

The Teen Magazine Arbitration Panel



Annual Report 2006

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TMAP Annual Report 2006 – Chairman’s foreword

Although there were no complaints to the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel during 2006, we held formal meetings, hosted a well-attended TMAP Forum in November with a novel format, and kept active links with the informal multi-agency group who had made representations to the DfES on the new guidelines for reporting possible abuse in teenage sexual relationships, in their document “Every Child Matters”

During the first quarter of 2006, the publication of these new guidelines for reporting was awaited with increasing anxiety. After much deliberation TMAP had in late 2005 had signed a joint letter to the DfES along with some 2 dozen other agencies outlining our serious anxiety on this potential destruction of the confidentiality of sexual health services for young people, and the Periodical Publishers’ Association had contributed to the commissioning of a legal report on the human rights implications of these proposed guidelines.

In early April, the DfES published the guidelines which while hugely improved, could from their wording still possibly be interpreted as indicating mandatory reporting to the police of every case where the subject is under 13 years old. The organization Action on Rights for Children sought funding from the Joseph Rowntree Trust to research the implementation of the guidelines in every social service department in England and Wales, with a particular focus on the consent of young people for sharing their data with other agencies. That report was expected by summer 2007.

The concerns of the TMAP panel about unconsented sharing of early teenagers’ identifiable data were discussed in detail at one meeting, and a summary of these databases will soon be available on the TMAP website.

The Axon case (referred to in Roger Ingham’s research report), was heard in the High Court in December 2006, though the welcome result confirming the Gillick case judgement of 1985 was actually delivered in January 2007. Arguably this case was the most significant event of 2006 affecting the sexual health of young people confirming their legal right to confidentiality.

At the 2006 meeting with Linda Jackson of the Home Office she raised the possibility of teenage magazine agony aunts who answer online problem letters from readers needing a Criminal Records Bureau check. We discussed this at the next TMAP meeting where the individual responsibility to obtain CRB clearance for each role undertaken by an employee of a magazine was emphasized by David Thomas of the PPA secretariat.

As a result of a creative discussion at the June Panel meeting, it was recognized that the TMAP Forum needed to be more interactive to engage the audience. It was agreed that a panel of editors after brief presentations should take questions from the audience, and that another panel expert on issues of personal safety for teenagers in on-line spaces and through “bluejacking” of mobile phone conversations give insight into both the risks and available protections on-line. Both these panels invigorated the subsequent debates.

We were fortunate to have in the audience four teenagers who felt confident in taking part and whose presence lent reality to the discussions. I am personally very grateful to Cathy Fallon, our new TMAP member and Deputy Head of Greenwich School for inviting these students, and of course to the students themselves. It reinforces my long-held sense that at least occasional input from teenagers could both enliven and enlighten our deliberations. We are currently investigating options for this within our remit.

The editors' panel aroused anxiety in many of the audience as the magazines' circulation vulnerability to associated free on-line magazine sites became clear. The unique value of the teenage girls' magazine sector in providing age-appropriate information on personal and sexual health in an acceptable, non-didactic format was emphasized in discussion. The less expensive celebrity magazines, often attractive to younger readers have no such function.

Meantime the TMAP remit has been extended to include similar oversight of magazines where 25% or more of the readers are boys under the age of sixteen. Our guidelines have been suitably adjusted to read "young people" rather than "young women" and the up to date a statement of the role of TMAP was discussed and agreed at the June meeting and is appended.

The panel will keep under review the relevance and applicability of our remit with the increasing convergence of the media in a society where ownership of a mobile phone is a teenage norm. The issue of online is not straightforward as while magazines self-regulate, online forums with user-generated content - have no such restriction.

Meantime the panel expressed continuing concerns on the implementation of the 2005 Sexual Offences Act (aimed to better protect vulnerable adults as well as younger children) which includes inter alia kissing as a sexual offence if either party is under 16. That the CPS advises that such "offences" should not generally be prosecuted in teenagers reflects the unhelpful drafting of this legislation, and the vulnerability of under-16s to prosecution and the potential of appearing on the sex offenders register as the result of early boy-girl relationships.

Three of the magazines developed impressive campaigns related to sex education during 2006. Cosmogirl's campaign launched with an article on young peoples' rights to a comprehensive sex and relationship programme in the curriculum. It was linked with an on-line petition to the Prime Minister signed by 5000 readers. The editor Celia Duncan and a small group of readers delivered the petition to Number 10 Downing Street, with associated national publicity.

