

# Public Affairs and Advocacy

### Successes:

**The Unintended Pregnancy Prevention Act was passed by the New York State Legislature** in June, only to be vetoed by Governor Pataki in August. FPA worked extensively with elected officials and coalition partners, and coordinated a bold grassroots campaign to gain the support of the Assembly and the Senate. The momentum of the grassroots campaign culminated in a rally in Capitol Park to encourage the Governor to approve this bill to increase access to emergency contraception. FPA issued news releases, statements, letters-to-the-editor and columns on this important issue, resulting in more than 40 million exposures in New York State print media from June through August alone.

**The Healthy Teens Act** which would provide funding for comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education for young people, was passed by the New York State Assembly by a vote of 123 to 18. This legislation, sponsored by Assemblymember Richard Gottfried, received strong bipartisan support in the State Legislature and was introduced in the Senate. FPA worked hard to encourage more than 50 legislators to co-sponsor this bill.

**FPA's 2005 Annual Conference** received international attention when Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton delivered a keynote address that made headlines about choice and propelled FPA's agenda to the forefront of the national debate. Informative plenary sessions were conducted by Dr. James Trussell, director of the Office of Population Research at Princeton University, and Loretta Ross, national coordinator of SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective. Five caucus meetings brought advocates with similar interests together to strategize on specific issues. Comedian Suzanne Westenhoefer made her first FPA conference appearance.

**An Alfred F. Moran Public Advocacy Award** was presented at the FPA Conference to the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, which has emerged as a critical voice in promoting policy and advocacy initiatives aimed at improving the health and well-being of Latinas, including their outstanding work on the 2004 March for Women's Lives.



**Celebrating 28 years of advocacy for reproductive health care**

**Reproductive rights leaders were honored** at FPA's 2005 Annual Meeting. The Shirley Gordon Public Policy Leadership Award was presented to Jen Wylega, the former executive director of the New York Chapter of the Republican Majority for Choice. Dr. Irene Sila, a pediatrician and devoted women's health activist and scholar, received the Rev. Beatrice Blair Courageous Service Award. Hon. Constance Cook, the former New York State Assemblymember who led the fight to reform the state abortion law in 1970, received an Alfred F. Moran Public Advocacy Award.

**22 members of New York State's Congressional delegation and staff** met with more than 35 FPA and Planned Parenthood representatives during lobby days held in Washington, D.C., in April and July. FPA staff personally met with U.S. Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Chuck Schumer. New Yorkers urged their Members of Congress to co-sponsor the Prevention First Act, the Compassionate Assistance for Rape Emergencies Act, and the Women, Children and Infant/Tsunami Victim Relief Act. Elected officials were educated about the dangers of the proposed Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act. FPA also worked to better inform federal representatives about New York State policy initiatives and coordinate legislative efforts at the state and national levels.

**U.S. Supreme Court appointments** were closely monitored and assessed to determine potential threats to legal precedent established by Roe v. Wade. FPA organized and participated in numerous visibility events, including a rally on the steps of the Supreme Court during which FPA provided more than 20 print and broadcast interviews about the importance of fully questioning judicial nominees to discern and ensure their commitment to women's health and constitutional rights.

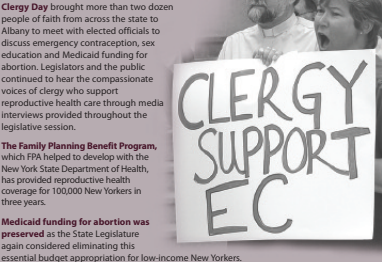
**Senator Chuck Schumer addressed FPA and New York State Planned Parenthood supporters** about the significance of judicial appointments. As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Schumer provided insight into the nomination process of John Roberts. Both New York Senators Schumer and Clinton voted against President Bush's nomination of John Roberts for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and advocated for judicial nominations that would protect women's health.

