

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Migration



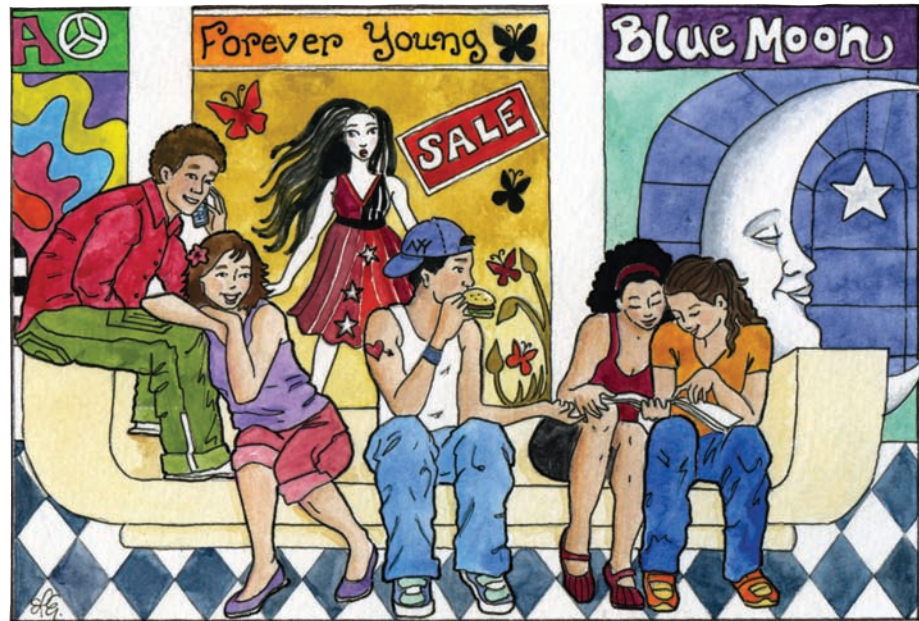
Cultural Change



The right to live a pleasant sexuality



The right to live free of violence



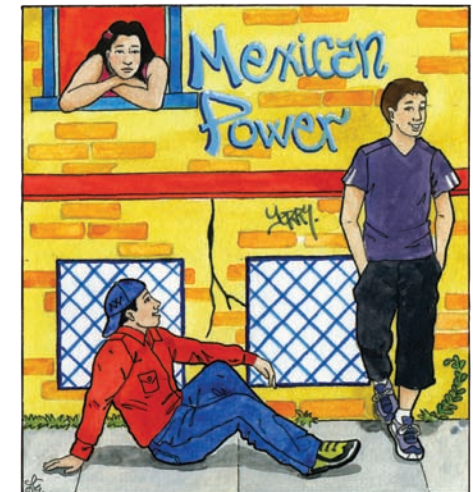
Sexual and Reproductive Rights



The right to health



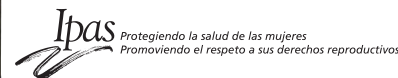
The right to choose



The right to live free of discrimination



The right to information and education



The right to choose

In comparison, Latin women have more children than other North American women. In many cases this is the result of our lack of access to information and contraceptive methods, combined with the way we've been taught to be women, in which our role as mothers and the absence of communication about sexuality in our families is privileged. It is considered that more than 50 per cent of deliveries among Latin women are due to unplanned pregnancies.

To be able to decide how many kids do we want to have, we must have information, as well as access to contraceptive methods and health services.

We have the right to decide if we want to have children or not, how many and when.

The right to live free of discrimination

In spite that many people migrate to the United States in search of the American Dream, the reality they face when they get to this country is very different from the myths we've heard in Latin America. The environment of discrimination and persecution we live for the fact of being Latin, migrants and not speaking English very well, lead us to isolation and poverty situations. **It is important to always remember that all people have the same rights** and deserve the same opportunities.

Latin women usually stay at home taking care of our children, which makes us feel lonelier and without emotional support. From 2001 to 2005, the number of Latin women who reported to be depressed the following 12 months after childbirth, increased from 11 to 16 per cent.

We need to build communal spaces where the young people can talk about our problems, about how we feel living as migrants in the United States, and to be informed about our rights.

The right to information and education

Young people have the right to have access to education about sexuality and information about all the contraceptive methods, including emergency contraception, the use of male and female condoms and legal abortion services in order to **make informed decisions that allow us to enjoy our sexuality**, prevent non-desired pregnancy and be protected from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

Despite our migratory status, we have the right to receive information. There are many of places where information is free and bilingual. Information must be given in a respectful environment towards cultural, sexual and gender diversity. Migrants have the right to have translation services.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Migration

Sexual and Reproductive Rights

The young Latin people have the same needs and desires related to our sexuality and our reproductive capacity, just as other young people living in the U.S. We need information related to our sexuality, our body and our health. We need to be treated with respect. And we need that health services take the time to make sure that we understand the information they give us so we can make our own decisions.

As a community, we need to work together to face the barriers and challenges so that the young Latin people can reach the highest standards of sexual and reproductive health in North Carolina and the rest of the country.

Even when in the U.S. there are laws that limit our development possibilities just because we are migrants, we must know that Human Rights are universal and we can always turn to non-governmental local organizations, to international organizations or to the government of the country we come from, to ask for help.

The right to health

Sexual and reproductive health is the general condition of physical, mental and social wellness, which includes the capacity of enjoying a satisfying sex life with no risks, and to have the freedom to choose to have children or not, when and how many.

As young people, we have the right to our health being protected and to enjoy scientific progress. This means that we ought to have **access to sexual and reproductive health services, as well as to the whole variety of contraceptive methods in a confidential environment that respects our cultural values.**

Cultural Change

As young people that have migrated from Latin America to the U.S., we have experienced a **strong cultural change because we come from more conservative societies and we are facing a liberal environment** that most of the time, our parents do not understand. There is a lot of machismo and violence in Latin America. Most of the time, Latin women do not have information related to our sexuality and our reproductive capacity, because in the communities we come from, we are made responsible of controlling our sexuality and we are blamed when pregnancy occurs outside marriage.

In order to take our decisions, we need to take the best from both cultures and so clarify which are the values we want to keep for ourselves.

The right to live a pleasant sexuality

Our sexuality starts from the very moment we are born and stays with us through all our life. All people have the right to enjoy our sexuality and that our decisions related to it are respected. No one can impose his or her values or force us to do anything we don't want to do. Every person lives its sexuality in a different way, and we all deserve respect.

The golden rule of sexuality is to respect other people's rights.

The right to live free of violence

We have the right to personal safety, so violence has to be prevented, taken care of and eradicated, being sexual, domestic or any kind of mistreat or abuse. As young women that have migrated, we have this same right and the government has to provide us with Spanish translation services. Latin women have more violence reports than other groups of women in North Carolina; 12 percent of them report psychological violence during the 12 months previous to pregnancy. The cycle of violence is hard to break, but this can be accomplished. **You can decide to live free of violence.**

There are specific resources for migrants in attending violence, where immigration authorities are not involved. You may check chapter 50B to get a valid protective order against domestic violence at: http://www.womenslaw.org/laws_state_type.php?id=563&state_code=NC&open_id=11150#content-11150