Bliss magazine's "Be Sexy, Be Sussed" focused on factual knowledge as the cool route to safe early relationships. Sugar's S.A.F.E.* campaign stressed the need to be **S**ure of the facts, **A**ge 16 or over, **F**ree from pressure, **E**motionally sorted.

During the year, there was a relentless focus in UK media on negative stories about young people. Publication of the IPPR's report "Freedom's Orphans" - subtitled "Raising Youth in a Changing World" – contributed constructively to the media debate. Social mobility in UK society having stalled over the last 30 years, the report argued that success now depends on the acquisition of personal social and relationship skills. Its recommendations included that Personal Social and Health education become statutory subject in all primary and secondary schools and that Ofsted's remit should include the teaching of personal and social skills. Fascinatingly, this echoed the demands of readers of teenage girls' magazines.

Last summer we said goodbye to David Thomas, who led the TMAP secretariat for 4 years, and whose legal knowledge and political nous has been an invaluable support to the effective functioning of TMAP and to me as its Chair. The arrival of Kerry Neilson was marked by her skill and energy in putting the TMAP Forum in place, delayed as it was by my

illness. TMAP and the teen magazines are in her debt for her smooth management of a difficult task at short notice. The enthusiastic response suggests that we may have outgrown the PPA premises for the next Forum.

I remain very appreciative of the continuing involvement of Nick Mazur, PPA's Deputy CEO in TMAP, and of James Evans in administrative support. It is a recurring but genuine pleasure to record my gratitude for the expertise, enthusiasm and diligence of the Panel members in 2006 with particular thanks to Roger Ingham for his work providing a succinct summary of the recent research most relevant to the work of TMAP.

Fleur Fisher

About TMAP

The Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP) monitors the sexual content of teenage magazines, ensuring that all sexual information in such magazines remains accurate and appropriate for the target readership, and in accordance with the TMAP guidelines.

The guidelines are the publishing industry's own standards, produced in co-operation with magazine publishers, editors and retailers, and approved by the Home Office. The guidelines are administered by a panel of publishers and non-publishing experts including health professionals, who meet to adjudicate on complaints, and to decide whether there has been a breach of those guidelines.

Magazines falling within the remit of TMAP are those where 25 per cent or more of the readership are girls and boys under 16 years of age. The TMAP panel also monitors the online output of magazines within its remit.

The Panel

The Panel consists of representatives from the fields of child public health, teenage sexual health, sex education, research, law and publishing. The TMAP secretariat is run by Kerry Neilson, Director of Legal and Public Affairs for the PPA.

In 2004, the Panel was expanded to four publisher seats and four seats for non-publisher industry experts, and continues to be chaired by Dr Fleur Fisher. The publisher seats were occupied in 2006 by the Editors of CosmoGirl, Bliss, Sugar and It's Hot. Details of the non-publisher industry experts are as follows:

Dr Fleur Fisher

A former head of the British Medical Association's Ethics, Science and Information Division, Fleur is now director of the independent consultancy Healthcare-ethics, vice-chairman of the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, and Trustee of The Medical Foundation for AIDS and Sexual Health (MedFASH), the Foundation for Information Policy Research and a member of the University of Westminster's Ethics Committee.

Before joining the staff of the BMA in 1991, Fleur spent 15 years working in family planning clinics and developing both community services and educational training programmes for doctors and nurses, teachers, and social workers. She has worked on sex education programmes with young people, teachers, youth and social workers and for Piccadilly Radio and Granada TV.

Professor Roger Ingham

Roger Ingham is Professor of Health and Community Psychology at the University of Southampton, and director of the Centre for Sexual Health Research.

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Roger has worked on sexual health issues for many years. During this time he has published widely on relevant topics and worked closely with policy makers in this country and abroad. He has been a consultant for the World Health Organisation's AIDS programme, and is a

member of the Government's Independent Advisory Group for the Teenage Pregnancy Unit. He was also a member of the Sexual Health and HIV National Strategy core group.

Monique Allan

Monique is a practising commercial barrister specialising in a broad range of commercial advisory, litigation and arbitration work. She is also an accredited mediator and qualified as FCI Arb, sitting on the Lloyds and NASD panels of arbitrators. Before being called to the Bar in 1986, following postgraduate studies,

Monique worked in the insurance and banking industries. She has a daughter of 26 and son of 24.

