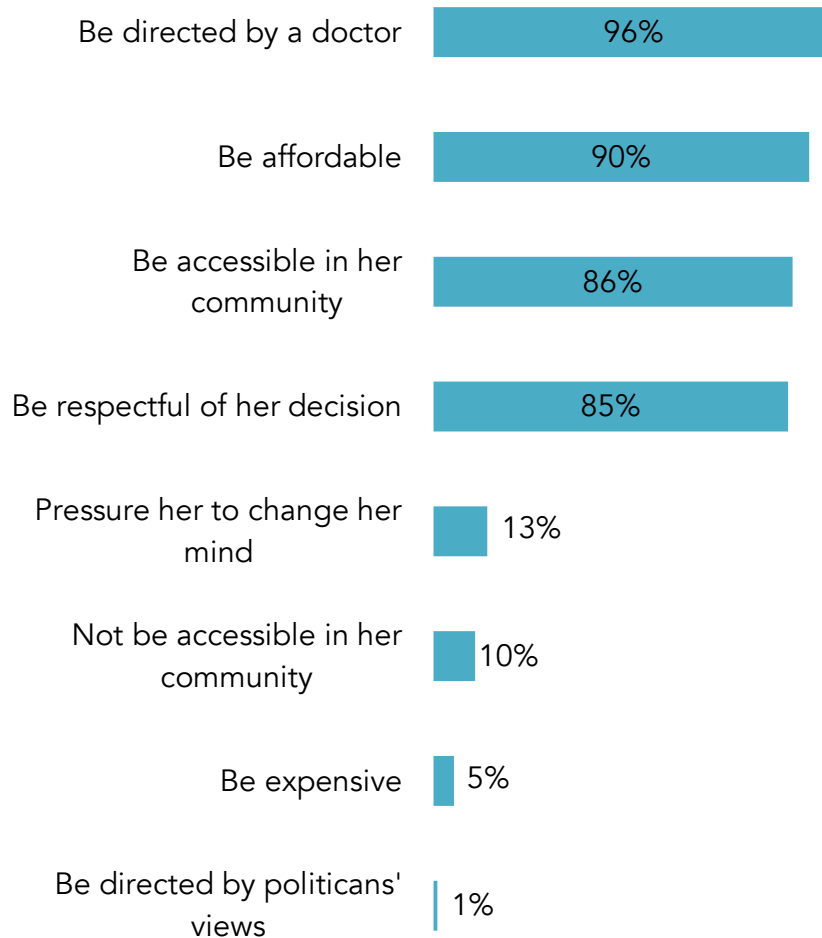
	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
Total	86	10	2
Men	82	13	3
Women	91	7	2
18-49 years old	89	7	2
50-64	84	15	1
65 +	85	8	5
High school or less	82	14	4
Some college	93	4	1
College +	89	8	1
<\$30K HH income	84	12	3
\$30K-75K	89	10	0
\$75K + (n=93)	94	5	1
Married or living w/ partner	88	8	2
Widowed/divorced/separated	83	14	3
Never married	87	9	3
Liberal	92	6	1
Moderate	88	9	3
Conservative	80	17	2
Religious service weekly or more	87	10	2
At least once a month	85	12	2
Less often/never	89	6	2
Registered to vote	88	9	2
Shelby County	85	8	5
Central TN	83	13	0
Central-East/West TN	90	10	0

Table 3a: Do you think a woman’s ability to control whether or when she has children is an important part of financial stability for herself and her family? [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	87	10	2
Men (n=84)	77	21	2
Women	91	5	2
50 + years old	84	12	3
Some college or less	87	9	3
College +	86	14	0
<\$50K HH income	87	12	1
\$50K + (n=95)	90	10	0

When we ask questions about how women access and experience abortion care — large majorities of Black adults in Tennessee want it to be directed by a doctor, affordable, accessible, and respectful of her decision. Just one percent wants this care to be directed by politicians' views. (See Figure 5.)

