

## POPULATION

## TODAY

*News, numbers, and analysis*

## Is There a Teacher Shortage?

By CHARLES DERVARICS

The U.S. Department of Education's projection is alarming: America's public schools will need 2 million new teachers during the next 10 years, amid a climate of rising enrollments and mounting teacher retirement. A close look at the data reveals that the problem is not simply one of adequate teacher supply; the problem also hinges on schools' ability to train, mentor, and retain instructors in the classroom.

The shortage issue has political implications as children return to school this fall. To combat the likely shortage—and help lower class sizes—President Clinton last year persuaded Congress to spend \$1.2 billion on teacher recruitment, a down payment on a plan he hopes will result in 100,000 new hires. Conservatives in Congress, believing school districts know best whether they have a teacher shortage and how to deal with growing enrollment, want to scale back this initiative and give schools discretion in using the funds. As a result, information about today's teachers is much in demand, but the limited data offer few clear-cut conclusions.

## The Case for a Shortage

A look at age and population trends shows the potential for shortages. This fall, 53.2 million children enrolled in elementary and secondary schools, a new record that eclipsed the previous high last fall (see figure on page 6). The trend is part of the well-documented baby boom echo, a surge in birth rates that began in the mid-1970s, hitting a peak in 1990. In *No End in Sight*, a new report on this trend, the U.S. Department of Education also cites increased immigration and the popularity of preschool programs as other factors placing "unprecedented pressure" on school systems.

At the same time, the nation's teaching force is graying (see figure on page 2). The greatest concentration of teachers today is in the 45-to-55 age range, including many who were hired during the steep enrollment increases of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Department of Education says. As a result, "a large number of teachers will be nearing the end of their teaching career within the next five to 10 years," according to *No End in Sight*. In this report, the

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## Teacher Shortage

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department makes its case for the 2 million shortage:

- More than 1 million teachers are between the ages of 45 and 54, while another 360,000 are 55 and over. Many of these individuals will retire in the next decade.
- School enrollments will increase by another 1 million children during the next 10 years. Assuming an average class size of 20 children, schools will need 50,000 additional teachers.
- Normal attrition rates, plus support for class-size reduction, will place additional pressures on the teaching force.

But some argue that these findings do not add up to a nationwide shortage. "There are far more people being trained to teach than there are jobs for," said C. Emily Feistritz, president of the National Center for Education Information (NCEI) in Washington, D.C. Feistritz believes the shortage issue "really is where the demand is and where the supply is." She said that about 40 percent of people who graduate with teaching majors are not teaching the following year. She pointed out that alternative certification programs, which are offered by most states to college-educated adults who want to make a midcareer switch to teaching, have further increased the supply of teachers.

### Behind the Data

Retirement is far from the only reason why individuals leave teaching, based on the nation's largest collection of raw data on teachers, the *Schools and Staffing Survey* of the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. Among teachers who left in the 1994-1995 school year, only 27 percent cited retirement as the reason. Some sought time off for childrearing, while many sought a different career and left because of dissatisfaction with the profession.

University of Georgia professor Richard Ingersoll, who has analyzed the raw data in three recent papers, concluded: "It's not so much a shortage problem as it is a retention prob-

lem." Nearly 25 percent of new teachers leave their jobs within three years, sometimes because they get the hardest assignments with little support. His other conclusions include:

- Teacher turnover averages 13 percent to 15 percent nationwide, which is above the 11 percent average turnover rate that is found in large industries.
- Turnover is especially high—nearly 16 percent—in the poorest districts. As a result, some center-city schools are "constantly in recruitment mode," even though affluent districts nearby have long waiting lists of job-seeking teachers.
- Job satisfaction erodes when instructors must teach subjects outside their field of specialty, a practice of many hard-pressed schools.