Cathy Fallon

Cathy has been a secondary school teacher for the past nineteen years and is currently a DFES appointed Advanced Skills Teacher in Citizenship and PSHE for Greenwich Education Authority. She is an FPA Accredited teacher of Sex and Relationships and works alongside many outside agencies in the development of PSHE programmes and the Healthy Schools Standard, including SRE, Drugs Education, and Healthy Eating. Cathy has a 6 year old son and an 11 year old daughter.

Anna Martinez

Anna Martinez is the Coordinator of the Sex Education Forum, the national authority on sex and relationships education (SRE). Established in 1987, it is a unique collaboration of 49 organisations including religious, children's, parents, governors, health and education. It aims to ensure that all children and young people receive their entitlement to good quality SRE, in a variety of settings. Prior to working at the Forum, Anna was the SRE lead of the Enfield and Haringey Teenage Pregnancy Team where she managed a team of SRE educators and provided training for professionals. She also has experience of working for UNAIDS in Namibia. Anna has a BSc in Psychology, an MSc in Health Promotion and is an accredited sexual health trainer.

Adjudications

There were no complaints made to the TMAP panel in 2006 and therefore this year there are no adjudications to report on.

Magazine Sector Information

The magazines covered by the TMAP guidelines in 2006 were: Bliss, CosmoGirl, It's Hot, Mizz, Smash Hits, Sneak, Shout, Sugar and Top of the Pops.

Unfortunately some of the publications within the TMAP remit closed in 2006. We were sorry to see the closure of Sneak and Smash Hits magazines.

Research Summary

Professor Roger Ingham
Centre for Sexual Health Research
University of Southampton

(Member of Teenage Pregnancy Unit Independent Advisory Group and Member of TMAP)

For this year's summary of relevant and interesting research and developments, I describe and summarise three studies that were published during 2006. They all deal with aspects of young people and sexual activity. First, I outline some work carried out in the USA that attempted to throw some light on why the teenage pregnancy rates are declining there. Second, I comment on some published material from the UK on the impact of a new sex and relationships education programme in Scottish schools. Third, I outline some new work that predicts who is more likely to become young mothers and fathers. Finally, I report on the outcome of a court case that challenged the right of young people to obtain contraceptive and abortion services in the absence of parental consent.

The US research casts some light on the reasons for the rather rapid decline in teenage pregnancy in the USA. Rates have been decreasing for a number of years now, and there has been a lot of discussion (to put it mildly) on the extent to which this is as a result of the increasing levels of abstinence-only education in schools, and/or as a result of improved contraceptive education and services for young people. The former case is made by the moral right with strong support from the Bush administration, which has been increasing funding for abstinence-only based school education for some years. For example, in 2005, well over 200 million US dollars were allocated to support the approach, with some States matching the funding received from the federal government.

On the other side of the argument are those who argue, on the basis of research evidence, that abstinence-only approaches are ineffective and, indeed, may do more harm than good. Some also argue that such approaches are a denial of the rights of young people to education and support to maintain healthy behaviours; for example, an integral part of the abstinence agenda is to not only discourage any sex before (heterosexual) marriage, but also to deny information on contraception on the grounds that it is not required.

Research by John Santelli and some colleagues¹ helped to disentangle some of the evidence. By combining data from a number of different surveys that looked at changing trends in sexual activity and contraception use, they were able to show that the vast majority of the decline in teenage pregnancy rates was due to improved contraceptive use, rather than less sexual activity. Of course, even if there were less sex going on, it could not in any case be assumed that this is as a direct result of abstinence-only education; all sorts of different factors affect whether and when young people engage in sex. These results are extremely important, since there are still those in the UK who argue that we should try to mimic the 'success' of the US approach through adopting a more abstinence-based approach.

The second important research publication was from the SHARE team at the Medical Research Council Unit in Scotland². Some years ago, they developed a new sex and relationships education programme, and instituted a large random control trial (where some randomly-selected schools received the new programme and were compared with schools

that continued their normal SRE provision). Some earlier results were published a few years ago, and showed that the levels of sexual activity at the time were not affected by the programme, even though it was popular amongst teachers and pupils. The new work reports on a follow-up in the areas covered by the schools, and showed that rates of conception and abortion did not differ in the areas concerned.

