



SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN BENEFIT FROM THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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My name is Stefani and I am a student at CCSF, as well as a bartender/server at a fast paced restaurant. I am 25 years old, and I have been living on my own since I was barely 18. I soon as I graduated high school, I was sent on my way (with a very poor paying job) and continued receiving medical care until I was 19. In the process of living on my own, I quickly discovered I knew very little about how much medical care actually was after I was no longer covered by my parents insurance. Not knowing even the first step to being able to set up medical insurance on my own, and most certainly not being able to afford medical on my own, or how to seek out affordable coverage, I was forced on many occasions to wait out serious illnesses that needed medical attention until I could save up enough money to visit a doctor. Since the cost of doctors visits and medicine was so insanely expensive w/o insurance and on a teenager's income, I would ignore everything from sinus infections so bad I was coughing up blood to bladder infections so painful I couldn't stand up straight and made me run high fevers. Going to the doctor literally meant that I would have to give up necessities such as food and money towards utilities. When I saw a doctor for a bladder infection so bad I was urinating blood, I was not able to pay for utilities later on and because of this my electricity was shut off for two days. There have been times I felt so lost and unable to do anything to get well.

Then, 4 years later (at the age of 23), I received amazing news: my parent's insurance covered me until I was 26. Upon receiving this information, I scheduled an appointment with a doctor for a physical I was long over due for. Being on my parents insurance has saved me money I didn't have when I needed to see a doctor.

Now with free contraception being proposed for women who need it, I feel that a huge step is being made in the right direction. Unplanned pregnancies not only can be worrisome for women and their partners, but unplanned pregnancy can be detrimental to children born to unprepared parents. There is nothing to lose by offering more support to family planning, but so much can be gained. I, too, will benefit from easier access to contraception as a sexually active woman in a long-term, monogamous relationship.