The issue of teacher dissatisfaction has not gone unnoticed at the Department of Education, which has examined the problem in *Schools and Staffing*. About 30 percent of elementary school teachers and 40 percent of secondary school teachers have a low level of satisfaction with their jobs, and the reasons usually have little to do with pay. Factors that contribute to low morale include student misbehavior, teachers' lack of control over class decisions, and little faculty involvement in school policy, the study says.

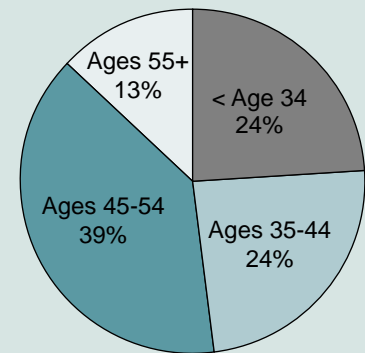
Ingersoll said these findings mean the teacher staffing issue is more complex than the arguments in the oft-repeated shortage rhetoric. New efforts to increase the supply of teachers may help, he said, "but they won't solve the problem if teachers leave the profession after a few years."

### Areas of Agreement

Both the Department of Education and its skeptics generally agree on a few issues—that shortages are more likely in low-income schools, as well as in math, science, and special education departments. As political interest grows in the teacher issue, here are other factors that may shape public policy decisions:

- The United States needs teachers of color: Minorities make up 36 percent of the school population today but account for only about 13 percent of teachers, according to the Department of Education.

Age Distribution of Public School Teachers, 1998-1999



Source: U.S. Department of Education, *No End in Sight*, 1999.

- Alternative certification can help with spot shortages: Forty-one states and the District of Columbia have alternative teacher certification programs, NCEI's Feistritz said, and 75,000 people have benefited from these activities so far.
- Mentoring keeps teachers on the job: In *The Condition of Education 1999*, the Department of Education asserts that new teachers who get mentors at their schools may have the extra help they need to succeed. Among teachers who held sessions with their mentors once a week, 70 percent said the sessions helped them on the job. ■

For more information:

*No End in Sight: A Back to School Special Report on the Baby Boom Echo* is available online from the U.S. Department of Education, Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/bbecho99/>. Other Department of Education publications cited in this article are available through the National Center for Education Statistics: <http://nces.ed.gov/>.

Richard Ingersoll's working paper "Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools" can be found on the Web site of the University of Washington's Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy: <http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail>. Click on "CTP publications" and then on the title.

*Charles Dervarics is a freelance writer based in Washington, D.C.*

# Emerging Markets for Emergency Contraception

U.S. obstetricians and gynecologists polled in a 1997 Kaiser Foundation survey unanimously agreed that emergency contraceptive or “morning after” pills are safe and effective in preventing an unintended pregnancy that may result after unprotected sex. Around the world, health care providers and consumers have expressed interest in these pills, yet they remain little known and little used in many countries.

In an age of information overload and commercial advertising, why do emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs) maintain such a low profile? And given estimates by The Alan Guttmacher Institute that 40 percent of pregnancies occurring each year worldwide are unintended, is there increased demand from doctors and patients for these pills?

James Trussell, faculty associate with Princeton University’s Office of Population Research, offered some answers about the situation in the United States. Trussell explained that, until recently, no company would sell or promote ECPs, which work up to 72 hours after unprotected intercourse to prevent pregnancy. Even companies that sell contraceptives that could be used for emergency contraception, such as regular birth control pills, don’t promote them for that purpose, said Trussell. “So you’ve had nobody out there trying to make money off of it.”

Companies have shied away from selling or promoting emergency contraceptive pills, said Elisa Wells, coordinator of the international Consortium for Emergency Contraception, because they fear a political backlash: “It’s a potentially controver-

sial product,” she said, referring to opposition from anti-abortion groups. These groups mistakenly assume that ECPs—which work by interfering, in ways still not thoroughly understood, with ovulation or with

ECPs. From the outset, consortium members—among them International Planned Parenthood Federation, Pathfinder International, the Population Council, the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH),

*“Clinicians are perfectly willing to give it [ECPs] to you if you ask for it, but you don’t know to ask for it.”*

— James Trussell

the transport or fusion of the sperm and egg—induce an abortion. Others fear that widespread availability of ECPs will cause people to forgo regular contraception, despite consortium research to the contrary.

