

# Using an iPad App in School Health Centers to Support Latina Teens Making Choices about Birth Control

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## What was the research about?

Teen pregnancy rates in the United States have decreased overall but remain high in certain groups. In this study, the research team tested the Health-E You/Salud iTu app in school-based health centers, or SBHCs, to help Latina teens learn about birth control and choose a method that works for them.

The app included a game to help teens learn about different birth control methods. It also offered a series of questions to help teens choose a method. Teens used the app in English or Spanish on an iPad before talking with clinicians, such as doctors or nurses. The SBHC clinician received information from the app about teens' preferred birth control method before their visit.

The research team compared teens who used the app with teens who received usual care. For usual care, teens completed an online survey about their sexual health history and birth control use.

## What were the results?

Teens had more knowledge about birth control right after they used the app than before. Compared with teens who received usual care, teens who used the app felt more confident

- That they had enough information to choose a birth control method
- Talking to their clinician about birth control

- Using birth control correctly

Six months after the clinic visit, teens who used the app were more likely to use a non-barrier method of birth control, such as the pill, the patch, or an implant, than teens who received usual care. Birth control use increased 119 percent among teens who used the app and 45 percent among teens who received usual care. Also, clinicians and teens reported high app satisfaction and that the app improved the clinic visit.

The two groups didn't differ in the number of teens that discussed birth control with clinicians or whether they received a birth control method within two days of their SBHC visit.

## Who was in the study?

The study included 1,360 Latina teens ages 14–18 who were sexually active. All teens received care at one of 18 SBHCs in Los Angeles. The average age was 16.

## What did the research team do?

The research team assigned SBHCs by chance either to use the app or provide usual care. The team surveyed teens before and after their SBHC visit and again within two days, and three and six months later.

Teens and healthcare staff helped design Health-E You/Salud iTu and gave input on the study.

## What were the limits of the study?

All teens received care at SBHCs in one county. Results may differ for teens in other places or healthcare

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settings. Only half of teens completed the survey at six months, which may have affected results.

Future research could look at how the app works for teens who receive care in other places or settings.

### **How can people use the results?**

SBHCs can use these results when considering ways to help Latina teens choose a birth control method.

*To learn more about this project, visit [www.pcori.org/Tebb328](http://www.pcori.org/Tebb328).*