

FACTSHEET: SOCIAL ISSUES and POLICY

Black Youth Project researchers surveyed 1,590 Black, White and Hispanic young people between the ages of 15 and 25 about their attitudes regarding social issues such as homosexuality and same-sex marriage, abortion and homosexuality, gender roles and discrimination based on gender, sex, and sexual orientation. Responses were broken down by race/ethnicity, sex and age.

Key findings include the following:

- Black and Hispanic youth are more likely than White youth to believe that abortion is always wrong.
- Yet, a majority of all youth do not support government action to make abortion illegal under any circumstances.
- Significantly more Black youth believe that homosexuality is always wrong and oppose allowing same-sex couples to marry, compared to either White or Hispanic youth. There is also a considerable gender gap on attitudes about homosexuality.
- The majority of all youth disagree with the statement that it is always wrong to have sex before you are married.
- Yet the majority of all young people also believe that the government should actively promote marriage by offering married couples special benefits.

Abortion

- Black and Hispanic youth are most likely to agree that abortion is always wrong. The percentage of youth who agree are:
 - 47% of Black youth
 - 46% of Hispanic youth
 - 34% of White youth
- Yet, despite the fact that nearly half of Black youth agree that abortion is always wrong, 58% think it would be wrong for the government to make it illegal to get an abortion under any circumstances. The percentage of youth who believe this are:
 - 58% of Black youth
 - 57% of Hispanic youth
 - 67% of White youth

Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage

- The majority of Black youth believe that homosexuality is always wrong. This was especially true of males. The percentage of youth who believe this are:
 - 55% of Black youth
 - 36% of Hispanic youth
 - 35% of White youth
 - 48% of all males surveyed
 - 29% of all females surveyed
- The majority of Black youth disagree with the statement that “the government should make it legal for same-sex couples to get married.” The percentages of youth who disagree with this statement are:
 - 58% of Black youth
 - 43% of Hispanic youth
 - 42% of White youth

Ten percent more males than females opposed the legalization of same-sex marriage. The percentages of youth who oppose this are:

- 50% of males
- 39% of females

Premarital Sex

- While the majority of all youth disagree with the statement “It is always wrong to have sex before you are married,” fewer Black youth disagree with a condemnation of premarital sex. The percentage of youth who disagree with this statement are:
 - 52% of Black youth
 - 61% of Hispanic youth
 - 63% of White youth
- The majority of all youth believe that the government should actively promote marriage by offering special benefits to married couples, such as lowering their taxes or paying for childcare. More young men than women agree with this position. The percentage of youth who believe this are:
 - 66% of Black youth
 - 57% of Hispanic youth
 - 56% of White youth
 - 62% of males
 - 54% of females