

## Poverty is no reason to skip family planning

The Desert Sun - Palm Springs, Calif.

Author: Alisha Wilkins

Date: Jul 2, 2011

Start Page: B.9

Section: OPINION

Text Word Count: 385

---

### Document Text

---

Special to The Desert Sun

Do you know Coachella Valley residents who need sexual and reproductive health care such as cervical cancer screening, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections or contraception but think they can't afford it?

Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest is urging people to educate their family, friends and neighbors about California's Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment program, commonly known as Family PACT, which aims to increase access to reproductive and sexual health care. Patients receive low- to no-cost services. Patients can visit a Planned Parenthood health center and receive care that saves lives.

Women, men and teens are eligible for Family PACT, regardless of immigration status, if they reside in California, are at risk of pregnancy (or causing pregnancy), and have an income that is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. For example, a single person earning \$1,815 or less per month is eligible for Family PACT. A family of four that earns \$3,725 per month or less is eligible for Family PACT. Patients can enroll for Family PACT at the time they check in at the health center where they receive services.

Family PACT provides services for 1.65 million people in California. Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest provides services 300,000 times per year to residents of San Diego, Riverside and Imperial counties. Eligibility is determined by income.

The social and economic benefits of Family PACT are enormous. Every dollar spent on prevention saves \$9.25 in future medical and social service costs related to unintended pregnancy. The program saves more than \$1 billion annually in public costs. Most importantly, public health improves when women, men and teens have access to reproductive and sexual health care. When patients have access to cervical, breast and testicular cancer screenings, they are more likely to detect abnormalities earlier.

When women, men and teens have access to contraception, they are less likely to have an unintended pregnancy. When they receive regular care, they are more likely to avoid contracting sexually transmitted infections and are more likely to receive treatment for these conditions.

Need more information about Family PACT? Visit [planned.org](http://planned.org) or call (888) 743-7526 (PLAN).

Alisha Wilkins is public affairs manager for Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest, which serves the Coachella Valley. Email her at [AWilkins@planned.org](mailto:AWilkins@planned.org)

ID\_Code: J1201110107010335

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.

---

### Abstract (Document Summary)

---

Special to The Desert Sun Do you know Coachella Valley residents who need sexual and reproductive health care such as cervical cancer screening, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections or contraception but think they can't afford it?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.

