



---

# Missouri Family Health Council, Inc.

---

For immediate release: 10am CT April 16, 2019

Contact: Leslie Pritchard  
Missouri Family Health Council  
(573) 694-4898  
[LPritchard@mfhc.org](mailto:LPritchard@mfhc.org)

## **New Initiative Will Increase Access to Quality Contraceptive Services for Women in Missouri**

*The Right Time* seeks to reduce Missouri's unintended pregnancy rate by 10 percent

**Jefferson City, MO**—Deciding if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant helps women to pursue the future they want. Launching today, *The Right Time* initiative is making it easier for Missouri women, including those who are uninsured or underinsured, to receive quality contraceptive services.

When women get pregnant on their own terms, they face fewer challenges in achieving their educational and career goals and are better prepared for the demands of parenthood. This leads to healthier women and babies, substantial savings to Missouri's health system, and reduced health disparities.

*The Right Time* is a six-year initiative working with a variety of health centers in targeted regions across the state to provide training, technical assistance, and funding to expand access to the full range of contraceptive methods. Seven health centers are joining the initiative in its first year, with two more sets of seven added the following two years, leading to a peak of 21 in 2021. The goal of *The Right Time* is to reduce the rate of unintended pregnancy in Missouri by 10 percent by 2024.

Currently, more than half (51 percent) of all pregnancies to women of all ages in Missouri are described by women themselves as unintended. Although there have been broad declines in

unintended pregnancy, both nationally and in Missouri, large disparities remain. Low-income women are nearly six times more likely than women of greater economic means to experience an unintended pregnancy, and rates also remain disproportionately high among women of color and those in rural areas.

*The Right Time* is focused on addressing these disparities by improving information about contraception, removing barriers to quality contraceptive services, providing more women with access to the full range of contraceptive methods, and helping women find the method that works best for them.

The first seven health centers selected to participate are:

- Fordland Clinic, Fordland and Kimberling City
- Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers, St. Louis
- Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri
- Contraceptive Choice Center, St. Louis
- Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services, Columbia
- AIDS Project of the Ozarks, Springfield
- Jefferson County Health Department

*The Right Time* is led by the Missouri Family Health Council (MFHC) and is an initiative of Missouri Foundation for Health. MFHC is a private nonprofit organization that champions access for every individual to culturally sensitive, quality, sexual and reproductive health education and services. MFHC supports systems of care throughout the state, with particular emphasis on safety net providers, in delivering patient-centered reproductive health care to all those who seek services. MFHC's programming is focused on removing cost barriers, specifically for the uninsured, and supporting health centers through quality training, analysis, and collaboration.

**About *The Right Time*:** *The Right Time* is a six-year initiative that is based on the simple belief that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue the future they want, including if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant. The initiative seeks to empower individuals to take control of their own health by improving information about, and removing barriers to, contraceptive services, recognizing that decisions always rest with the patient. With a goal of reducing Missouri's unintended pregnancy rate by 10 percent, *The Right Time* is committed to addressing persistent health disparities that exist around unintended pregnancy and marginalized populations.

# # #