The PATH questions are one client-centered approach to assess Parenthood/Pregnancy Attitude, Timing, and How important is pregnancy prevention. PATH can be used with clients of any gender, sexual orientation, or age. PATH is designed to facilitate listening and efficient client-centered conversations about preconception care, contraception, and fertility as appropriate.

**QUESTION 1**
Do you think you might like to have (more) children at some point?

- **YES**
- **NOT SURE**
- **NO**

**QUESTION 2**
When do you think that might be?

- Now or trying for some time
- Not now or not anytime soon

**QUESTION 3**
How important is it to you to prevent pregnancy (until then)?

- Not as Important
- Important

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**FPNTC RESOURCE**
Basic Infertility Services

**FPNTC RESOURCE**
Preconception Counseling Checklist

**FPNTC RESOURCE**
Birth Control Options Chart

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**REFERENCES**


FPNTC is supported by the Office of Population Affairs of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services FPTPA006028-01-00. The information presented does not necessarily represent the views of OPA, DHHS, or FPNTC member organizations.
## Client-Centered Reproductive Goals Counseling Skills

### TRY THIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRY THIS</th>
<th>IT SOUNDS LIKE THIS</th>
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<td><strong>Start with small talk</strong> about the client’s life to build rapport and learn about the client’s goals.</td>
<td>“It sounds like you are incredibly busy with work and school. I can see how it could be challenging to make it into the clinic every 3 months for your shot.”</td>
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<td><strong>Ask open-ended questions</strong> about what a client wants from their contraceptive method, rather than asking what contraceptive methods they are interested in.</td>
<td>“Do you have a sense of what is important to you about your birth control method?” (Pause to allow the client to consider.)</td>
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| **Ask probing questions** to explore client preferences about method characteristics such as side effects; bleeding pattern; control over removal; ability to conceal; non-contraceptive benefits, etc. | “How would that be for you?”
“Has that happened to you?”
“How do you see yourself managing this?”
“Do you have a sense of what else is important to you?” |
| **Find something the client says to agree with,** empathize with, or validate before giving additional clarifying information. Instead of “No” or “But,” try to start with “Yes! And___”. | Agreement: “Yes, you’re absolutely right, AND…”
Display of empathy: “I can see this is concerning to you, AND…”
Validation: “Yes, many of my clients say that, AND…” |
| **Point out health-supporting behaviors or knowledge.** Acknowledge as many positives as possible. | “That is a really great question.”
“I wish all of my patients knew that!”
“You are clearly interested in protecting yourself.” |
| **Paraphrase what the client says** so they know you have heard them, they can correct or confirm, and you can redirect the conversation in a client-centered way. | “It sounds like on the one hand you are saying _____, yet on the other hand you are saying _____, do I have that right?” |
| **Use natural frequencies** instead of percentages, and use common denominators when comparing effectiveness or risk. | “If 100 women have unprotected sex for a year, 85 of them will get pregnant, as compared to maybe 0 or 1 out of 100 using an IUD.” |
| **Make sure the client knows that they can always come in to have an IUD or implant removed** for any reason, you can help manage side effects, and return to fertility is immediate. | “This implant is good for **up to** 3 years, but if you want to get pregnant before then, or would like it removed for any reason, we will remove it any time you want. Your ability to get pregnant will return to whatever is normal for you, immediately.” |
| **Reflect and validate feelings.** Let clients know that you heard them and that their feelings are normal. | “Wow, I think most people would find that really hard to deal with.” |
| **Confirm the client’s understanding** by asking them to phrase information in their own words. Phrase the request so the provider takes the responsibility for needing clarification. | “We have discussed many different things today, I would like to be sure I was clear. Can you tell me what you will be doing to manage heavy periods with your copper IUD?” |

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Learn more about PATH at [envisionsrh.com](http://envisionsrh.com) | Find more resources at [FPNTC.org](http://FPNTC.org)