Another factor keeping emergency contraceptives from reaching consumers, according to Trussell, is “the huge disconnect between what clinicians think and what they do.” Referring to the 1997 Kaiser survey, Trussell noted that almost all physicians and other clinicians think ECPs are safe and effective, that very few have any moral objections to the pills, and that the vast majority have prescribed them within the last year. Still, they don’t routinely counsel women in advance about these pills. “Clinicians are perfectly willing to give it to you if you ask for it, but you don’t know to ask for it. That’s the real Catch-22 here,” said Trussell.

The Consortium for Emergency Contraception, formed in 1995, is working to raise awareness and use of ECPs worldwide—but not just any

and the World Health Organization’s Human Reproduction Programme—favored a “dedicated” product, one specially packaged in the precise doses for emergency contraception.

“Dedicated products are very important,” said consortium founder Sharon Camp, who also stressed the importance of a product with dramatically lower side effects and greater efficacy. The latter considerations led the consortium also to support pills that contain only one hormone, progestin, in addition to combined estrogen-progestin pills, because progestin-only pills have been shown to cause less nausea and less vomiting than combined-hormone ECPs. Preven, a dedicated ECP product that contains both estrogen and progestin, was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in September 1998.

Before persuading doctors and patients of the benefits of the single-hormone pills, the consortium had to ensure their availability. Out of several

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## Emergency Contraception

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manufacturers the consortium approached, only the Hungarian pharmaceutical firm Gedeon Richter, maker of a high-dose pill, agreed to develop a product for emergency contraception. The consortium agreed to help pave the way for product introduction in selected developing countries in exchange for a guarantee of preferential public-sector pricing. In the United States, though, Gedeon Richter sought to work through a U.S. pharmaceutical corporation.

### A Company Is Born

So, as Camp said, "with money from super-friendly investors," she created the Women's Capital Corporation, and development of the U.S. product proceeded. In July 1999, the corporation won approval from the FDA for the new product—called in the United States "Plan B."

Camp, who laughed about being president of "the world's tiniest pharmaceutical corporation," acknowledged that Women's Capital Corporation presents a very different model for financing drug development. Camp hopes the model can be used again to rescue other technologies that have been orphaned by the pharmaceutical industry. "I think there are a lot of choices that women need which are not being offered by industry, and if we can get some of these products safely to market through new kinds of public-private sector partnerships, hopefully we can expand women's choices," she said.

### Direct Marketing

The consortium has introduced information about ECPs, and in most cases the pills themselves, in selected developing countries—including Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, and Sri Lanka. According to reports of surveys conducted by the consortium and its partners, the potential gains from emergency contraception are large in Mexico and in Sri Lanka. In both, abortion is either illegal or highly restricted, and it is life-threatening when performed clandestinely

in unsafe conditions. Moreover, traditional and barrier methods of contraception—methods with high rates of failure—are used by pivotal segments of the populations: by Mexican women ages 15 to 19, and by a third of married Sri Lankan women who practice any form of contraception. In both these countries, innovative marketing efforts are underway.

In Mexico, approval of a dedicated product for emergency contraception was uncertain (Postinor-2 was approved in September 1999). But oral contraceptive pills that can be used as emergency contraception are "virtually sold over the counter," ac-

ing Ministry of Health approval, to launch a media campaign that will feature ads on television, in subway stations, and in newspapers and magazines. In the meantime, local ECP experts who have been invited to appear on TV and radio talk shows have taken the opportunity to promote these services. To target young people, the Population Council has also distributed specially labeled condoms (packets bearing stickers that read, "If this condom fails, call 01-800-en-3-dias for back-up options") and flyers promoting the hotline and the Web site at rock concerts, women's fairs, and special events.