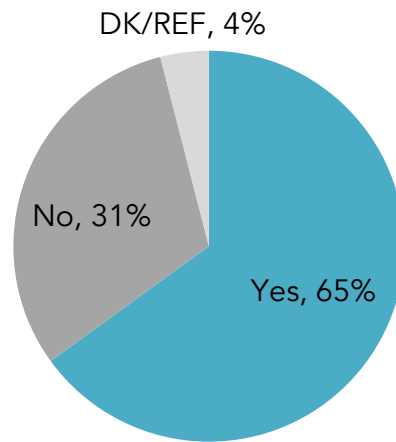
*Figure 5: Let's say a woman has decided to have an abortion. Would you want the care to...
(% Yes)*



Views toward Politicians' Positions on Abortion

Black adults in Tennessee are paying attention to a political candidate's views on abortion. Two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) say they pay attention to a candidate's views on abortion. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6: In general, do you tend to pay attention to a political candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion?



Majorities across demographic groups are paying attention to a political candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion. (See Tables 4 and 4a.)

Table 4: In general, do you tend to pay attention to a political candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion?

	Yes	No
Total	65	31
Men	68	31
Women	64	31
18-49 years old	70	27
50-64	71	25
65 +	48	47
High school or less	54	42
Some college	70	25
College +	81	18
<\$30K HH income	63	34
\$30K-75K	64	32
\$75K + (n=93)	80	19
Married or living w/ partner	66	31
Widowed/divorced/separated	66	29
Never married	64	33
Liberal	74	25
Moderate	66	28
Conservative	62	33
Religious service weekly or more	66	29
At least once a month	68	28
Less often/never	60	37
Registered to vote	67	29
Shelby County	65	32
Central TN	72	22
Central-East/West TN	59	37

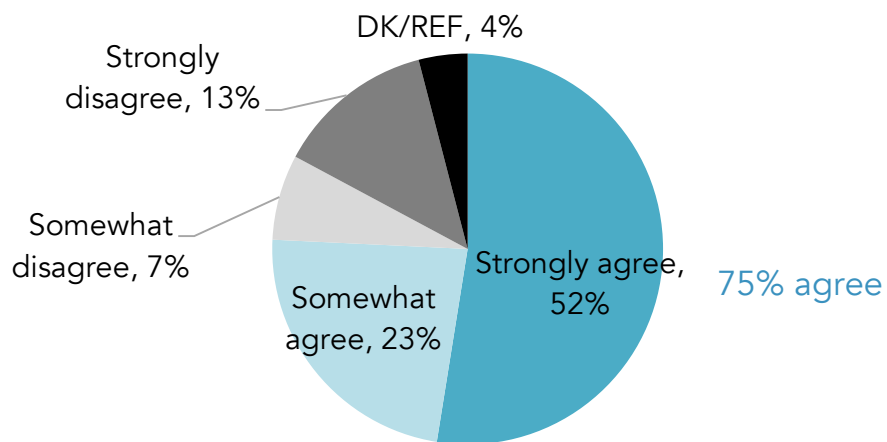
Table 4a: In general, do you tend to pay attention to a political candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion? [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Yes	No
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	66	29
Men (n=84)	74	22
Women	62	33
50 + years old	58	35
Some college or less	58	35
College +	86	12
<\$50K HH income	58	38
\$50K + (n=95)	85	14

Abortion in Their Personal Lives

Three in four Black adults in Tennessee (75 percent) believe abortion should remain legal, even though some church leaders take a position against it. About half (52 percent) strongly believe this. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7: Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.



Majorities across all demographic groups agree with this sentiment including those who attend religious services regularly (72 percent). (See Tables 5 and 5a.)

Table 5: Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.

