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## **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP STABILIZE POPULATION**

Change is only truly possible when it begins inside the person who is advocating it. This being the case, the following suggestions are made to help you take personal responsibility for stabilizing human population.

- **TALK ABOUT POPULATION WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.** It's time this issue was openly discussed, and what better place to begin.
- **SUPPORT FAMILY PLANNING EFFORTS.** Nearly one half of pregnancies in the US are unplanned. Every child should be a wanted child. When people have the means to choose the number and spacing of their children, they tend to have smaller, healthier families. This has a ripple effect that benefits communities socially, economically, and environmentally.
- **MAKE A CONSCIOUS, INFORMED CHOICE WHEN DECIDING HOW MANY CHILDREN YOU WANT FOR YOUR FAMILY.** Consider that it is not just a question of whether or not you can afford more children; it is also a question of whether or not the planet can afford more children. Adopting children is always an option instead of, or along with, having your own. After all, it's the love that counts. Another option is to enrich the lives of other people's children as part of your life.
- **SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO CHOOSE TO HAVE ONE CHILD OR NO CHILDREN.** It is their decision; that should be supported, not criticized. Don't pressure your children, grandchildren, or other relatives to have children. A decision not to have children may be the best personal choice and contributes to sustainable population levels. There are plenty of other children who could benefit from that love.
- **WRITE LETTERS TO THE NEWSPAPER, ARTICLES FOR AN ORGANIZATION'S NEWSLETTER, OR CONTRIBUTE TO A BLOG.** Letters to the editor raise awareness and help policy makers determine the issues to which they should pay attention. The Sierra Club Population Committee has background information and suggestions for letters. Call us at the numbers below.
- **WRITE TO STATE AND NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES URGING THEM TO SUPPORT FUNDING FOR FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS.** It is critical that these people hear from you, both for national and international programs. The Sierra Club Population Committee has an e-mailing list. We will alert you when an important vote is coming up. Become part of this list by contacting us at the phone numbers or emails below.
- **CHALLENGE THE NEED FOR GROWTH.** The perceived need for growth in consumption levels and the number of consumers should be continually challenged as we strive for a sustainable society. No matter how far scientific knowledge advances, there cannot be infinite growth on a planet of finite resources.

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