The critics of the UK government's approach were quick to leap on the result and suggest that the increased attention to sex education was therefore misguided. This, however, is a false conclusion. Whether or not young people engage in sexual activity, when and with whom, is affected by a host of factors, of which school education is but one. Further, the results are related to just this one approach to the topic, and so say little about the efficacy and impact of SRE in general; for example, whether different results would have been obtained had the programme started earlier, been longer, contained different components, and so on. The (admittedly disappointing) results should not be used to divert us away from the need for continuing to improve the quality of SRE in schools, to encourage more family or carer support and discussion, to continue to try to improve the prospects and aspirations of young people in poorer communities, to improve sexual health services, and so on.

The third research project³ used data from two large longitudinal cohort studies, where samples of people are followed up over time, to explore factors associated with early pregnancy. A key advantage of this approach is that measures are obtained before the pregnancy occurs, so reporting is not affected by possibly *post hoc* justifications or rationalisations. One part of the study used data from the British Birth Cohort 1970, in which the parents of all young people born in a certain week have been sent regular questionnaires for completion covering a range of issues (and the children were sent questionnaires once they were old enough to complete them).

What these data showed is that it is possible to predict fairly well who is more likely to become a teenage parent from certain indices. Key factors included whether their own mother was a teenage mother, their father's social class, whether there was indeed a father figure in the home at birth, whether they had ever been in care, their mother's aspirations for the child, and a range of factors measure when the child was ten years old – these included conduct disorder, external locus of control, poor reading ability, and living in social housing. The factors that predicted early parenthood were very similar for women and for men.

Drawing on data from a different survey carried out in the Avon area, the effects of early motherhood could be ascertained. These included relatively high rates of depression and anxiety with consequently negative effects on their own children. However, what the research showed was that it was not age *per se* that was the important factor, but the fact that teenage mothers are less likely to be supported (that is, there is a much greater probability of partnership dissolution amongst younger parents), to be living in poor neighbourhoods and in poor housing. In other words, the research reinforces the present policy initiatives to offer good support (through Sure Start, for example) and improved housing and educational opportunities to young parents.

Finally, at the time of writing last year's report, we were waiting the outcome of an important judicial review concerning the rights of young women to receive confidential advice and treatment from sexual health services without their parents' knowledge and agreement. The case was bought by a Sue Axon from Manchester in response to Department of Health guidance that stated that efforts should be made to inform and involve parents, but that the young woman had the right to refuse if she desires.

The judgement, when it arrived, supported the Department of Health's position⁴. Whilst recognising that it is almost always desirable that a young woman in such a situation should receive parental or other adult support, it was accepted that there may be circumstances in which she will choose to maintain confidentiality. The judge argued that where there is a conflict between the rights of the child and the rights of parents, the former should take precedence; this was an extremely helpful clarification for all those who work directly with young people, and helps to remove what had been a rather ambiguous and grey area before this judgement.

References

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- 2 Henderson, M, Wight, D, Raab, G, Abraham, C, Parkes, A, Scott, S and Hart, G (2007) Impact of a theoretically based sex education programme (SHARE) delivered by teachers on NHS registered conceptions and terminations; final results of a cluster randomised trial, *British Medical Journal*, 20 Jan 2007, vol 334, pp 133-136.
- 3 Berrington, A, Stevenson, J and Ingham, R (2007) *Consequences of Teenage Parenthood; pathways which minimise the long-term negative impacts of teenage childbearing*, Research Briefing Number 8, January 2007, Teenage Pregnancy Unit, Department for Education and Skills and Department of Health, access from [www.dfes.gov.uk/teenagepregnancy]
- 4 R (on the application of Sue Axon) v Secretary of State for Health [2006] EWHC 37 (Admin); [2006] QB 539

TMAP Annual Forum 2006

Delegates at the TMAP Annual Forum met in November 2006 to discuss how young people use new media and how their safety could be ensured.

An expert panel made up of Hamish McLeod from the Internet Watch Foundation, Julie Minns from 3 Mobile, Kate Belson from ICSTIS and Sarah Baynes from Creative Garden investigated how young people use online media now, how they would use it in the future and how they could stay safe when they used it.

Hamish McLeod highlighted comments by young people relating to online safety campaigns and flagged up the fact that they wanted to be trusted and felt that they were aware of what they needed to do to be safe. The comments illustrated that educational campaigns needed to be targeted in such a way that young people didn't feel they were being preached to. He also presented research which showed that while parents felt that their children were not seeing inappropriate content, this was not the case. When asked, nearly 60% of young people had seen porn online whereas less than 25% of parents thought that this was the case. Hamish McLeod concluded that children needed to explore the internet but parents should use the help provided by organisations such as CEOP and the IWF. They should also take time to talk to their children about what they do online to ensure that they were aware of how to stay safe.