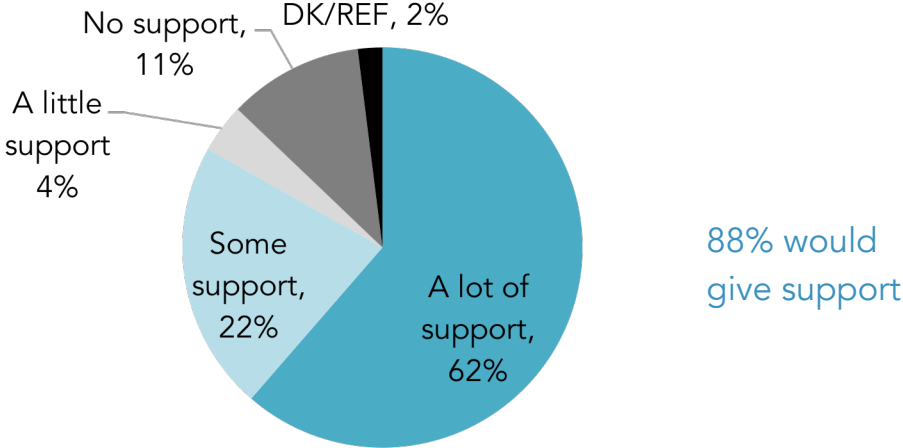
	Agree	Disagree
Total	75	20
Men	77	18
Women	74	23
18-49 years old	84	12
50-64	72	24
65 +	63	32
High school or less	66	28
Some college	81	18
College +	87	10
<\$30K HH income	66	31
\$30K-75K	84	14
\$75K + (n=93)	89	8
Married or living w/ partner	74	22
Widowed/divorced/separated	76	22
Never married	76	18
Liberal	90	9
Moderate	72	25
Conservative	68	32
Religious service weekly or more	70	26
At least once a month	72	25
Less often/never	83	12
Registered to vote	76	21
Shelby County	74	24
Central TN	81	15
Central-East/West TN	72	22

Table 5a: Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal. [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Agree	Disagree
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	70	26
Men (<i>n</i> =84)	65	29
Women	72	24
50 + years old	63	31
Some college or less	65	29
College +	83	15
<\$50K HH income	67	28
\$50K + (<i>n</i> =95)	78	20

Nearly nine in ten Black adults in Tennessee would support a loved one who had an abortion. Eighty-eight percent would offer support to a friend or family member, with 62 percent saying they would give her “a lot” of support. (See Figure 8.)

Figure 8: If a close friend or family member told you she had an abortion, would you:



Majorities across demographic groups would give a friend or family member support. (See Tables 6 and 6a.)

Table 6: If a close friend or family member told you she had an abortion, would you give her:

	Would give support	"A lot" of support
Total	88	62
Men	88	66
Women	87	58
18-49 years old	92	67
50-64	88	64
65 +	77	49
High school or less	82	53
Some college	94	67
College +	91	71
<\$30K HH income	78	45
\$30K-75K	94	74
\$75K + (n=93)	95	69
Married or living w/ partner	87	64
Widowed/divorced/separated	88	53
Never married	85	63
Liberal	93	70
Moderate	83	59
Conservative	84	52
Religious service weekly or more	88	62
At least once a month	87	62
Less often/never	87	60
Registered to vote	89	63
Shelby County	84	59
Central TN	89	66
Central-East/West TN	90	59

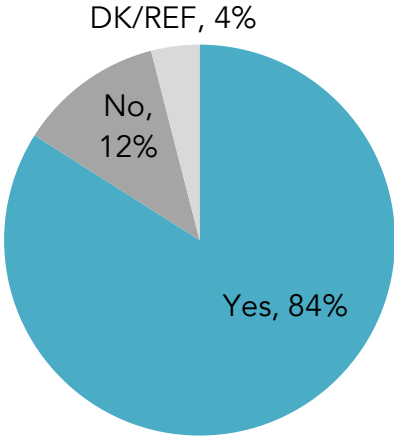
Table 6a: If a close friend or family member told you she had an abortion, would you give her: [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Would give support	"A lot" of support
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	88	62
Men (n=84)	89	68
Women	88	60
50 + years old	83	55
Some college or less	86	56
College +	94	78
<\$50K HH income	81	52
\$50K + (n=95)	98	79

Views about Birth Control and Access

A large majority of Black adults in Tennessee (84 percent) consider birth control a basic part of women’s health care coverage. About one in eight (12 percent) do not consider it a basic part of women’s health care coverage. (See Figure 9.)

Figure 9: Do you consider birth control part of basic women’s health care coverage, or not?



Large majorities across demographic groups view birth control as part of basic women’s health coverage. (See Tables 7 and 7a.)

