

REPRODUCTIVE COERCION quick facts for awareness-raising

WHAT IS REPRODUCTIVE COERCION?

Reproductive coercion is the behavior used to pressure or coerce a woman into becoming pregnant or into continuing or ending a pregnancy against her will, through the use of manipulation, intimidation, threats, and/or actual acts of violence.¹

Reproductive coercion most-often manifests within the context of an intimate, heterosexual relationship, when a man uses pregnancy-controlling behaviors in an effort to maintain power, control, and domination over a woman.2

Women victimized by reproductive coercion may not recognize that these behaviors are abusive, particularly if there is no history of physical or sexual violence in their relationship.3

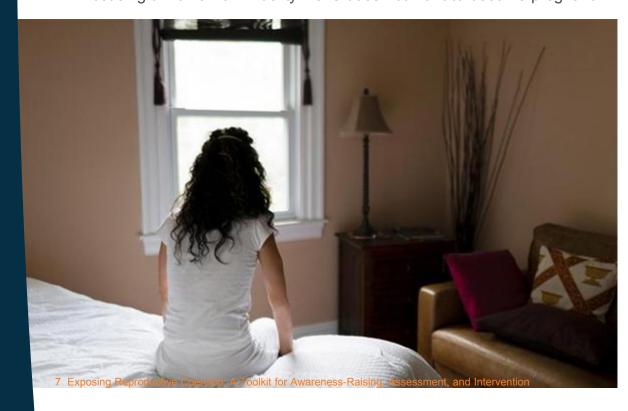
Example: A man may try to get his girlfriend pregnant against her will in order to keep her physically and financially tied to him forever.

WHAT DOES REPRODUCTIVE COERCION LOOK LIKE?

Pregnancy pressure: When an individual pressures or coerces a woman into becoming pregnant against her will.

Examples include:

- Threatening to hurt a woman physically, economically, or emotionally if she refuses to become pregnant;
- Making a woman feel guilty for not wanting to become pregnant;
- Accusing a woman of infidelity if she does not want to become pregnant.



Birth control sabotage: When an individual interferes with a woman's use of contraception to cause her to become pregnant against her will.

Examples include:

- Physically or economically preventing a woman from obtaining birth control;
- Hiding, throwing away, or destroying a woman's birth control pills;
- Pulling off contraceptive patches or pulling out vaginal rings;
- Refusing to use condoms, removing condoms, or poking holes in condoms;
- · Refusing to pull out during sex when previously agreed upon.

Pregnancy outcome control: When an individual pressures or coerces a woman into continuing or ending a pregnancy against her will.

Examples include:

- Making a woman feel guilty for wanting to continue a pregnancy or have an abortion:
- Convincing a woman that she has no other option but to continue a pregnancy or have an abortion:
- Hurting a woman (or threatening to hurt a woman) physically and/or emotionally if she continues a pregnancy or has an abortion;
- Physically or economically preventing a woman from obtaining an abortion;
- Physically assaulting a woman in an attempt to induce a miscarriage.

REPRODUCTIVE COERCION AND INTIMATE PARTNER **VIOLENCE (IPV)**

Women victimized by their intimate partners are more likely to experience reproductive coercion than non-abused women.

• Roughly 25% of women who report being physically or sexually abused by their intimate partners also report being pressured or forced to become pregnant.^{4,5}

Women victimized by their intimate partners have an increased risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancy as a result of pregnancy pressure and birth-control sabotage.

- A woman having an unintended pregnancy is 4x more likely to be in an abusive relationship than a woman having a planned pregnancy.6
- Women who are being physically abused by their intimate partners are 3x more likely to have an STI than non-abused women.7

For more information on IPV and reproductive health, please visit: www.ncadv.org/programs/reproductive-coercion/Fact-sheet.pdf

Educating friends and family about reproductive coercion can help them recognize abusive behaviors in their own relationships and encourage them to take steps to protect themselves and their reproductive autonomy.

See citations in Appendix A on page 31 of Exposing Reproductive Coercion: A Toolkit for Awareness-Raising, Assessment, and Intervention, located at www.feministcenter.org/RCtoolkit.pdf