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Views of parents in the Johannesburg Metro (Region 11) regarding reproductive health issues emanating from the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended in 2008.

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TRACT/SYNOPSIS

The study took as its point of departure the Childrenôs Act No 38 of 2005 that emanated from the Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). This Act has as its primary aims, to promote the preservation and strengthening of families and to give effect to the rights of children as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, including: protection of children from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation and the fact that the best interest of a child are of paramount importance in every matter concerning children. It was anticipated that the areas of the Childrenôs Act with its emphasis on the rights of children would empower them in relation to their protection and development in that particular context. When the Act was introduced, it evoked mixed reactions with certain segments of society applauding the government for its efforts, and others condemning the governmentôs approach towards reproductive health issues affecting children. The primary aim of the research project was to explore the views of a group of parents in the Johannesburg Metro Region 11 regarding reproductive health care as embedded in the Childrenôs Act. The study took the form of a small-scale, mixed methods, descriptive, cross-sectional survey research design as it sought to elicit participantsô views on those specific clauses in the Act. In addressing the aims and objectives of the study, interview schedules were administered to 35 participants on an individual, face-to-face basis. Participants were adults drawn from Johannesburg Metro Region 11 and the data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic content analysis. The main findings that emerged from the study were that, participants did not participate in the process leading up to the promulgation of the Childrenôs Act No 38 of 2005. Consequently, participants had little knowledge about the Act and did not have any knowledge about its objectives. The fact that participants did not support certain clauses has implications for amendment of the Act with reference to the clauses on reproductive health care.

Key Words: reproductive health care, contraceptives, consent, Childrenôs Act