

# What is the **PATH** Framework?

The **PATH Framework** is a **person-centered way for health care providers** (clinicians as well as patient educators, staff and social workers) **to engage in non-judgmental conversations with clients about their sexual and reproductive health.**

- **PATH unites inclusive questions with counseling, client education and communication skills;** PATH questions + repeated ASA (Affirm, Share, Ask) Cycles = The PATH Framework.
- **PATH moves beyond the idea that pregnancies are “planned vs. unplanned”** by acknowledging and respecting the nuanced nature of people’s attitudes and feelings about their own reproduction.
- **PATH is inclusive.** The same questions are used in conversations with all patients regardless of gender, sexual orientation or ability to carry a pregnancy. There is never a need to adapt or change the questions.

## Why **PATH**?

- PATH works to **prioritize equity** and **prevent trauma.**
- PATH facilitates **active listening**, an essential skill for person-centered care that **ensures client’s voices are heard.**
- PATH is **efficient.** It yields a maximal amount of relevant information in minimal time. Clients have the space to verbalize their current reproductive desires so providers and staff can offer appropriate services and conversations about contraception, pre-pregnancy care and fertility.

**PA T H**  
**QUESTIONS**

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**THE PATH FRAMEWORK**

### **PA - Parenting/Pregnancy Attitudes**

“Do you think you might like to have (more) children at some point?”

### **T - Timing**

“When do you think that might be?”

### **H - How Important**

“How important is it to you to prevent pregnancy (until then)?”

“Since you said \_\_\_\_\_”

- “Would you like to discuss ways to prevent pregnancy?”
- “Can you tell me something that is important to you about your birth control?”
- “Would you like to talk about ways to be prepared for a healthy pregnancy?”

### **What is the ASA (Affirm/Share/Ask) Cycle?**

- The **ASA Cycle** brings together essential counseling and patient education skills into a simple format that facilitates person-centered communication. It is used with the PATH questions.
  - ➔ **AFFIRM**/Acknowledge the client or what the client says/feels
  - ➔ **SHARE** relevant information in a way that the client can digest/learn/retain
  - ➔ **ASK** a pertinent follow-up question
- The ASA Cycle is meant to be **used repeatedly** throughout interaction with clients.
- The ASA Cycle **fosters rapport.**
- The ASA Cycle **supports health literacy.**

### **Questions?**

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Thank you to the *Women’s Fund of Omaha* for permission to utilize their document in the creation of this resource. Learn more about their work at: [OmahaWomensFund.org](http://OmahaWomensFund.org).

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