Julie Minns of 3 Mobile showed delegates the technological developments that young people would be using in the near future. She highlighted the increased use of mobile services to download music and showed delegates the user-generated services provided by 3. Julie stressed that the user-generated services were moderated carefully and not available to under-16s. She added that mobile operators were signatories to a code which ensured that access to over-18 content was limited to over-18s, that chat services were properly moderated to prevent misuse and that premium rate calls could be barred on handsets if necessary. She told delegates that the self-regulatory approach had been very successful.

Kate Belson of ICSTIS, the premium rate regulatory body introduced a new information service which had been developed for children between 9 and 12 to help them understand about premium rate charges and know where they could go to get help if they were targetted by those services. The website called 'Phone Brain' was launched in early December 2006 after testing on sample groups of young people who felt the content was exciting and informative.

Sarah Baynes of Creative Garden told delegates that young people needed to be able to use the internet to explore ideas and try things out. She added that they would drive individualism online. She encouraged students attending the Forum from the Thomas Tallis School in London to take part in the discussion. They told delegates that they wanted adults to trust them to use the internet without looking at content they shouldn't be. They felt monitoring was an invasion of privacy and pointed out that content filters prevented them from using legitimate information sites, giving the example that finding appropriate information about sex was impossible when sites containing the keyword 'sex' were blocked from their use by standard filtering software.

Drawing together conclusions from the session, Kerry Neilson of the TMAP secretariat stated that a balance needed to be found between protecting young people online and trusting them to behave responsibly so that they could use the internet to learn. She added that

safety campaigns had to be appropriate to the audience they targeted and not be considered 'uncool' if young people were to take any notice of them.

In a panel session for editors Celia Duncan of CosmoGirl highlighted the fact that teen magazines were heavily regulated and that they were suffering from increased restrictions on advertising of food. She reminded the audience that high-quality content could only be produced if funding was in place.

Carolyn Hamilton of the Children's Legal Centre highlighted the privacy issues around the Government's move to open up access to family courts. She gave the audience a number of case studies illustrating why allowing the public and possibly the press access to proceedings could result in an invasion of privacy for young people.

Dr Fleur Fisher summarized the proceedings by reminding the audience that young people had to be given the tools to navigate the online world safely and that teen magazines could be a good way of ensuring they had the correct information.

A Beginners Guide to Teen Magazines

Teen magazines, to quote an oft-used phrase, are more than the sum of their parts. They are regularly portrayed in certain sections of society as being frivolous and sensational, or promoting unrealistic images to young people but the same groups which accuse them of this behaviour choose to ignore the great deal of content which plays a valuable educational role for young people. The magazines receive a huge amount of positive feedback from their readers and are increasingly used by schools as a part of their PSHE curriculum.

This section of the TMAP report pulls together only some of the high-quality content available and gives some examples of the feedback received by teen magazines. It is by no means an exhaustive review of the content available but it does give a clear picture of what teens can read in the magazines printed for them.

Teen magazines encourage literacy by providing a variety of interesting source material for readers. These include the articles themselves, short story competitions for readers and regular book reviews, which readers are encouraged to give their feedback on.

Articles in teen magazines can provide role models and address some quite difficult subjects in a way which is accessible to young people. This article from Bliss magazine encourages young people to address the 'grey' areas of moral arguments and take part in email dialogue to continue the debate in a wider forum.



From 'Bliss' by Panini

There are some good examples in teen magazines of articles on managing your money or not getting 'ripped off'. This article from 'Sugar' gives suggestions for ways to earn money. As well as giving advice on part-time work in a way which will appeal to its audience, the magazine also ensures that the rules which apply to working under the age of 16 are made clear.



From 'Sugar' by Hachette Filipacchi

Teen magazines focus regularly on health issues without 'preaching' about the need for healthy eating and regular exercise. 'Sugar' magazine has worked closely with the Food Standards Authority to produce regular articles on healthy eating and exercise, as well as interactive activities such as webchats, in conjunction with FSA nutritionists.

What makes the message from teen magazines more relevant is that they understand what their readers want. They focus on their interests, speak a language which they can relate to and recommend activities which will be most appealing to them.

