

TABLE 1. Selected measures of public opinion on premarital sex and sex education, and of young women's sexual behavior and reproductive experience, United States, by region

Measure	Total	Northeast	South	Midwest	West
Public opinion, 1999					
% who believe sex should occur only in marriage	33	26	40*	34*	29
% who support the teaching of sex education in high school	93	94	92	92	93
% who support the teaching of sex education in junior high school	84	82	82	85	87
% who agree that by grades 11–12, the following topics are appropriate to be taught					
Abstinence	95	96	93	96	93
Contraception	91	94	90*	89*	95
Condoms	90	93	89*	89*	93
Sexual behavior/reproductive experience					
% of sexually experienced 20–24-year-old women who had had sex by age 17, 1995	47	43	47	49	46
Rate per 1,000 women aged 15–17, 1996					
Pregnancies†	62	56	67	50	69
Births	34	24	41	29	36
Abortions	19	25	16	14	24

*Differs significantly from proportion in the Northeast at $p < .05$. †Includes miscarriages. Note: The four U.S. regions are as follows: **Northeast**—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. **South**—Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. **Midwest**—Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. **West**—Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Sources: **Public opinion**—unpublished tabulations of a nationwide poll of 1,050 respondents, aged 18 or older (reference 16). **Sexual behavior**—reference 17. **Reproductive experience**—calculated from previously reported findings by The Alan Guttmacher Institute (reference 18).