*"Choices that women need are not being offered by industry."*

*— Sharon Camp*

ording to Mexico-based Angela Heimburger, a Population Council regional staff associate for Latin America and the Caribbean. So the Population Council has set up a toll-free, 24-hour hotline that callers can reach from anywhere in the country; a recorded message describes what ECPs are, how and why they work, and what the possible side effects are. Most of the low-key advertising to date has concentrated on Mexico City, and the hotline has received nearly 17,000 calls since mid-February 1999. Now that a product is approved, the Population Council will work to ensure it is appropriately incorporated into the Mexican health care system.

The Population Council has also created a Spanish-language Web site. Its Web address contains the Spanish words "en 3 dias," or "in three days," the amount of time a woman has to initiate treatment after unprotected sex. And Heimburger noted that the Population Council is poised, pend-

In Sri Lanka, where the Ministry of Health granted registration of a dedicated product, the strategy has been to make ECPs available in pharmacies, according to Daya Abeywickrema, executive director of the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka. The association has developed educational materials in all three major languages—Sinhala, English, and Tamil—for prospective users and has targeted the materials especially to youth groups. The association's medical director got free air time from TV stations to discuss the use of ECPs. Sales of ECPs have risen to 3,000 packets per month, and Abeywickrema projected that they would rise to 5,000 by the end of 1999. More than 10,000 callers with questions on ECPs have contacted the association's hotline since September 1997. Abeywickrema noted that the potential users are more than young people: "From our activities, it is clear that many couples who should use contraceptives on a regular basis are

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# Uganda Beats Back HIV/AIDS

By YVETTE COLLYMORE

In a region hungry for good news about HIV/AIDS, Uganda can relish its gains in beating back the epidemic.

Declines in HIV infection, first noted in the East African country in 1993, have continued steadily and are especially striking among young women, says the UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

“What we’re seeing in Uganda is that there are declines in overall prevalence among pregnant women, and [especially] among the age group 15 to 19,” said Karen Stanekki, chief of the Health Studies Branch at the U.S. Census Bureau’s International Program Center. “By looking at pregnant women, we can see what the trends are, what’s happening in general,” she added, explaining that pregnant women are relatively easy to track since they regularly enter the health system and undergo various blood tests.

In this country of roughly 23 million people, where life expectancy is a modest 42 years and 81 infants die for every thousand live births, HIV infection levels among pregnant women in major urban areas climbed to about 30 percent in 1992, some 10 years after the first case of the virus was reported. By 1996, however, the levels had fallen by almost 50 percent, according to the Census Bureau’s *World Population Profile: 1998*.

The declines have been even more dramatic for women ages 15 to 19. At two large clinics for pregnant women in the capital, Kampala, the number of HIV-infected women in this age group plunged from 28 percent in 1992 to just 8 percent in 1997—a drop of more than 70 percent in five years, UNAIDS reports.

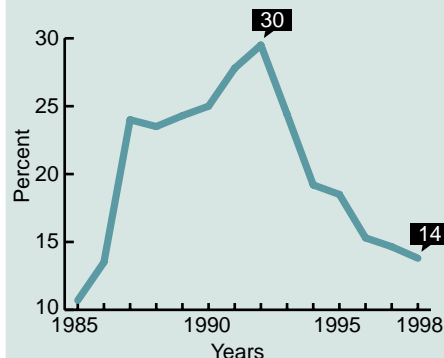
What accounts for these drops?

“A lot of different things,” said the Census Bureau’s Stanekki, citing the involvement of the government, the involvement of grassroots organizations, the involvement of religious groups, delays in sexual onset, reductions in the number of partners, and increased use of condoms. “It’s because everybody has made this a priority that people feel this is a success story.”

