



Oral Contraceptives Over-the-Counter Working Group Updates

May 27, 2021

Dear Working Group member,

Earlier this month, you joined us in celebrating our third annual Free the Pill Day (May 9) which also marked 61 years since the very first birth control pill was approved. Together we demonstrated the overwhelming support for OTC birth control pills that are **backed by science, affordable, fully covered by insurance, and available to people of all ages.**

Here are a few highlights:

- Sarah, a #FreeThePill Youth Council member, and Angela, strategic projects coordinator at [Advocates for Youth](#), chatted about the many ways OTC birth control pills will help young people control their reproductive health and lives. If you missed it, watch on our [IGTV](#).
- We heard from advocate, provider, and youth voices about the barriers to birth control and the benefits of OTC birth control pills during our livestream. You can watch the replay on [Twitter](#).
- Advocates for Youth and its youth council unveiled the [Free the Pill Virtual Store](#) which illustrates the future we're fighting for. Be sure to visit the store if you haven't yet and [share with your networks!](#)

On behalf of the entire Free the Pill team, THANK YOU for celebrating Free the Pill Day with us and for being part of this movement!

With deep appreciation,

Steph Synoracki

Senior Communications Manager
Ibis Reproductive Health

#FreeThePill Youth Council update



On May 10, Advocates for Youth celebrated their ribbon-cutting ceremony for the **Free the Pill Virtual Store**. Visitors were able to see what a corner store would look like in a world where birth control pills are made free, over the counter, and without age or insurance limits. The store will remain open for visitors to learn about barriers to birth control access, earn merchandise, view Free

the Pill artwork, and take action to free the pill. Check out these posts on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#), and share with your networks!

Additionally, Advocates for Youth Program Applications—including the #FreeThePill Youth Council—are open until May 31! [Learn more and share](#) with anyone you think might be interested.

Policy updates

This month, Representatives Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) and Nanette Barragán (D-CA), and Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the HEAL for Immigrant Families Act in the US House and Senate. The HEAL Act would remove the barriers to federal health programs that disproportionately harm Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other immigrants of color, including the five-year waiting period for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the exclusion of undocumented immigrants from health insurance exchanges. To learn more, visit this [resource page](#) from the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, a working group partner.

Media highlights

It's time to change the way we think about birth control access. Health care providers agree.

Allie Wollum, senior project manager at Ibis, published on [Medium](#) highlighting how over-the-counter birth control pills can address systemic inequities in our health care system and how providers can support the movement for OTC access.

The birth control pill is safe, effective and should be available over-the-counter

In *Ms. Magazine*, Raegan McDonald-Mosley, president of **Power to Decide**, a working group member, explains how the prescription requirement is an unnecessary barrier and why making the pill OTC would have the greatest impact on access.

A quick call to action

This #APAHM, we celebrate @NAPAWF and their 25-year history building power with AAPI women and girls. Learn more at napawf.org #AAPIWomenStrong

[Click to Tweet](#)

Resources and more

Free the Pill policy agenda

Check out our policy agenda with recommendations for expanding contraceptive access in the time of COVID-19. Please share with your colleagues working on state and federal policy.

[Read Policy Agenda](#)

KFF survey findings

Key findings from the 2020 Kaiser Family Foundation Women's Health Survey show 70% of women of reproductive age would support OTC access to birth control pills if the FDA said it was safe and effective.

[View Findings](#)

Statement on racial justice

The OCs OTC Working Group Steering Committee is committed to fighting racial injustice and calling out systemic racism and inequities in sexual and reproductive health.

Statement of purpose

Illinois Contraceptive Access Now (ICAN!) is our newest statement of purpose sign on! Has your organization signed our **statement of purpose** yet?

[Read the Statement](#)[Sign On](#)[Sign On](#)

About us

The **Oral Contraceptives (OCs) Over-the-Counter (OTC) Working Group** is a coalition of reproductive health, rights, and justice organizations, nonprofit research and advocacy groups, university-based researchers, and prominent clinicians who share a commitment to providing easier access to safe, effective, and affordable contraceptives, especially for those who currently face the greatest barriers, and support making birth control pills available over the counter. **Free the Pill** is the public-facing education campaign for the working group.

The working group is coordinated by **Ibis Reproductive Health**.

[Email Us](#)

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