The focus of this 'CosmoGirl' article on exercise is on feeling good in the new fashions for Spring by getting fit.



'CosmoGirl' by The National Magazine Company

Teen magazines also encourage good emotional health. This article in 'Sugar' shows young people who are comfortable with their 'different' bodies, and puts forward the message that you do not need the 'perfect 10' body to be confident and to succeed.



From 'Sugar' by Hachette Filipacchi

Campaigns on challenging issues such as bullying are often covered by teen magazines. The National Children's Bureau has good links with TMAP member publications and works with teen magazines to highlight the anti-bullying week campaign it runs in conjunction with the NSPCC.

Problem pages in teen magazines focus on a variety of issues which are important to teens. These range from friendships and school work to relationships with parents and health issues.

The problems are treated seriously and are responded to by counsellors who are trained in the area they answer questions on. The numbers of helplines for some of the issues discussed are displayed prominently. Any teen magazine which gives advice on sexual issues is covered by the Teen Magazine Arbitration Panel's guidelines. Additionally, several of the teen magazines run campaigns to help young people make sensible decisions relating to sexual issues and write regular articles highlighting initiatives such as the Sugar 'S.A.F.E*' campaign and the Bliss 'Be Sexy Be Sussed' campaign.



'Bliss' and 'Sugar' Campaigns

Teen magazines receive regular feedback from their readers covering every sort of subject. Here is a selection of the letters received by TMAP member publications.

On sexual advice:

I love your mag.

It's the best all my friends read it. I like how you campaign safe sex. My friend had a baby at 14. I guess she didn't read your mag.

Parris

I love you're mag. All my mates read it and we learn so much about sex that our parents refuse to talk about. We really appreciate it and send our love. xOx

Kelly

I loved your pressured into sex article you had in the last issue! It made me rethink having sex with my boyfriend!

Hayley

On self-esteem:

This month (July), I like that its more rock n roll and not all Chavs. Everyone has to look and act the same, otherwise you get named an Emo or a Goth. I've always listened to my music and dressed how I want to and so have my friends, till recently, some of my closest friends have started smoking and dressing a certain way just to fit in with the crowd, and it's proved to me how weak they are. Not everyone needs to look and act the same! Be proud of what you are and try to stand out from the crowd that's what I say! And stop trying to be what people want you to be, woo power to the people lol!

Faye

Just before Christmas I fell ill and had to go into hospital, luckily I came out in time for Christmas and now I realise how precious life is. I have now fully recovered and after a month of feeling sorry for myself I have realised: life is great! I am in good health, in full education and live in a society of safety and fun. I say embrace life, appreciate everything- especially your friends and family who care about you most. Remember, whether you're fat, thin, spotty, smelly, pretty, ugly- you'll be ok and the journey of life has just begun!

Bryony

Thank you for all you're inspiring 'sorted life' posts, they have helped me with some of my problems as some of them I wanted to write in and ask about. Thank you for your help your magazine is ace and help's me loadz xxxxxxxxxxxx

Megan

I love your magazine! I want to say thank you. Thank you for giving me mountains of confidence to be myself. Thank you for showing me that real happiness comes from believing that you are as gorgeous as heck no matter what anyone says.

Thank you for letting me see that life is as fabby as anything if you are POSITIVE! So basically THANK YOU!

And for all those gals out there who look at themselves and think what a load of fudge, I couldn't be like that- then go and listen to the song by Baz Luhrman "Everybody's Free (to wear sunscreen)"- cos it shows you that proper happiness comes from doing what you love. YOU love. Thanks for rocking my totally positive world. Love hugs and sparkle from Sarah

Reading your 'What it feels like to...' series is really inspiring, From each story you can learn something, whether it is confidence tips or how to beat bullies.

Taniqua

After reading 'Do lads really like dumb girls?' made me realise that intelligence rules and it is nothing to be ashamed off. I am not super clever but I do get good results and always thought that lads don't care but now that is all changed.

Anon

I'm soo pleased about your problem pages ! I always feel different from everyone else and they help me realise I'm not a freak and a lot of people go through the same thing so thank you!!

Lily

On campaigning

I just wanna say that your magazine is the best mag around. From the hilarious cringes and up-to-the-second fashion, to the informational problem pages and totally true real life stories- its amazing how you brighten up the lives of teen girls around the country. Also thank you for the "Animals dying for a good time" article (May). It showed me and my friends that you guys also care about the suffering in our world and show us how we can stop it. Thank you so much!