The Ugandan government of President Yoweri Museveni was the first in Africa to acknowledge that it had an epidemic on its hands and ask for help. Now the Uganda AIDS Commission coordinates a national AIDS control program. And, mindful that HIV in Uganda is transmitted primarily through unprotected heterosexual intercourse, the program includes major education campaigns designed to promote safer sexual behavior and curb the spread of the disease.

Still, as of 1997, some 930,000 Ugandans were living with HIV infec-

HIV Prevalence for Pregnant Women in Kampala, 1985–1998



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Data Base, 1999.

tions or AIDS, and an estimated 160,000 died of the disease in 1997 alone, according to UNAIDS. The UN program also notes that roughly 9.5 percent of all adults in the country are infected. Further south, the infection rate for sub-Saharan Africa’s most severely hit countries—Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—is estimated at 18 percent to 25 percent of all adults. ■

*Yvette Collymore is a writer on international population topics at PRB.*

## WEBWISE

These publications were posted recently at <http://www.prb.org>:

■ **World Population: More Than Just Numbers.** The story of world population includes many statistics but is first and foremost about people. This PRB publication provides a quick, clear, and comprehensive discussion of world population trends in the 21st century: the status of women, longer life spans, more young people, environmental degradation, and

movements of people across international borders.

■ **The Population Story: Presentation Guide.** This educational tool contains 51 colorful graphics and accompanying notes—all of which tell the story of population. The graphics are grouped into 15 topics, including birth rates, life expectancy and mortality rates, urbanization, education, world population, health, HIV/AIDS, women, and population policy.

■ **America’s Racial and Ethnic Minorities.** The latest *Population Bulletin* explores who America’s minorities are, how they are faring compared with each other and with white Americans, and what place minorities will hold in U.S. society in the next century. Full text of the *Bulletin* is available online.

[www.prb.org](http://www.prb.org)

# POPULATION UPDATE

## Estimated U.S. Population:

As of Aug. 1, 1999	273,388,000
As of Aug. 1, 1998	270,819,000

Latest data available from the U.S. Census Bureau, total monthly population estimates. Totals include armed forces overseas.

## Estimated World Population:

As of Nov. 1999	6,010,000,000
Annual growth	84,000,000

Extrapolated from the mid-1999 population on PRB's 1999 World Population Data Sheet.

## Latest Provisional Statistics for the United States: December 1998

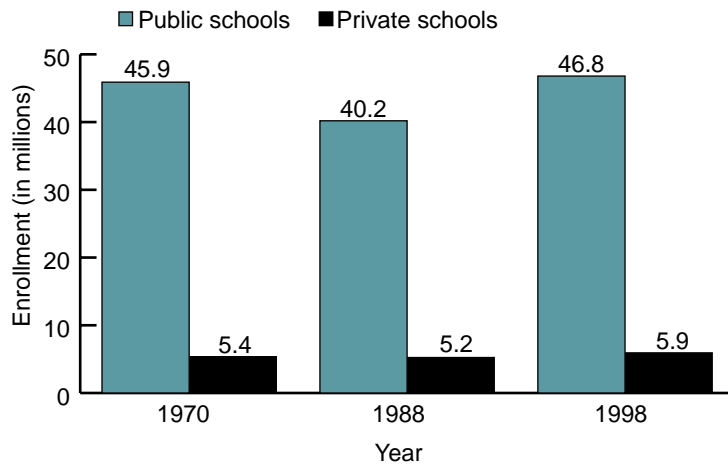
	12 months ending with December			
	Number		Rate	
	1998	1997	1998	1997
Live births .....	3,946,000	3,882,000	14.6	14.5
Fertility rate .....	—	—	66.0	65.0
Deaths .....	2,331,000	2,294,000	8.6	8.6
Infant deaths .....	27,600	27,000	7.0	7.0
Natural increase .....	1,615,000	1,588,000	6.0	5.9
Marriages .....	2,244,000	2,384,000	8.3	8.9
Divorces .....	1,135,000	1,163,000	4.2	4.3

Note: Fertility rate is given per 1,000 women ages 15-44; infant deaths per 1,000 live births; other rates per 1,000 population.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Reports*, vol. 47, no. 21 (1999).