Table 7: Do you consider birth control part of basic women’s health care coverage, or not?

	Yes	No
Total	84	12
Men	82	15
Women	85	10
18-49 years old	80	14
50-64	91	6
65 +	80	19
High school or less	82	15
Some college	89	7
College +	82	13
<\$30K HH income	81	16
\$30K-75K	89	11
\$75K + (n=93)	88	9
Married or living w/ partner	86	12
Widowed/divorced/separated	84	12
Never married	82	14
Liberal	89	10
Moderate	88	10
Conservative	82	17
Religious service weekly or more	83	13
At least once a month	84	13
Less often/never	83	11
Registered to vote	85	12
Shelby County	77	22
Central TN	88	3
Central-East/West TN	88	9

Table 7a: Do you consider birth control part of basic women’s health care coverage, or not? [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Yes	No
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	83	14
Men (n=84)	81	17
Women	84	12
50 + years old	84	13
Some college or less	83	12
College +	82	19
<\$50K HH income	84	16
\$50K + (n=95)	88	10

A large majority of Black adults in Tennessee (87 percent) believe all women should have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care, including abortion. Seven in ten (72 percent) strongly agree with this idea; 10 percent disagree. (See Figure 10.) Similarly, 91 percent agree women should get birth control through their health insurance even if their boss disagrees with the idea of birth control. (See Figure 11.)

Figure 10: Whether she has private or government funded health coverage, every woman should have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care, including prenatal care and abortion.

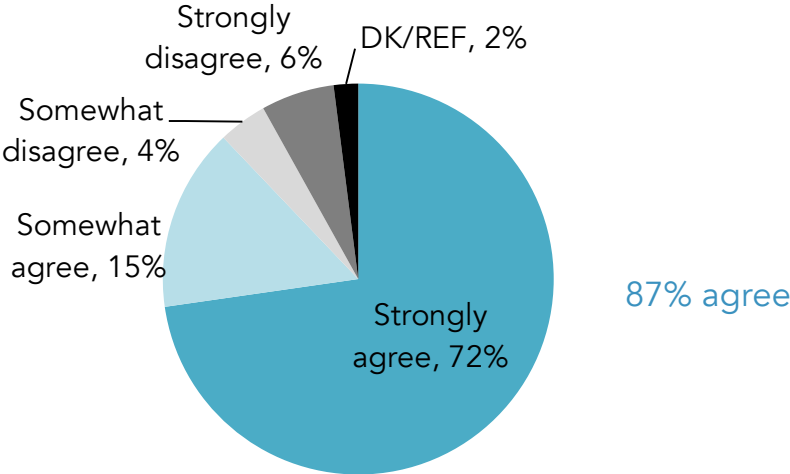
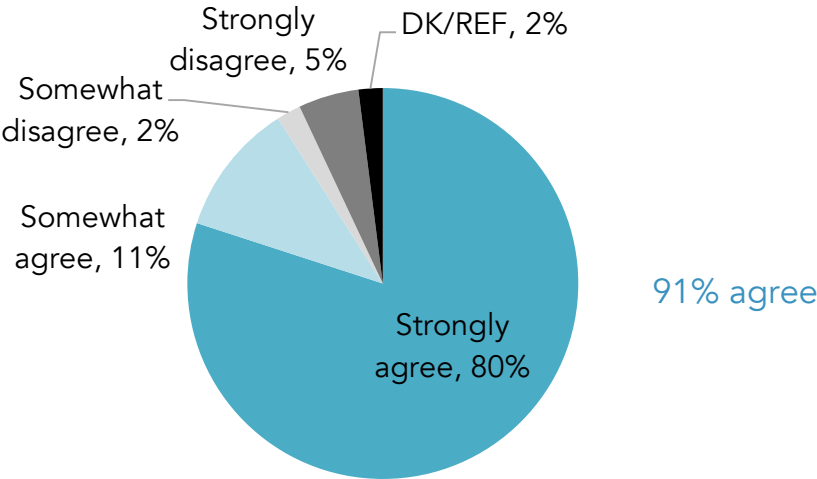


Figure 11: A woman should be able to get birth control through her health insurance even if her boss disagrees with the idea of birth control.



