



Child Welfare League of America Statement
on
Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization

On Friday, June 24, 2022, the United States Supreme Court issued *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, resulting in the overturning of the landmark decision *Roe v. Wade*. In doing so, the Court has set off a great debate that, in part, should cause us to challenge how this nation supports, or more accurately utterly fails to support, its families and children. The decision has broad application to other settled rights and should alarm all who support civil rights and the protection of these rights.

Far too often, Americans who have been marginalized depend on the Supreme Court to ensure that their rights are protected. Never before has the Supreme Court granted and then denied rights—until now. Reversing settled law sets a dangerous precedent, not just for the rights of women, but for the rights of all Americans. Justice Clarence Thomas has made it clear that among those rights now in jeopardy is marriage equality, which, if overturned, could have a destabilizing impact on families led by and children parented by couples of the same sex.

Members of the Supreme Court, the political leaders that hold with this decision, organizations and institutions that have fought for it, and like-minded voters have suggested that various supports and services, including the use of adoption laws, baby abandonment laws, and children’s services are readily available solutions to the challenges that this Court decision has created. Unfortunately, this is not true. What is missing is a comprehensive response to the trauma, economic, and legal issues for parents and their children related to adoption and baby abandonment, and the lack of services and supports such as child care and family support.

To truly solve these problems, we need to address the impact of broader structural issues like racism and poverty. We must also address the persistent lack of adequate sexual health education, adequate mental health services, adequate response to drug epidemics, and the country’s persistent inability to place families first.

The United States is far behind other countries that have paid leave, universal child care allowances, and universal child care to support families.

None of these issues and needs have received the attention, advocacy, or urgency they deserve over the first half of this century. In light of this Court decision, we must decide what kind of a country we want to be in the remainder of this 21st century: one that supports its families and cares for its children or one that believes our responsibility to our children ends at conception.