Michelle Obama on Her Struggles With Fertility

In a new memoir, the former first lady discusses her miscarriage years ago and explains why she opted for IVF to conceive children.

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At 54, Michelle Obama has accomplished and endured a lot. Now, the former first lady divulges that a miscarriage she suffered nearly 20 years ago led her to turn to in vitro fertilization (IVF) to conceive her daughters, PEOPLE reports.

For the TV special Becoming Michelle: A First Lady's Journey, Obama sat down with journalist Robin Roberts to discuss these and other issues that she wrote about in her memoir, titled Becoming.

"I felt like I failed because I didn't know how common miscarriages were because we don't talk about them," Obama said. "We sit in our own pain, thinking that somehow we're broken."

"That's one of the reasons why I think it's important to talk to young mothers about the fact that miscarriages happen and the biological clock is real because egg production is limited—I realized that as I was 34 and 35, and we had to do IVF," she continued. "I think it's the worst thing we do to each other as women: not share the truth about our bodies and how they work and how they don't work."

Obama and her husband, President Barack Obama, planned to start a family, but she realized the window of opportunity for her to have children was closing. As a result, the couple tried IVF and she was able to conceive their daughters, Malia and Sasha, now ages 20 and 17, respectively.

Obama said she wanted to share her story so that other women know they're not alone.

In Becoming, the first lady also writes candidly about her marriage and shares her thoughts on President Donald Trump. The book is available for order on Amazon.

Click here to learn about the uterine condition that might have contributed to Gabrielle Union's fertility issues.

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