Ella

... and just on life in general

hey i know you probably get alot of mail so ill try and keep this short i find your magazine a gr8 help 2 me wen im down the cringes make me laugh when im confuzzed or have a problem the help pages r there when im happy ive got d fashion pages which rock myt i add bliss gives a sense of safety n reliablity n helps a lot of ppl my problems r soooooo much smaller den dat of ovas i mean hello i just finished reading the may issue n i feel so sorry for the sisters and the gal sold into prostitution but my problems r mine n in my world they do kinda suck thnx 4 readin this n takin your time on this reader much appreciated
rach Xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

TMAP Guidelines

The TMAP Guidelines for coverage of sexual subject matter in teenage magazines

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Guidelines are the outcome of discussions between publishers of teenage magazines (represented through the Periodical Publishers Association [PPA]), retailers of teenage magazines (represented by, among others, the British Retail Consortium [BRC], National Federation of Retail Newsagents [NFRN], the Multiple Newsagents Association [MNA]) and magazine editors (represented by the British Society of Magazine Editors [BSME]).
- 1.2 The Guidelines cover the editorial content of teenage magazines. The final arbiter of the meaning and interpretation of the Guidelines is the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP), to whom any complaints relating to alleged infractions of the Guidelines should be addressed.
- 1.3 There is a separate code of practice relating to advertisements, which is produced by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), which is the final arbiter in the meaning of the code of practice. The ASA deals with complaints about advertisement content.

SCOPE

- 2.1 The Guidelines apply to magazines published more than once a year when it is apparent that young people aged under 16 comprise 25 per cent or more of the total readership.
- 2.2 A list of such titles will be drawn up on the basis of the latest available figures over a 12-month period, using the reports of the Youth Target Group Index survey (Youth TGI) or other figures or bases accepted by TMAP.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

- 3.1 Readers will always be encouraged to take a responsible attitude to sex and contraception, and where relevant to seek advice from General Practitioners and other professionals.
- 3.2 If sex is being discussed, then safer sex will be highlighted and encouraged wherever relevant.
- 3.3 Where under-age sex or sexual abuse is discussed it will be clearly stated as illegal in the UK. Under-age sex will be discouraged and the age of consent clearly stated.
- 3.4 Editorial advice will be given in good faith, with relevant professional organisations contacted for guidelines and named within the editorial if appropriate.

- 3.5 Readers will be encouraged to seek support from parents, guardians or other responsible adults wherever relevant. The emotional consequences of sexual activity will be highlighted where relevant.
- 3.6 The editorial content of the magazines will reflect the typical concerns of the magazine's readership, with advice given to provide readers with relevant and responsible answers to their concerns.
- 3.7 It is recognised that magazines have an important role to play in the field of sex education for, and emotional development of, teenagers.
- 3.8 The principles set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.7 will apply regardless of the country of origin of any story or material or reference within articles falling within the scope of these Guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Publishers of teenage magazines containing subject matter on sexual issues are responsible for ensuring that editorial policies for their magazines fall within the Guidelines.
- 4.2 Editorial policies with regard to the publication of subject matter on sexual issues will be formally recorded by the publishers. All editorial staff employed to work on such subject matter will be instructed on the magazine's editorial policy and informed of any changes to that policy if relevant.
- 4.3 Editorial instruction will incorporate clear examples of appropriate and inappropriate editorial treatment of subject matter on sexual issues.
- 4.4 Each magazine will appoint an independent consultant of good standing to advise the editor on an ongoing basis with regard to sexual, emotional and moral issues.
- 4.5 An annual audit will be conducted by the Teenage Magazines Arbitration Panel to ensure published material (those titles listed as a result of 2.2 plus any other titles apparently aimed at the defined readership) falls within the Guidelines.
- 4.6 All teenage magazines containing problem pages will ensure that published letters are based on genuine letters received by those magazines.
- 4.7 All published responses to letters on problem pages will be provided by relevant, professionally qualified advisors. Relevant qualifications will be approved by the Teenage Magazines Arbitration Panel.

RETAIL DISPLAY

- 5.1 Publishers will advise distributors and retailers of the appropriate display category of their magazines.

- 5.2 Distributors and retailers should ensure that displays of magazines reflect the perceived age of purchasers, as communicated by publishers.

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