

# Your rights as a teen in Minnesota...

## IN SCHOOL

### Can I get in trouble for engaging in public displays of affection at school?

Your school may have rules against this, which is legal. However, the rules must apply equally to boys and girls and to “making out” with someone who is either the same or different gender than you.

### If an adult finds out I’ve had sex with someone, does he or she have to report it?

It depends. No one is required to report your sexual activity unless you’ve had sex or sexual contact with a family member or someone who is in a position of authority over you, such as a coach, teacher or youth leader.

### If I am gay, can anyone at my school “out” me?

Teachers and other school officials do NOT have the right to “out” you to anyone without your permission or use your sexual orientation to manipulate or punish you in any way.



## WHAT’S AGE GOT TO DO WITH IT ?

- **You CANNOT legally consent to sex or sexual contact with anyone if you’re under 13** (which means that if you engage in sexual activity under the age of 13 you or your partner could be charged with a crime).
- **If you’re between 13 and 16**, you CANNOT legally consent to sex with someone more than 2 years older than you. If you have sex with someone more than 2 years older than you, that person can be charged with a crime, even if the sex was consensual (you both agreed to have sex).
- **If you’re between 16 and 18**, you can legally consent to sex with anyone EXCEPT family members or people who are both: a) in a position of authority over you *and* b) more than four years older than you.
- **Once you turn 18** you can legally consent to sex with anyone, except family members. However you may still be charged with a crime for having sex with someone who is younger than you. [Please see above for guidelines.]

### I had unprotected sex last night. Can I get emergency contraception - the “morning after” pill?

Yes. If you are 17 or older, male or female, you can buy emergency contraception over the counter with a government-issued I.D. that proves your age. If you are 16 or younger, you need a prescription. Emergency contraception greatly reduces the chance of pregnancy if taken within 120 hours of unprotected sex, but the sooner you take it, the more effective it is. For more information: [www.sexualhealthmn.org](http://www.sexualhealthmn.org). [Note: Not all pharmacies carry emergency contraception, but if they do and refuse to sell it to you, please contact [education@aclu-mn.org](mailto:education@aclu-mn.org)]

## BIRTH CONTROL & TESTING

### How old do I have to be to buy condoms?

There is no age restriction for buying condoms.

### Can I get a prescription for birth control if I am under 18?

Yes, your doctor should be able to write you a prescription. However, you should ask the doctor what his or her policy is about:

- notifying parents/guardians
- billing for the visit and test
- reporting your results
- putting information in your medical records

### Do I have to be a certain age to buy a pregnancy test at the store?

No. There is no age restriction for buying a pregnancy test.

### Will anyone have to find out if I go in for a pregnancy test at a clinic?

In most cases, no. You have some rights to privacy and many clinics will provide confidential testing. However, you should still ask your clinic what their privacy policy is.

### Can anyone make me get tested for pregnancy, STD or HIV?

No. No one can make you take these tests. [Note: It may be in your best interests to get tested as soon as possible. See phone numbers on the back of this brochure for resources that can help you decide on the best thing to do.]

## IF YOU ARE PREGNANT:

**Do I have the right to decide what to do about my pregnancy?**

That depends...

**If you want to have your baby adopted** and you are unmarried and under age 18, your parent or guardian must consent. The father may also have some rights.

**If you want to keep the baby**, you have the right to confidential prenatal care. Check your doctor's policies.

**If you choose an abortion**, you do not need permission from parents or guardians, but if you are under 18, they will be notified before the procedure unless you go to court and get a "judicial bypass," which would allow you to have an abortion without notification of your parent or guardian. The clinic you go to for an abortion can help you get a hearing with a judge. Different clinics may vary in procedures.

### **Can I consent to medical care?**

After you have a baby, you are legally able to consent to medical, dental and mental health care for both yourself and your baby.

### **Are you hiding your newborn baby?**

Don't panic – There is a safe place for newborns. You can leave your unharmed baby, up to 3 days old, with a hospital employee at any hospital – NO QUESTIONS ASKED. Your baby will be given any needed medical attention, then placed in foster care for adoption.

## WHERE CAN I GO WITH QUESTIONS?

HEALTH SERVICES &  
STD & HIV/AIDS INFORMATION  
1-800-78FACTS  
[www.sexualhealthmn.org](http://www.sexualhealthmn.org)

RESOURCES AND WHERE I CAN GO  
[www.aclu-mn.org](http://www.aclu-mn.org)



If you feel your rights are being violated or you are being treated unfairly, contact the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota at [education@aclu-mn.org](mailto:education@aclu-mn.org) or file a complaint online at [www.aclu-mn.org](http://www.aclu-mn.org)

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**Printed in 2011**  
**Laws are subject to change**  
**Applies to teens in Minnesota**



**Are you sexually active?  
Thinking about it?**

## Understand your rights and Minnesota law



**Teenwise Minnesota**  
[www.teenwisemn.org](http://www.teenwisemn.org)

**American Civil Liberties Union of  
Minnesota**  
[www.aclu-mn.org](http://www.aclu-mn.org)