



POWER TO DECIDE

YOUNG PEOPLE, BIRTH CONTROL, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Findings from the 2026
Youth Reproductive Health Access
(YouR HeAlth) Survey

Introduction

Adolescents and young adults (AYA) are turning to social media for birth control information.[1,2] To better understand what they're seeing, how much they trust it, and whether it shapes their contraceptive decisions, Power to Decide analyzed data from our 2026 Youth Reproductive Health Access (YouR HeAlth) Survey.[3]

Findings from the 2026 Youth Reproductive Health Access (YouR HeAlth) Survey

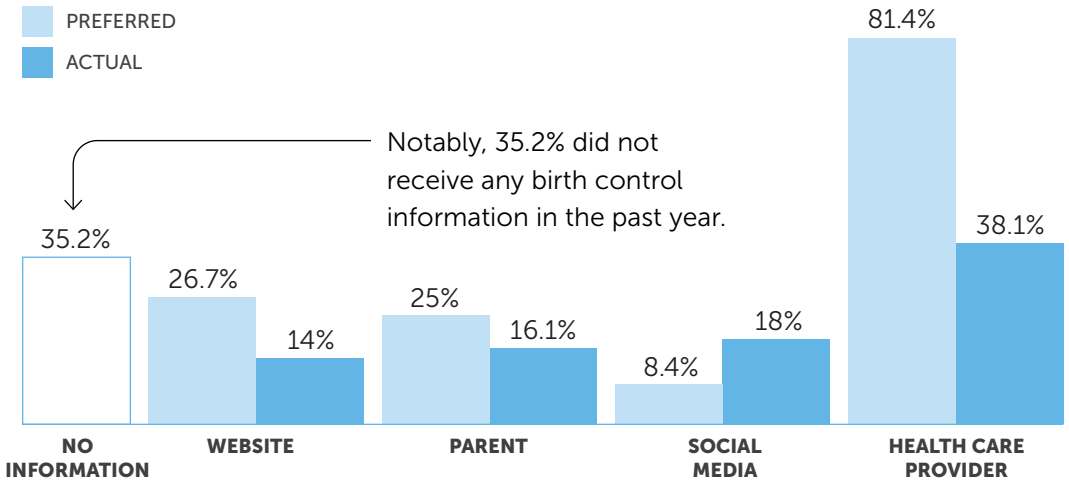
Methods

Findings from this factsheet draw from the 2026 YouR HeAlth Survey. Between July 31 and August 11, 2026, we surveyed 1,026 people assigned female at birth between the ages of 15 and 29 using the Ipsos Knowledge Panel, an online probability-based research panel. Respondents 15–17-year-old were recruited through a parent or household panel member. The survey focused on knowledge and attitudes about and experiences with sexual and reproductive health information and services, including online and offline sources of information, contraceptive care and abortion care.

FINDINGS

Young people's actual and preferred sources of birth control information in the past year (n=1,026)

Only 8.4% of AYA report wanting to get information about birth control from social media, compared with the most common preferred sources of birth control information, including health care providers (81.4%), websites (26.7%), and parents (25.0%).

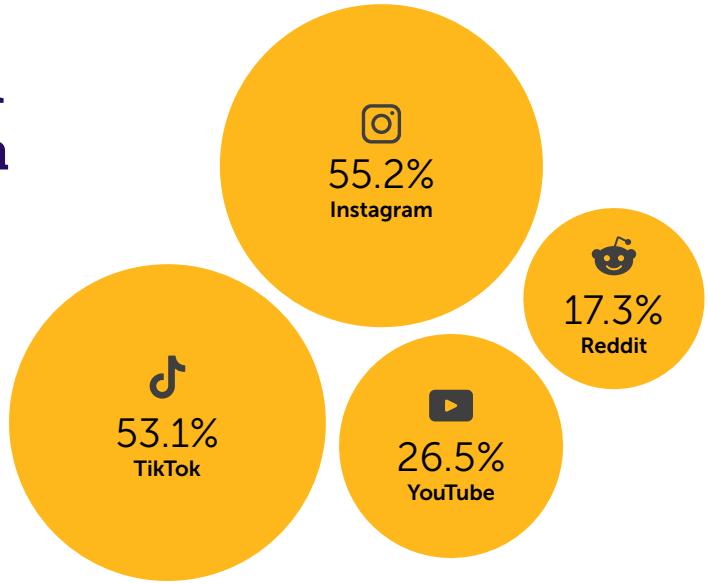


Understanding Birth Control Information on Social Media



Social media source
(n=179)

18.0% of adolescents and young adults received information about birth control from social media.



FINDINGS

What information about birth control are young people seeing on social media? (n=179)

54.1%
Personal experiences from people who have used birth control

50.7%
Bad side effects of birth control methods

48.3%
Different types of birth control methods available

43.7%
Information about a specific birth control method, such as how it is used or how it works

74.4% of AYA somewhat trust birth control information on social media, compared with 17.4% who trust it a lot. 3.0% report no trust at all.



Did young people start a new method, stop their current method, or switch their birth control method because of something they saw or heard on social media in the past year? (n=175)



74.2%
of AYA did not change their birth control method because of something they saw on social media.



20.5%
of AYA thought about starting, stopping, or changing their birth control method, but did not make the change.



10.2%
of AYA started, stopped, or changed their birth control method because of what they saw or heard on social media.



AYA reported notable gaps in receiving birth control information in the past year, with a little over one-third receiving no birth control information at all. Social media was a dominant source, largely through personal accounts of negative side effects, consistent with prior studies identifying TikTok, YouTube, and Reddit as key platforms for sharing birth control experiences.[4,5,6]

In line with other national surveys, we found that while most AYA aren't changing their behavior because of something they saw on social media, 20% reported thinking about making a change because of something they saw on social media, and 10% did actually change their birth control method because of something they saw on social media.[7]

IMPLICATIONS

Understanding where young people prefer to get and are actually getting information about birth control is critical to ensuring they receive reliable and trusted information. Given the number of young people getting information from social media, these platforms present an opportunity to ensure that young people also have accurate, evidence-based facts alongside the content about side effects and personal stories they are seeing.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Young people are not getting information about birth control, but when they do, they are not getting it from their preferred sources.

18% of young people got birth control information from social media in the last year, but only 8% actually want to get this information from social media.

Only 17% of young people trust birth control information on social media "a lot." Most (74%) "somewhat" trust the information.

One in five young people considered starting, stopping, or switching their method because of something they saw on social media, and one in ten reported actually making a change.





References

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