**FPA pushed the FDA to approve EC for over-the-counter (OTC) use** but the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continued to delay a decision on Barr Laboratories' application to make Plan B available OTC. FPA submitted comments to the FDA on behalf of New York State family planning providers urging the agency to allow emergency contraception (EC) to be sold over-the-counter to women of all ages. In both FDA and public comments, FPA expressed extreme concern about political interference in the FDA's consideration of the EC application.

**The Women's Health and Wellness Act** was again challenged by Catholic Charities and FPA submitted a key amicus brief to New York's Supreme Court Appellate Division to uphold this law and prevent discrimination against women in health insurance.

**The 2005-2006 New York State Executive Budget** placed family planning appropriations in a funding stream that would have required multiple layers of government intervention to access contracts. Intense pressure by FPA resulted in the revision of this appropriation in the Governor's 30-day budget amendments. Through FPA's work with key elected officials, the State Legislature added a total of \$2.6 million to the Governor's proposal.

**FPA's Board of Directors** increased their participation in lobbying and visibility activities to make FPA's public affairs work more powerful. The board also provided leadership in studying and updating board administration policies, and changed the composition of the board to better reflect FPA's membership.



**Clergy Day** brought more than two dozen people of faith from across the state to Albany to meet with elected officials to discuss emergency contraception, sex education and Medicaid funding for abortion. Legislators and the public continued to hear the compassionate voices of clergy who support reproductive health care through media interviews provided throughout the legislative session.

**The Family Planning Benefit Program**, which FPA helped to develop with the New York State Department of Health, has provided reproductive health coverage for 100,000 New Yorkers in three years.

**Medicaid funding for abortion was preserved** as the State Legislature again considered eliminating this essential budget appropriation for low-income New Yorkers.

**The New York State Catholic Health Plan Fideles acquired the New York City-based CenterCare**, which provided health coverage to Family Health Plus members, raising concerns about the disruption of reproductive health services for thousands of women. FPA worked with the New York State Department of Health, Planned Parenthood of New York City and the New York Civil Liberties Union to secure an agreement that enabled Family Health Plus members to access reproductive health care outside of the network providers if covered by a plan which does not seamlessly provide these services.

**The federal abortion ban** continued to be challenged and debated in courts across the nation. In the face of this dangerous legislation, FPA rallied public support for a woman's right to choose through a consistent media presence.

**Medicaid clients can now get refills on prescriptions for EC** thanks to FPA's negotiations with the state Department of Health. The Office of Medicaid Management revised a policy which had prohibited women from obtaining refills on emergency contraception so that they can keep this medication on hand for the emergencies for which it was designed.

**The Public University Emergency Contraception Act**, which would enhance access to EC on college campuses, was sponsored in both the state Assembly and the Senate. FPA is working with legislators and students to increase awareness of this legislation.

**FPA maintained a constant presence at the New York State Capitol** through the 2005 legislative session. Reproductive health legislation and policy were consistently monitored, and contacts with elected officials were continued, throughout the year.

# Education Fund

### Successes:

**The Legal Initiatives project** was developed to provide in-depth analysis and information on issues that affect access to and funding for reproductive health services.

**A statement supporting over-the-counter availability of emergency contraception was submitted to the federal Food and Drug Administration** in response to the agency's call for public comments on Barr Laboratories' application to make Plan B an over-the-counter medication.

**The EC for Rape Victims Partnership** between the Education Fund, the ACLU of Pennsylvania and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center continues to work throughout the state and the nation to improve access to emergency contraception for rape victims. Education Fund staff is monitoring hospital policies through a new 2005 survey to ensure that New York's EC for Rape Victims law is being properly implemented. FPA reported hospitals failing to follow the law to the enforcement unit of the state Department of Health. Members of the partnership also continue to assist state-based advocates and make presentations at national and regional conferences on the importance of coalition-building to enhance access to EC.