# SPEAKING GRAPHICALLY

## Elementary and Secondary School Enrollment, 1970-1998



Source: U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education 1999*.

*Total enrollment in public and private elementary and secondary schools increased considerably during the late 1980s and 1990s, reaching an all-time high of 52.7 million in 1998. This increase followed declining total enrollment in elementary and secondary schools during the 1970s and early 1980s. Between 1988 and 1998, the U.S. Department of Education projects that there was a 16.4 percent increase in public school enrollment and a 13.1 percent increase in enrollment in private schools.*

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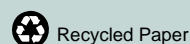
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\* Educators, students, and seniors should send supporting documentation.



# Cuba's Low Birth Rate

Low fertility rates are usually linked to wealthy countries. But there are notable exceptions. Cuba, for instance.

Cuba's average birth rate per woman (1.6) is the lowest in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is also the same as that of the newly industrialized countries of Singapore and South Korea, and it falls below the 2.0 average in the United States.

A number of factors may contribute to the low rate in Cuba. For one thing, despite the country's battered economy, many indicators for Cuba compare favorably with those of wealthy countries. According to the *Human Development Report 1999*, published by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Cuba ranks 58th in the world in life expectancy, education, and income. In opportunities afforded to women, Cuba ranks

Selected Indicators for Cuba and the United States

	Total Fertility Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Infant Mortality Rate	% of Children Dying Before Age 5
		Male	Female		
Cuba	1.6	73	78	7.2	1
United States	2.0	74	79	7.0	1

Source: PRB, *1999 World Population Data Sheet*.

21st in the world, followed by France (36th) and Japan (38th).

Life expectancy for Cuban boys and girls combined (75 years) is the same as that of more developed countries as a whole, according to PRB's *1999 World Population Data Sheet*. Also, the literacy rate for Cuban women ages 15 and over is 95 percent. For every 100 males in secondary school, there are 105 females, according to PRB's *1998 Women of Our World*. And 68 percent of married women use

some form of modern contraception—a figure that is higher than the 61 percent average for more developed countries. ■

For more information:

The *Human Development Report 1999* can be accessed online on the UNDP Web site: <http://www.undp.org/hdro/report.html>.

Excerpts from both PRB publications cited above are available at <http://www.prb.org>.

## Emergency Contraception

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not doing so. We feel that ECPs can play a major role in our family planning program to prevent unwanted pregnancies."

In the United States, abortion is legal, but studies by The Alan Guttmacher Institute show that approximately half of all pregnancies are unintended. The potential gains from use of ECPs are considerable. Preven has been available by prescription for more than a year, and marketing of Plan B will soon take off, according to Pamela Long, with Women's Capital Corporation's public relations. Long said that "women's magazines are a natural fit" for advertising that will move into high gear next year.

Even before dedicated products were available, the Reproductive Health Technologies Project in Washington and the Office of Population Research at Princeton University sponsored the toll-free Emergency Contraception Hotline and the Emergency Contraception Web site, said Trussell. The hotline has received more than 175,000 calls since it was

launched in 1996, and the Web site has gotten some 500,000 hits since it was launched in 1994.

In mid-1997, PATH implemented a two-year project in Washington state that allows women to receive ECPs directly from pharmacists. Details of the project appear on the PATH Web site. The pharmacists, parties to a cooperative drug therapy agreement between pharmacists and physicians, wrote 7,211 prescriptions for ECPs during the first 10 months of the project. These prescriptions are believed to have prevented 541 unintended pregnancies, half of which PATH believes would have led to abortion.

