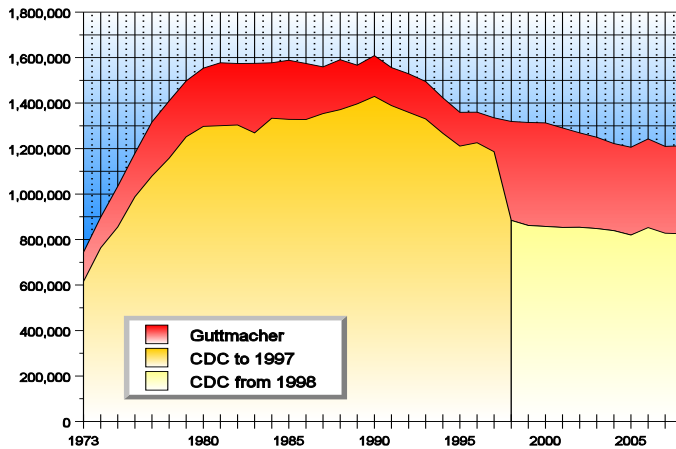


Reported Annual Abortions 1973 - 2008



	GI	CDC
1973	744,600	615,831
1974	898,600	763,476
1975	1,034,200	854,853
1976	1,179,300	988,267
1977	1,316,700	1,079,430
1978	1,409,600	1,157,776
1979	1,497,700	1,251,921
1980	1,553,900	1,297,606
1981	1,577,300	1,300,760
1982	1,573,900	1,303,980
1983	1,575,000	1,268,987
1984	1,577,200	1,333,521
1985	1,588,600	1,328,570
1986	1,574,000	1,328,112
1987	1,559,100	1,353,671
1988	1,590,800	1,371,285
1989	1,566,900	1,396,658
1990	1,608,600	1,429,247
1991	1,556,500	1,388,937
1992	1,528,900	1,359,146
1993	1,495,000	1,330,414
1994	1,423,000	1,267,415
1995	1,359,400	1,210,883
1996	1,360,200	1,225,937
1997	1,335,000	1,186,039
1998	1,319,000	884,273*
1999	1,314,800	861,789*
2000	1,313,000	857,475*
2001	1,291,000	853,485*
2002	1,269,000	854,122*
2003	1,250,000	848,163*
2004	1,222,100	839,226*
2005	1,206,200	820,151*
2006	1,242,200	846,181*
2007	1,209,600	827,609*
2008	1,212,400	825,564*
2009-11	1,212,400 §	

§ NRLC base figure
*excludes NH, CA, and at least one other state

ABORTION statistics

United States Data and Trends

Abortions Level Off After Decline

After dropping 25% from a high of over 1.6 million in 1990, the number of abortions performed annually in the U.S. has leveled off at about 1.2 million a year.

Two independent sources confirm this latest trend: the government's Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Guttmacher Institute (GI), which was once a special research affiliate of abortion chain Planned Parenthood.

The CDC ordinarily develops its annual report on the basis of data received from 52 central health agencies (50 states plus New York City and the District of Columbia). GI gets its numbers from direct surveys of abortionists conducted every few years.

Because of these different methods of data collection, GI has consistently obtained higher counts than the CDC. CDC researchers have admitted it probably undercounts the total number of abortions because reporting laws vary from state to state and some abortionists probably do not report or under-report the abortions they perform. Nevertheless, because increases and decreases in CDC and GI numbers have usually roughly tracked each other, both sources are thought to provide useful information on abortion trends and statistics. The CDC stopped reporting estimates for some states in 1998, though, making the discrepancy larger.

Abortions from CA and NH have not been counted by the CDC since 1998, and other states have been missing from the totals during that time frame: OK in 1998, AK from 1998 to 2002, WV in 2003 and 2004, LA in 2005 and 2006, MD in 2007 and 2008. For areas that did report, overall declines were seen from 1998 through 2008, though totals ticked up again in 2006.

GI's latest survey found slightly higher numbers in 2008, but these may be due to the addition of abortionists missed in previous surveys. Increasing numbers of chemical abortions have also helped arrest previous declines.

Using GI figures through 2008, estimating 1,212,400 abortions for 2009 through 2011, and factoring in the possible 3% undercount GI estimates for its own figures, the total number of abortions performed in the U.S. since 1973 equals 54,559,615.

The Consequences of *Roe v. Wade*

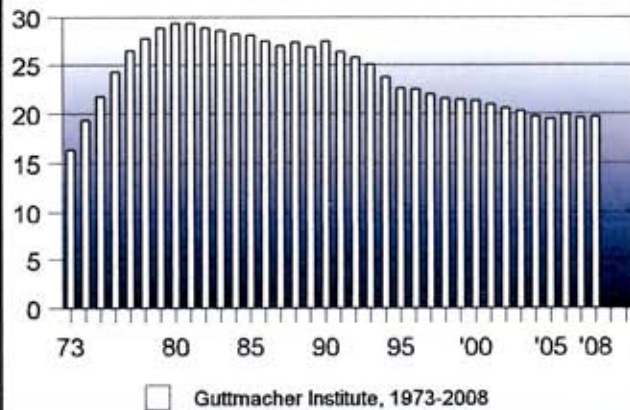
54,559,615

Total abortions since 1973

Based on numbers reported by the Guttmacher Institute 1973-2008, with estimates of 1,212,400 for 2009-2011. GI estimates a possible 3% under reporting rate, which is factored into the total. 1/12