**The Immigrant Women's Access to Reproductive Health project** received funding to conduct cultural competency assessments at three family planning centers in New York State. Assessments were completed at Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson's Utica Center and Planned Parenthood New York City's Boro Hall Center. The assessments will strengthen family planning centers' abilities to provide culturally and linguistically competent services to immigrant populations. Reports were presented to the leadership team at each center and mini-grants were provided to implement recommendations in the report.

**FPA raised awareness of the need for real sex education** by organizing numerous public and legislative meetings and visibility events. FPA devised and implemented a comprehensive communications strategy that focused attention on New York's high rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection, and the state's practice of funding flawed abstinence-only programs.

- The activities of the Education Fund of FPA are supported by:
- The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation
  - The John Marcik Fund
  - The City of New York, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
  - The New York State Department of Health
  - The Compton Foundation
  - The Orchard Foundation
  - The Nathan Cummings Foundation
  - Planned Parenthood Federation of America
  - The Dyson Foundation
  - Global Partners
  - The Ford Foundation
  - Mobilizing to Win Campaign
  - The George Gund Foundation
  - Republicans for Choice Project
  - The Long Island Unitarian Universalist Fund
  - SisterSong Women of Color
  - Reproductive Health Collective

**The "Get the Facts New York"** campaign grew to include more than 100 organizations and 12,000 individual members. More than 4500 e-activists received regular reports on developments in sex education and participated in four e-activations to legislators on the need for real sex education. Campaign members participated in visibility events resulting in print and broadcast media coverage across the state, including Planned Parenthood activity at the New York State Fair and many local venues.

**Concerned Clergy for Choice** has continued to expand its statewide interfaith network to more than 1000 pro-choice clergy in New York State. The project achieved significant media coverage on clergy support for enhanced access to emergency contraception and comprehensive sex education.

**The Mobilizing to Win (MWT) Public Policy Initiative** funded by Planned Parenthood Federation of America, enabled more than 4000 e-mails to be sent to State Senators to encourage passage of the Unintended Pregnancy Prevention Act, followed by 3000 faxes and 2000 calls to the Governor to urge him to sign the bill into law. MWT has enabled the Education Fund to enhance grassroots organizing and planning by providing tools and technical support on a wide variety of issues.

**International Partnership Exchanges** were held in New York State and Europe to enhance and inform regional advocacy work through FPA's Planned Parenthood Global Partners' project. In partnership with the International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network, FPA created a dialogue that enhanced the ability of both organizations to learn from and contribute to global efforts to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights.

**A tool kit providing useful information on stem cell research** has been developed by Concerned Clergy for Choice for use by religious leaders and others. Education Fund staff made more than 10 presentations throughout New York State on stem cell research and its significance to reproductive health issues.

**MergerWatch transitioned to a national project** to better fulfill its mission of saving reproductive health services in communities faced with religious/secular hospital mergers. After eight years at the Education Fund, MergerWatch has secured a nationally-based home from which to continue its important work.



**Family planning centers provide services** to 400,000 New Yorkers annually. FPA provides technical, legal and problem-solving assistance so that family planning centers can devote their valuable time to client services.

## Ongoing Initiatives

**Working closely with FPA, Pro-Choice Republicans** in New York State were engaged in campaigns to promote comprehensive sex education, enhance access to emergency contraception, preserve Roe v. Wade and encourage the President to appoint Supreme Court judges who would protect women's health and rights.

**FPA staff made presentations** at regional and national conferences, college classes and other venues to provide accurate information about the state of reproductive health care in New York.

**FPA developed an ambitious strategic plan for 2006-2008**, focused on preserving and expanding women's rights to health care, enhancing sex education for young people and improving access to emergency contraception.

**More than 10 students gained work experience** through internships with FPA. FPA benefited from the skills and enthusiasm of doctoral, graduate, undergraduate and high school students while mentoring future reproductive rights leaders.

