

Reasons U.S. Women Have Abortions

TABLE 2. Percentage of women reporting that specified reasons contributed to their decision to have an abortion, 2004 and 1987

Reason	2004 (N=1,160)	1987 (N=1,900)
Having a baby would dramatically change my life	74	78*
Would interfere with education	38	36
Would interfere with job/employment/career	38	50***
Have other children or dependents	32	22***
Can't afford a baby now	73	69
Unmarried	42	na
Student or planning to study	34	na
Can't afford a baby and child care	28	na
Can't afford the basic needs of life	23	na
Unemployed	22	na
Can't leave job to take care of a baby	21	na
Would have to find a new place to live	19	na
Not enough support from husband or partner	14	na
Husband or partner is unemployed	12	na
Currently or temporarily on welfare or public assistance	8	na
Don't want to be a single mother or having relationship problems	48	52*
Not sure about relationship	19	na
Partner and I can't or don't want to get married	12	30***
Not in a relationship right now	11	12
Relationship or marriage may break up soon	11	16*
Husband or partner is abusive to me or my children	2	3
Have completed my childbearing	38	28**
Not ready for a(nother) child†	32	36
Don't want people to know I had sex or got pregnant	25	33*
Don't feel mature enough to raise a(nother) child	22	27*
Husband or partner wants me to have an abortion	14	24***
Possible problems affecting the health of the fetus	13	14
Physical problem with my health	12	8**
Parents want me to have an abortion	6	8
Was a victim of rape	1	1
Became pregnant as a result of incest	<0.5	<0.5

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001. †This was a write-in response in 2004 and 1987. Note: na=not applicable, because survey questions were not comparable. Source: 1987—reference 4.

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