

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Planned Parenthood Federation of America

RE: Myths vs. Facts on Race-Based Attacks

DATE: December 6, 2011

Anti-choice activists are spreading misleading and false information about Planned Parenthood in their effort to undermine access to abortion care.

Below please find the real facts about Planned Parenthood and the preventive health care our centers provide, as well as common myths vs. facts.

FACTS ABOUT PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Planned Parenthood provides preventive health care to three million women, men, and young people. Planned Parenthood health centers are trusted nonprofit health care providers to which one in five women has turned at some point in her life for preventive health care and information, including birth control, lifesaving cancer screenings, STI testing, and annual exams.

More than 90 percent of the health care Planned Parenthood provides is preventive. Last year, Planned Parenthood doctors and nurses carried out nearly one million screenings for cervical cancer and 830,000 breast exams. Planned Parenthood health centers also provided affordable birth control to nearly 2.5 million clients, and nearly four million tests and treatments for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV testing for women and men. Planned Parenthood's doctors, nurses, and other health professionals have been providing health care to millions of women for 95 years.

Seventy-three percent of Planned Parenthood health centers are in rural or medically underserved areas. Planned Parenthood provides primary and preventive health care to many who would otherwise have nowhere to turn.

Planned Parenthood health centers are an integral part of the public health safety net. According to the Guttmacher Institute, six in 10 patients who receive care at a family planning health center like Planned Parenthood consider it their main source of health care.

Planned Parenthood's federal funding goes toward basic health care. Just like hospitals and other health care providers, Planned Parenthood receives reimbursements from Medicaid and other federal sources to provide preventive health care. Federal funds pay only for cancer screenings, birth control, family planning visits, annual exams, testing for HIV and other STIs, and other basic care.

Planned Parenthood opposes discrimination in any form and unequivocally denounces racial bias in the delivery of health care. For 95 years, Planned Parenthood has worked to address racial and economic bias in access to health care. Planned Parenthood believes in helping all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation, make informed decisions about their reproductive health care. Our mission is deeply rooted in the philosophy of equality for all, and our doors are open to everyone.

MYTH vs. FACT

Myth: Planned Parenthood has racist roots and its founder, Margaret Sanger, supported “black genocide.”

FACT: Several independent media outlets have reviewed the facts and found that these claims are false and wildly misleading. [PolitiFact](#) gave this claim its worst rating, “Pants on Fire.” They say, “We found no evidence that Sanger advocated - privately or publicly - for anything even resembling the ‘genocide’ of blacks, or that she thought blacks are genetically inferior.” The [Washington Post](#) gave a similar claim made by Herman Cain four “Pinocchios.” They write, “No matter what you think of abortion, it seems pretty clear that Cain is spouting historical fiction. There is no evidence that Sanger ever sought to kill black babies, either through the Negro Project or any other endeavor.” The fact is Planned Parenthood opposes discrimination in any form and has worked to address racial and economic bias in access to health care for 95 years.

Myth: Planned Parenthood is targeting African Americans for abortions, and builds its health centers in African American neighborhoods.

FACT: Planned Parenthood is committed to ensuring all communities, and especially those most in need, have access to high-quality, affordable women’s health care. The fact is 73 percent of Planned Parenthood health centers are located in rural or medically underserved areas. In addition, the [Gutmacher Institute](#) has a study that rebuts the misleading claim that most abortion clinics are located in predominantly African-American neighborhoods. Their report says fewer than one in 10 abortion clinics are located in predominantly African-American neighborhoods. The [Washington Post](#) also found this claim misleading, saying, “(Herman) Cain’s claim that three-quarters of Planned Parenthood’s facilities are in black neighborhoods also appears wildly exaggerated.”

Myth: Planned Parenthood exploits African-American women by encouraging them to have abortions, since the abortion rate is highest among African-American women.

FACT: This, too, is a misleading claim. According to researchers, unintended pregnancy rates are higher for black Americans and Latinas than for white women; as a result, abortion rates are higher. Disproportionately high rates of both unintended pregnancy and abortion are just one symptom of broader health disparities that in large part stem from less access to preventive care, birth control, and cancer screenings. Planned Parenthood works every day to improve the quality of health care for all people, including African Americans.

Myth: There are tapes of Planned Parenthood staff appearing to accept racist donations earmarked solely for African-American abortions.

FACT: Planned Parenthood does not tolerate racism of any kind and firmly and unequivocally denounces racial bias in the delivery of health care. Planned Parenthood has a proud history of social justice and believes in helping all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation, make informed decisions about their reproductive health care. It is unacceptable for any Planned Parenthood employee to create the impression that the organization would accept donations for such offensive purposes. Planned Parenthood has apologized for misstatements made several years ago by a very small number of employees on this issue. It should also be noted that those tapes were part of a sting operation by anti-choice operatives, and were heavily edited to create a misimpression.