## New Initiatives

**U.S. Supreme Court appointments** were closely monitored and media interviews were provided by FPA and Planned Parenthood leaders across New York State. Print articles and letters-to-the-editor helped to educate the public and encourage U.S. Senators to support judicial nominees who would respect the right to medical privacy and uphold a woman's constitutional right to abortion.

**As incidents of pharmacists refusing to fill prescriptions rose** around the country, FPA worked with the New York State Education Department's Board of Pharmacy to eliminate this problem in New York State. FPA monitored reports and provided guidance to clients about reporting incidents, and worked closely with pharmacy trade associations to ensure that pharmacists were aware of their ethical responsibilities to clients and the penalties for violating patients' rights.

**A groundbreaking curriculum for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)**, *When a Woman Makes a Choice*, was developed by Concerned Clergy for Choice for distribution to organizations and individuals. The curriculum, which covers issues including abortion, adoption and teen access to reproductive health services from a spiritual perspective, is available to seminars, clergy groups and pastoral care providers.

**FPA's web sites were upgraded** to provide more interactive information for advocates, legislators, youth, parents, clergy and teachers. Family Planning Advocates' web site averaged 3443 visitors per month. The Education Fund and Get the Facts web sites received an average of 1850 and 2206 visitors respectively.

**Hundreds of young people gained hands-on grassroots organizing experience** by participating in a Live Action Camp at FPA's Annual Youth Conference. The students shared their experiences regarding sex education in their schools, made recommendations for improving the curricula, and learned how to make their voices heard in their schools and communities.



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## FPA's Mission

To fight for progressive public policies that protect and expand access to a full range of reproductive health care services that respect cultural diversity and every individual's privacy and dignity.

## FPA's Goals

1. Promote and defend every person's right to reproductive freedom, including legal and affordable access to all reproductive and related health services.

2. Decrease race and class disparities in access to reproductive health services.

3. Maximize and expand state and federal funding to support Planned Parenthood affiliates, other family planning agencies and reproductive health services.

4. Advocate to ensure that individuals are able to make reproductive health care decisions based on their own conscience or religious beliefs, unimpeded by institutional restrictions.

5. Ensure the adoption of public policies and funding streams that support comprehensive sex education that is medically accurate and free of bias.

6. Strengthen New York Planned Parenthood affiliates' and family planning clinics' capacity to meet their clients' needs by providing more effective public affairs leadership, technical expertise and individualized services.

7. Strengthen FPA by increasing diversity and the involvement of the Board of Directors in advocacy activities.

8. Strengthen FPA's position as a statewide and national leader in setting health policy, education and political action.

9. Continue to build FPA as a sustainable institution.

## Dear Friends,

FPA's core mission -- to protect and expand reproductive rights -- was tested this year like never before. The combination of a conservative far-right U.S. President and Congress puts the ability of family planning centers to provide women with high quality care at risk. To fulfill our mission, and the promise of access to the full range of health care options for New Yorkers, we needed to intensify our efforts in state, national and international arenas.

This year, great strides were made in increasing awareness of the need for real sex education in New York public schools. With your support, FPA is expanding its grassroots efforts, media outreach and legislative effectiveness to achieve a real change in how young people are being educated.

FPA was a leader in the national effort to increase access to emergency contraception (EC). We worked diligently on both a state law to enable pharmacists to dispense EC through agreements with physicians and a federal policy to allow EC to be available as an over-the-counter medication. Our efforts on both of these initiatives will continue next year, as will our focus on the Supreme Court. President Bush's effort to pack the courts with ultraconservatives is extremely dangerous to women's health and rights. The impact of new Supreme Court appointees will be tested soon, as several important cases will be heard that will affect the health of our nation's women and girls for generations to come.

Women and girls around the globe are also desperate for responsible leadership from the United States on matters relating to family planning. We recently led a delegation of New York State women's health care leaders to Europe to meet with elected officials and health care advocates. The more we work with state, national and international partners, the stronger we become.