Majorities across all demographic groups agree women should have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care including prenatal care and abortion and access to birth control regardless of employers' positions. (See Tables 8 and 8a.)

Table 8: Do you agree or disagree... (% Agree)

	Whether private or government funded health coverage, every woman should have the full range of pregnancy-related care, including prenatal care and abortion.	A woman should be able to get birth control through her health insurance, even if her boss disagrees with the idea of birth control.
Total	87	91
Men	87	89
Women	87	92
18-49 years old	87	92
50-64	92	95
65 +	81	81
High school or less	85	90
Some college	91	94
College +	88	89
<\$30K HH income	83	92
\$30K-75K	93	94
\$75K + (n=93)	92	85
Married or living w/ partner	90	91
Widowed/divorced/separated	83	90
Never married	88	93
Liberal	96	91
Moderate	84	96
Conservative	83	88
Religious service weekly or more	84	90
At least once a month	84	91
Less often/never	93	90
Registered to vote	87	91
Shelby County	82	87
Central TN	93	98
Central-East/West TN	87	89

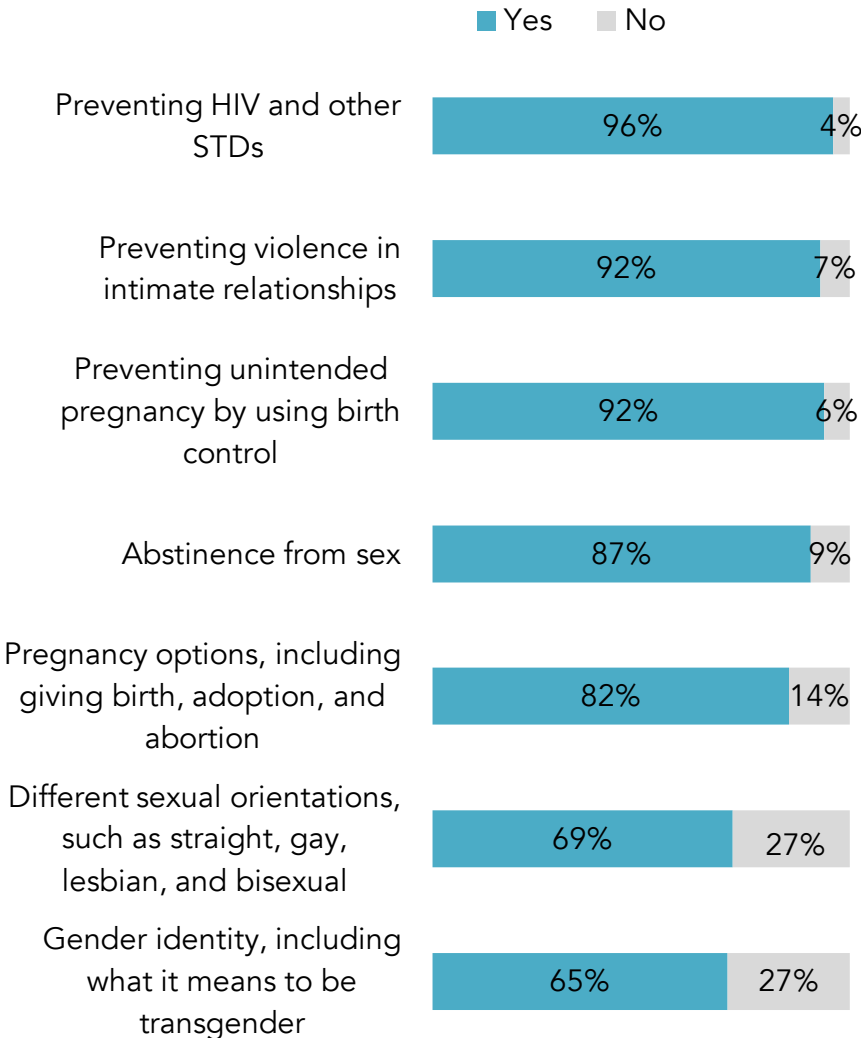
Table 8a: Do you agree or disagree... (% Agree) [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Whether private or government funded health coverage, every woman should have the full range of pregnancy-related care, including prenatal care and abortion.	A woman should be able to get birth control through her health insurance, even if her boss disagrees with the idea of birth control.
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	85	90
Men (n=84)	83	86
Women	85	92
50 + years old	85	88
Some college or less	84	90
College +	86	89
<\$50K HH income	88	90
\$50K + (n=95)	89	93

