

**Using a rights-based argument, write a response paper about commonly heard myths and misconceptions around abortion. You may choose any myth from the lesson or one that you may have heard otherwise. [200-300 words]**

I have often come across a popular myth that a parent/guardian, husband/partner or in-laws' consent is required to avail medical/surgical abortion procedures. This idea is often perpetuated by Medical practitioners themselves who believe that guardians, partners or other family members have more rights and information than the pregnant person themselves. It inherently infantilises the pregnant person, who is believed to be unaware of their rights, possessing no significant individual beliefs or ideas, inherently incapable of understanding and making medical decisions and thus requires consent of other family members and/or a 'decision maker of the family'. Needless to say, this is often a male. This is a massive deterrent for persons who may want to keep this process confidential. The idea of having to involve immediate family adds to the fear of stigma among pregnant persons, who may choose to then avail of unsafe means for terminating their pregnancy.

Needless to say, such a misconception leaves pregnant persons with minimal to no rights or agency over their bodies. Pregnant persons are infantilised, given no dignity or opportunities to make their own decisions. Further, such enforced involvement of the family and the stigma perpetuated by the medical practitioners, further alienate pregnant persons from availing the required emotional and medical support during a distressing period. Such ideas not only, then, deter pregnant persons from seeking safe abortion services, but even considering them in the first place.