

Abortions in Ohio, 2012

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The Ohio Department of Health released its annual report on *Induced Abortions in Ohio, 2012* in October, 2013. Statewide, reported abortions were up by 2.9% over 2011, for a total of 25,473, or an average of just under 70 per day. However, the report noted that an unusually low number of abortions were reported in 2011, and that the 2012 figures represent the second lowest number of abortions reported in Ohio since 1976. (The full report may be seen on line).

Better news was reported for the local area. Abortions for residents living in Medina, Portage, Stark, Wayne and Summit counties were down by 1.1% overall, while they were down by 3.8% in Summit County, which has the area's sole abortion clinic in Akron. (In the past, as many as five abortion clinics were operating in Akron). This was the seventh straight year that resident abortions have decreased in Summit County. While there may be many other reasons for this local decrease, our educational and witnessing efforts, along with the effort of five local pregnancy help centers certainly deserve some of the credit.

Client Characteristics. Following is a summary of the characteristics of women obtaining abortions whose information was known:

Age: Under 20, 13.7%; 20-24, 34.3%; 25-29, 24.4%; 30 and over, 27.5%

Race: White, 54.2%; Black, 40.1%; Other, 5.7%

Education: High School or less, 58.4%; Some College, 28.8%;

Bachelor's Degree, 10.2%; Graduate Degree, 2.6%

Marital Status: Never married, 81.0%; Divorced, separated, widowed, 8.6%;

Married, 10.4%

Number of Living Children: None, 34.4%; One 28.3%; Two or more, 37.3%

Using Contraception at Time of Conception? Yes, 32.0%; No, 68.1%

Number of Prior Abortions: None, 52.8%; One, 28.9%; Two or more, 18.3%

Comment. Four comments might be made about these data. First, it is evident that many women and men are not exercising their legitimate moral right to control their own bodies. That is, although they do not wish to conceive or beget a child at this point in their lives, they engage in an activity that can have this result. They then resort to destroying the body of the child they are responsible for.

Second, Blacks are overrepresented in the abortion count. While they make up only some 12.2% of the state's general population, they account for some 40% of the abortions, about 3.2 times greater than their numbers in the population would lead one to expect. At the national level, they have about 2.7 times the number of abortions one would expect. An analysis of data for seven counties in Northeast Ohio yields similar figures. (See our website or contact the office for details). Abortion is devastating the African American community.

Third, given the facts that more than two-thirds of the women having abortions were not using any contraceptive method at the time of conception, and that almost one-fifth were having their third or higher abortion, it appears that many use abortion as birth control.

Fourth, the report indicates that in 2012, 367 unborn children at or older than 20 weeks gestation were aborted, an average of one a day. This number decreased from 525 late-term abortions in 2011, and hopefully will continue to fall since Ohio's Viable Infants Protection Act prohibits abortion after 20 weeks when the child is determined to be viable. Also, this October a late-term abortion clinic, the Cleveland Center for Women's Health, closed.