Views toward Sex Education

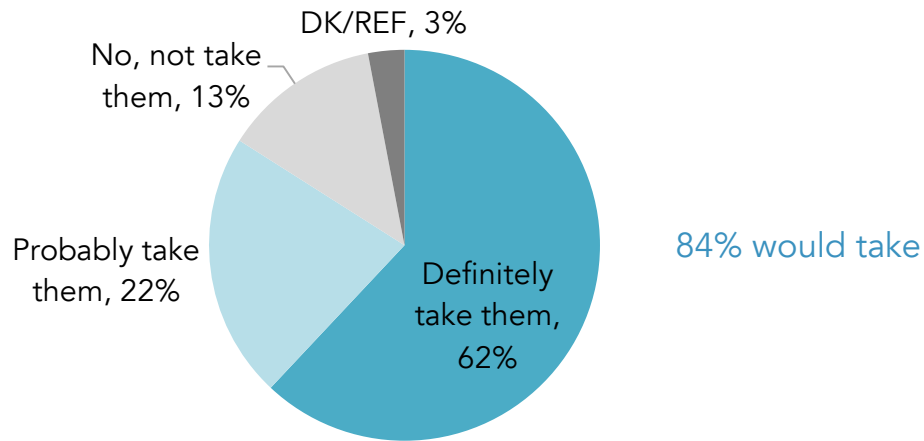
Majorities of Black adults in Tennessee want comprehensive sex education. Nearly all want sex education programs to cover preventing HIV and STDs (96 percent), intimate partner violence (92 percent), and preventing unintended pregnancy by using birth control (92 percent). Large majorities also want topics included such as abstinence (87 percent), pregnancy options including giving birth, adoption and abortion (82 percent), sexual orientation (69 percent), and gender identity (65 percent). (See Figure 12.)

Figure 12: Switching gears, I have a few questions about sex education programs in high schools. Do you think a sex education program should cover...



A majority of respondents (84 percent) would take their teenager to get birth control if they needed it. Sixty-two percent say they would definitely take them. About one in six (17 percent) say they would not take them. (See Figure 13.)

Figure 13: If you had children, do you think you would definitely take your own teenagers to get birth control if they needed it, probably take them, or would you not take them?



Majorities across demographic segments are likely to definitely take their teenagers to get birth control. (See Tables 9 and 9a.)

Table 9: If you had children, do you think you would definitely take your own teenagers to get birth control if they needed it, probably take them, or would you not take them?

	Definitely take them	Probably take them	No, not take them
Total	62	22	13
Men	61	20	16
Women	63	23	10
18-49 years old	65	18	13
50-64	64	26	8
65 +	55	23	19
High school or less	66	20	12
Some college	54	31	12
College +	64	16	15
<\$30K HH income	55	29	15
\$30K-75K	70	20	8
\$75K + (n=93)	63	17	15
Married or living w/ partner	63	23	11
Widowed/divorced/separated	61	22	14
Never married	67	20	12
Liberal	73	18	8
Moderate	63	27	9
Conservative	60	21	17
Religious service weekly or more	59	20	18
At least once a month	62	20	16
Less often/never	63	25	5
Registered to vote	63	21	14
Shelby County	60	23	14
Central TN	67	22	8
Central-East/West TN	62	21	14