Regardless of race, ethnicity, political affiliation or economic status, women need basic family planning services. With your strong commitment, FPA will continue our fight to protect and expand reproductive health and rights so that women can lead healthy lives.

*Catherine M. Abate*  
Catherine M. Abate  
Board Chair

*JoAnn M. Smith*  
JoAnn M. Smith  
President and CEO

**Family Planning Advocates of New York State, Inc.**

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<b>Carol Blowers</b> Director of Governmental Affairs	<b>Georgiana Hanson</b> Grassroots Public Affairs Coordinator	
<b>Ronnie Pawlita</b> Chief Strategy	<b>Sang Hwa Won</b> Program Associate	<b>Concerned Clergy for Choice</b>
<b>Jessica Fisher</b> Policy Analyst	<b>Lois Utley</b> Member/Watch Consultant	<b>Rabbi Dennis Ross</b> Clergy

November 17, 2005



Catherine M. Abate



JoAnn M. Smith

## Family Planning Centers

- Allegany County Department of Health  
Belmont
- Amsterdam Memorial Hospital Women's Health  
Amsterdam
- Cattaraugus County Department of Health Family Planning Program  
Olean
- Chautauque County Department of Health  
Mayville
- Children's Aid Society  
New York
- Community Healthcare Network  
New York City
- Coney Island Hospital  
Brooklyn
- East Hill Family Medical  
Auburn
- Eric County Department of Health  
Buffalo
- Ferre Institute  
Binghamton
- Govemour Healthcare Services  
New York
- Greenburgh Health Center  
White Plains
- Greene County Family Planning Services  
Castell
- Harlem Hospital Family Planning Center  
New York City
- Highland Hospital  
Rochester
- Hudson River HealthCare  
Poughkeepsie
- Jacobi Medical Center  
Bronx
- Jacobus Center for Reproductive Health/Cortland County Department of Health  
Cortland
- Kaleida Health  
Buffalo
- Kings County Hospital Center  
Brooklyn
- Livingston County Department of Health  
Mt. Morris
- Metropolitan Hospital Center  
New York City
- Medical Health Research  
Association of New York City  
New York City
- Morris Heights Health Center  
Bronx
- Mt. Sinai Hospital Adolescent Health Center  
New York City
- Nassau County Medical Center Family Planning Service  
East Meadow
- New York City Health & Hospitals Corporation  
New York City
- New York Presbyterian Hospital  
New York City
- North Central Bronx Hospital  
Bronx
- Northern Adirondack Planned Parenthood  
Plattsburgh
- North Shore/LIJ Health System  
Great Neck
- Oswego County Opportunities  
Fulton
- Planned Parenthood Buffalo & Erie County  
Buffalo
- Planned Parenthood Hudson Pecos  
Hawthorne
- Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley  
Poughkeepsie
- Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson  
Utica
- Planned Parenthood Nassau County  
Hempstead
- Planned Parenthood  
New York City
- Planned Parenthood  
Niagara County  
Niagara Falls
- Planned Parenthood Northern New York  
Watertown
- Planned Parenthood Rochester/Syracuse Region  
Rochester
- Planned Parenthood South Central New York  
Onondaga
- Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes  
Utica
- Queens Hospital  
Teen Family Planning  
Jamaica
- Rockland County Department of Health  
Pomona
- Staten Island University Hospital  
Staten Island
- Suffolk County Department of Health Family Planning Clinic  
Hauppauge
- Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility  
Syracuse
- The Door: A Center of Alternatives  
New York City
- Threshold Alternative Youth Service Center  
Rochester
- Tioga Opportunities Family Planning Center  
Owego
- Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood  
Albany
- Westchester County Department of Health  
New Rochelle
- Wyoming County Department of Health  
Watson
- Yates Family Planning Services  
Penn Yan

+ Indicates official members of FPA



## Family Planning Advocates of New York State



# Annual Report

2005