Yet work to make ECPs available in the United States has hit a snag. Women need a doctor's prescription to get Plan B, Preven, or even regular birth control pills. And filling the prescription is not always easy. The giant retail chain Wal-Mart issued a statement in May 1999 explaining its decision not to sell Preven in its pharmacies. Even though Wal-Mart refers patients to pharmacies that can

fill their prescriptions, "this does not help women comply with the crucial and narrow 72-hour window of opportunity," said Heimburger. Extending direct-to-consumer marketing to the Internet, as entrepreneurs have done with Preven, allows users to place mail orders for ECPs. But, Heimburger noted, "It does not provide equal access to all potential users of the method." ■

### Related Web Sites

**Consortium for Emergency Contraception**  
<http://www.path.org/cec>

**Emergency Contraception Web Site and Hotline**  
<http://not-2-late.com>  
phone: 1-888-not-2-late

**PATH**  
[http://www.path.org/html/emergency\\_contraception.htm](http://www.path.org/html/emergency_contraception.htm)

**Population Council's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean**  
<http://www.en3dias.org.mx>

## NEWS AND RESOURCES

### Drugs and work

The workplace is at the heart of two recent studies on drug use. One study, by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, indicates that most illicit drug users between the ages of 18 and 49 work full-time.

SAMHSA officials and the White House Director of National Drug Control Policy stated that the study illustrates the benefits of workplace substance abuse referral programs. Such programs have a wide reach—70 percent of illicit drug users in the stated age range. (The study is available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, phone: 1-800-729-6686.)

The other study, by researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign analyzing data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, finds that workers may use alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana to cope with jobs that are too easy or too difficult for them. The researchers suggest that, to reduce employee substance use, employers should systematically assess workers' abilities and consider reassigning them or restructuring their jobs to

match their skills. For more information about the study, contact co-author Greg R. Oldham, e-mail: [g-oldham@uiuc.edu](mailto:g-oldham@uiuc.edu).

### Long-range UN population projections released

The world will have 9.7 billion people by 2150 if birth rates remain constant at 1995 levels, according to the UN's long-range projections spanning 1995 to 2150.

Among the report's other key findings:

- The population is aging. According to the medium scenario, which assumes that birth rates stabilize to replacement level (slightly more than two children per woman) in 2050, the share of people ages 0 to 14 will decline from 31 percent in 1995 to 18 percent in 2150. During the same period, the share of people ages 60 or older will rise from 10 percent to 30 percent.
- The geographical distribution of the world will shift significantly. Africa's share of the world's population will double from 12 percent in 1995 to 24 percent in 2150 under the medium scenario; China's share will drop by one-third, from 22 percent to 14 percent.

### PRB Policy Seminars

PRB hosts monthly noontime seminars on demographic trends and policy issues at our Washington, D.C., office. The PRB policy seminars are free and open to the public. To receive regular notices of upcoming seminars, contact PRB at 202/483-1100; fax: 202/328-3937; e-mail: [popref@prb.org](mailto:popref@prb.org). Or visit PRB's Web site at <http://www.prb.org>.

More information can be found at <http://www.undp.org/popin>.

### Evaluating the gains of women

A new publication issued by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) offers indicators that can be used to evaluate regional and international agreements pertaining to women's advancement and gender equity. The indicators can be used to monitor compliance with agreements of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001.

The publication of the indicators forms part of regional preparations for the eighth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the special session of the UN General Assembly "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for

the 21st Century"—both to be held in the first half of 2000.

The publication is available on ECLAC's Web site: <http://www.eclac.cl/English/research/women/indicators/genderind.htm>.

Writing contest to highlight urban sprawl  
Zero Population Growth (ZPG) is sponsoring a writing contest for high school and college undergraduate students. Students are invited to write a plot featuring the problem of urban sprawl for an episode of a current television show.

Besides the chance to see their scripts on TV, students are eligible to win cash prizes up to \$1,000. Entries, which are limited to 1,500 words, must be received by Feb. 15, 2000.

More details are available from ZPG, phone: 800/767-1956; Web site: <http://www.zpg.org/education/writingcontest>.

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