

Teen Abortion: Requiring Parental Consent Makes No Sense

by Diana Alstad

If a girl isn't mature enough to decide not to have a child, how could she possibly be mature enough to raise one? Certainly raising a child requires infinitely more maturity than having an abortion. You can't have it both ways: *if a girl is considered old enough to be a parent, she must be at least old enough to decide whether to be one.*

Parental consent is not legally necessary to have a child. All requiring it for abortion does is force girls to have children they don't want. Those who say parents have a right to decide are either not looking at consequences, or are more concerned about parental control and authority than about good parenting. Just requiring notification alone can prevent or delay a girl from seeking an abortion—especially if her parents are anti-abortion or abusive.

What about the child's right to a responsible and willing mother in this complex and dangerous world? Does a 15-year-old mother also need parental consent on how to raise her child? Or does becoming a mother make her magically responsible and free from parental authority? If it does not, who is the ultimate authority for the baby—its grandparents? To not look at repercussions beyond the womb is truly irresponsible. Saying teenage girls are too young to make the decision without parental consent, but old enough to be parents is absurd.

“Teen Abortion,” “Abortion as a Moral Act,” and “Abortion & the Morality Wars”
are at JoelDiana.com

Abortion and the Morality Wars: Taking the Moral Offensive

A position paper co-authored by veteran feminist Diana Alstad and Joel Kramer exposes why being on the moral defensive is harming pro-choice and how this can and must be reversed by redefining the moral high ground, challenging the right's moral monopol, and showing why the religious right is wrong. It shows why forcing a woman to have a child she doesn't want is immoral, whereas abortion is usually a moral act that is good for individuals and society. This paper has had significant impact on many heads of pro-choice and family planning organizations, and enthusiasm from feminists.

“I can't remember reading so cogent and truthful an analysis—ever. It's superb.” Elizabeth Conant, former editor of *Pro-Choice Network Newsletter*, plus enthused responses from Gloria Steinem, Ira Glasser, Geraldine Ferraro, Kate Millett, Lawrence Lader, Sarah Epstein, Anita Perez Ferguson, Alix Shulman, Ellen Levine, Gene Boyer, Virginia Whitehill, and many more.