U.S. Abortion Rate

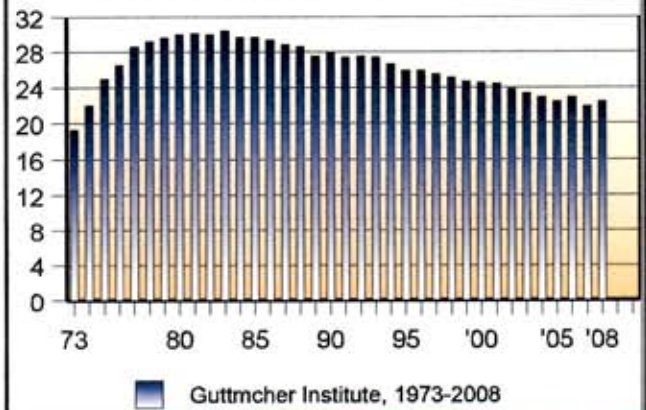
abortions per 1,000 women ages 15-44 (as of July 1 each year)



For full citations and more information, see the "Factsheets" section at www.nrlc.org

U.S. Abortion Ratio

abortions per 100 pregnancies ending in live birth or abortion



Factors Affecting Abortion Trends

Not surprisingly, abortions surged when they were first legalized in states like Colorado, California, and North Carolina in the late 1960s, and then in the nation as a whole in 1973 under *Roe v. Wade*. They continued to climb throughout the 1970s as the number of abortionists grew and many in society began to acclimate themselves to the idea of abortion on demand.

A large segment of the public, though, saw abortion for what it was – the destruction of innocent human life – and undertook legislative, educational, organizational, and practical steps to protect the lives of unborn children and their mothers. Over the years, this began to have an impact.

Abortions as a whole first reached around 1.55 million in 1980 and hovered at this level for about ten years. After peaking at 1.6 million in 1990, they fell by about 25%, reaching an annual level of about 1.2 million in 2005.

Several factors can impact the numbers of abortions. If there are fewer women of reproductive age (15-44) in one year rather than another, or if that group skews older, from population shifts or bubbles, that will reduce the numbers of abortions even if the likelihood of abortion for any given woman stays the same.

In theory, anything that impacts female fertility, such as a successful national teen abstinence campaign, the large scale use of birth control, or even high rates of reproductive injuries or diseases, can reduce the likelihood of pregnancy and hence abortion.

Economic factors may play a role as well, but their impact is unclear. Many women cite a sense of inability to afford the care of a child in their decisions to abort, but this may also affect their willingness to risk pregnancy.

Abortion rates and ratios, which measure the prevalence of abortion in a society and the choices made by pregnant women, give a little clearer idea of what may be going on.

Guttmacher measures the **abortion rate** as the number of abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44 as of July 1 in a given year. This gives us an idea of how common abortion is in our culture at a particular time.

Looked at in this way, abortion reached its highest prominence around 1980, when there were about 29.3 abortions for every thousand women of reproductive age. Though, owing to population, the raw number of abortions stayed the same or even rose during the decade, the prevalence of abortion, with a higher population, began to decline from around 1982 on.

By 2004, the rate had dropped to under 20, meaning that abortion was a significantly less common feature in women's lives in 2004 than it was in 1980. Population changes don't tell the whole story, however.

The **abortion ratio**, for Guttmacher, is the number of abortions per 100 pregnancies that end in either abortion or live birth (miscarriages and stillbirths are not counted). This number is significant, since it tells us the likelihood that any given pregnant woman will choose to abort or give birth to her baby.

Like the rate and the raw numbers, the abortion ratio rose swiftly after *Roe*, reaching 30 by 1980. Though estimated to have gone as high as 30.4 in 1983, it trended down after that point, dropping below 23 in 2004.

This is an indicator that real changes in attitudes and behaviors are involved, as a higher proportion of pregnant women are choosing life, rather than death, for their babies.

What accounts for this? There were fewer abortionists, but a correlation between them and the number of abortions may say as much about demand as supply. Economic conditions? – mixed throughout the long decline.

It is notable that during the time of these changes, pro-life legislation has been passed in many states. Since 1989, 24 states have passed right to know legislation, making sure women know not only the risk and realities of abortion, but also of alternatives better for them and their unborn children. Caring volunteers at pregnancy care centers all around the country make these alternatives realistic.

Twenty-nine states now have substantive parental involvement laws in place, protecting teens from adolescent fears and exploitation by the abortion industry. Waiting periods, limits on taxpayer funding, and ultrasound viewing laws have also probably played significant roles.

Millions of pieces of pro-life literature illustrating fetal development have been distributed, confirming what so many women have seen for themselves in sonograms and heard on fetal heartbeat stethoscopes, that abortion stops a beating heart and ends the lives of children with hands, feet, and faces.

In recent years, however, other forces have been at work, causing trends to stagnate. The abortion industry has been attracting new customers by building glamorous new megaclinics with decorator colors and furnishings and pushing new products like RU-486 with false promises of easy, safe chemical abortions.



NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE
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