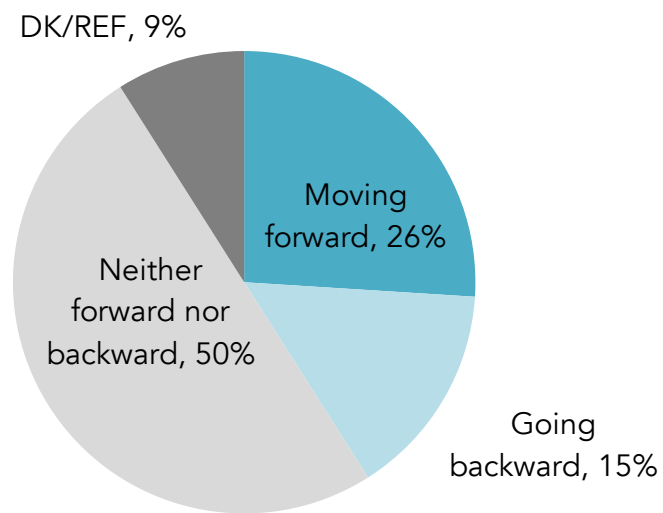
Table 9a: If you had children, do you think you would definitely take your own teenagers to get birth control if they needed it, probably take them, or would you not take them? [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Definitely take them	Probably take them	No, not take them
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	59	20	18
Men (<i>n</i> =84)	58	12	29
Women	59	24	13
50 + years old	58	22	16
Some college or less	60	20	18
College +	58	20	21
<\$50K HH income	62	22	14
\$50K + (<i>n</i>=95)	57	20	23

Views on Issues Related to Women’s Rights

About one-quarter of respondents feel elected officials in their state are moving forward on issues related to women’s rights. About two-thirds say elected officials are not moving forward or moving backward. (See Figure 14.)

Figure 14: Would you say elected officials in your state are:



Those with a college education are more likely to say elected officials are going backward on issues related to women’s rights. (See Tables 10 and 10a.)

Table 10: Would you say elected officials in your state are [_____] on issues related to women’s rights?

	Moving forward	Going backward	Neither forward backward
Total	26	15	50
Men	25	18	45
Women	26	13	54
18-49 years old	18	13	58
50-64	32	21	41
65+	32	14	46
High school or less	31	7	51
Some college	24	14	51
College +	18	30	47
<\$30K HH income	30	19	43
\$30K-75K	24	11	60
\$75K + (n=93)	15	19	53
Married or living w/ partner	25	16	49
Widowed/divorced/ separated	32	14	46
Never married	16	15	57
Liberal	13	20	61
Moderate	27	14	54
Conservative	39	14	44
Religious service weekly or more	28	19	44
At least once a month	29	19	44
Less often/never	19	8	62
Registered to vote	27	16	50
Shelby County	23	15	50
Central TN	30	21	46
Central-East/West TN	27	12	53

Table 10a: Would you say elected officials in your state are [_____] on issues related to women’s rights? [Among those who attend religious services weekly or more]

	Moving forward	Going backward	Neither forward backward
Total who attend religious services weekly or more	28	19	44
Men (n=84)	28	22	31
Women	29	17	50
50 + years old	34	15	42
Some college or less	32	9	47
College +	19	45	35
<\$50K HH income	37	16	41
\$50K + (n=95)	16	24	50

Detailed Methods

The telephone study collected data from a sample of $n = 500$ Black adult Tennessee residents. All phone interviews were done through the CATI system. The study included landline ($n=207$) and cell ($n=293$) completes.

The fielding period for the study was September 28 through October 31, 2016. The margin of sampling error for results is ± 6.7 percentage points.

In order to obtain the number of interviews needed in a timely manner, SSRS used pre-screened sample from its omnibus survey, which is a national, weekly dual-frame bilingual telephone survey designed to meet standards of quality associated with custom research studies. For this study, SSRS utilized pre-screened sample that had been identified as non-Hispanic African American in a previous omnibus survey. In addition, SSRS obtained listed and non-listed sample from low and high African American incidence areas in Tennessee. The listed sample consisted of households that were identified as African American using propriety logic by Ethnic Technologies, a company that provides multicultural marketing data, ethnic identification software and ethnic data appending services. The non-listed sample consisted of RDD based sample that utilized Marketing Systems Group's Genesys system to target areas with high density African American coverage.

The data from this project were weighted to reflect representative estimates of the adult African American population in Tennessee. The survey data were also weighted to adjust for the fact that not all survey respondents were selected with the same probabilities, and account for systematic nonresponse along known population parameters.