

EQUITY IMPACT PROGRAM

Message Testing for Reproductive Justice in Latine Communities

In late 2024, Resource Media tested abortion access messaging frameworks to gain insight into what reproductive justice messages are most persuasive for Latine audiences. The goal was to understand what moves specific audiences to support either elected officials who champion reproductive care or their likelihood in voting for abortion care.

Research Methodology

Grow Progress provides rapid online testing via message-and-image compositions that are akin to quick-glance social media scrolling content. 2,792 adults in the United States who self-identify as Latine saw either a placebo or one of our six message-and-image combinations.

Voting support for abortion care starts at a high baseline, but the 2024 election results are contradictory

Before test participants were exposed to any message, more than half (56%) agreed that elected officials should work to protect access to abortion care, and more than seven out of ten (71%) are likely to vote in support of abortion care. These high numbers signal how important abortion access is for many in this audience, but also mean there's less room to persuade. Majority votes for anti-abortion politicians in the 2024 elections also contradicted this high baseline, suggesting a dual messaging strategy in future:

- efforts to persuade must be highly targeted, focusing on specific segments of the Latine audience who do not already show high levels of support for abortion care;
- other messages that produced directional movement in this test (such as the self-managed abortion message, discussed below) can be used to help shore up a base of support.

Our Messages and Findings



Deploy safe self-managed abortion messages to reinforce support among young Latine liberals, moderates, and those who live in suburban and restricted areas

Our empowering self-managed abortion message was the most effective overall (+6) in this test; and this message especially elicited support among young Latine people (+12), liberals (+8), moderates (+14), those who live in suburbs (+12) and states where abortion is likely restricted (+8). It may be that the values of safety, historical continuity and control were resonant.



Linking the most persuasive self-managed abortion and healthcare messages could strengthen them both

Healthcare messaging works especially well with people ages 18-34 (+12) who in their reproductive years are most likely to need abortion care, indicating an opportunity to craft future messages linking abortion to basic healthcare and/or to avoiding criminalization.



Criminalization message is salient with current events, and may work well with Latino men

It might be that the privileges of people such as Latino men (+8), people with higher incomes and college degrees (+11), and those in states without abortion bans (+12), are threatened by criminalization, because this message performed well. The healthcare message performed poorly with Latino men in this test (0 change from baseline), whereas the self-managed abortion message (+8) also did well.



Message about youth lacking abortion access moved middle aged people and other audience segments

Perhaps 35-54 year olds (+10) are thinking about their own recent past experiences with reproductive health and of their younger coworkers, friends and relatives.

Latine audiences who live in states with abortion restrictions are concerned with the lack of access to abortion care, and this sentiment is reflected in the efficacy of the lack of access for youth message (+10). Those who live in urban areas were also moved by this message (+12) perhaps drawing on the higher populations in cities who need abortion care.



Fertility message may be too niche or disconnected from abortion care

The message about fertility treatments for people trying to start families lowered support among Liberals (-12) and Republicans (-14) , people living on lower incomes, and several other groups. The visual of a pregnant person associated with this message may have triggered abortion stigma.



We can learn a lot from the faith message that produced backlash

The faith message was backlashing, especially lowering support among people aged 35-54 and people with liberal political beliefs (-10), perhaps because the context of prayer was misinterpreted as anti-abortion, triggered abortion stigma, or threatened the value of “separation of church and state.”

Takeaways

Resource Media’s message test results indicate segments of the Latine audience who are persuadable with the right message, and that folks who already support abortion care are receptive to multiple messaging strategies.

Looking forward

No one message in this test moves the entire audience—and that’s ok. There are few issues where one single message would be persuasive for a very large audience that spans the entire country; let alone one of the most fraught and complex social issues in the U.S. Furthermore, Latine communities are not a monolith and there is a lot of variation among culture, countries of origin, Spanish and English languages and dialects, immigration status and experiences, as well as faith and religions including Catholicism with its historically vocal anti-abortion stance.

With this test under our belt, we’re well-positioned to design and run more targeted, effective testing and research to refine abortion care communications strategy among specific Latine audience segments.

Our recommendations for further research include:

- Spanish language messages should be transcreated and tested.
- Additional messages should tap narrative frameworks like bodily autonomy, mutual aid/support, pregnancy complications, miscarriage/pregnancy loss, abortion pills, and privacy.
- Messages to best reach Latino men should be tested.
- Messaging differences among Latine people living in states where abortion access is banned (as do 6.7 million people—43 percent of all Latinas of reproductive age) and in states where it is not restricted, should be more narrowly identified.