



Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel

ANNUAL REPORT

2004



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Chairman's foreword

When the Teenage magazine Arbitration Panel was set up in 1996, a continuing high profile for the role was not anticipated.

TMAP was the industry's practical response to Tory MP Peter Luff's 1996 demand in a parliamentary debate that teenage girls' magazines should be age stamped on the front cover. This impractical and unenforceable proposal seems to have lost none of its potency over the years, and was recently recycled by a Deputy Head Master from Nottingham, who proposed it again at the annual conference of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers in April 2004.

This led to a flurry of media activity, with over 40 radio interviews being undertaken by Clare Hoban (then PPA's Head of Legal Affairs and TMAP secretariat) in addition to those by individual magazine editors. As TMAP Chair I was a guest on BBC's Breakfast TV and a half hour radio Five Live programme devoted to teenage girls' magazines, their sexual content and the issue of age-stamping.

In response to a parliamentary question, Tessa Jowell, Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, commended both teenage girls' magazines as a reliable source of information on sexual issues and TMAP's role in ensuring they advise young people responsibly.

Continued pressure from the ATL led to Margaret Hodge, Minister for Children, Young People and Families commenting favourably on the independent role of TMAP and its non-partisan process. This was followed in June by Lord McIntosh (Minister for Culture and Heritage at the DCMS) writing to the PPA to confirm that the government had no plans to enforce age restrictions on sale of magazines in this sector.

This would appear to be an evidence-based response by the Government as academic research¹ reveals that young people are more "media-savvy" than anxious adults perceive. Teenagers are very aware of society's prevailing sexual attitudes derived from the wide variety of media easily available to them. They are bombarded by sexual images, and reports of the sexual exploits of the famous. Teenagers' attitudes were found to be a complex response to their families, their schools and the society they live in.

In May 2004 the Sexual Offences Act 2003 came into force. The PPA and the magazine industry had lobbied successfully to amend clause 14 to prevent criminalising the advisory and educational role of magazine agony aunts,

¹-Buckingham, D. and Bragg, S. (2003) *Young People, Media and Personal Relationships*, London, Institute of Education (sponsored by ASA, BBFC, BBC, BSC and ITC).

teachers and youth workers. However, in legislating to protect under-age youngsters from their sexually predatory peers, the Bill's drafters were unable to find a legal form of words that both protected vulnerable young people against peer abuse, and yet did not criminalise early mutual teenage behaviour. Thus Clause 13 remains an area where normal teenage behaviour is categorised as unlawful, despite energetic and well-informed lobbying by a coalition of organisations concerned with the protection of children's rights.

The panel has observed the industry's response over the year to well-publicised and validated concerns about the sexual health of young people. We have noted in particular articles in the magazines on sexually transmitted diseases, contraception and the dangerous impact of alcohol on risky sexual behaviour, all getting over sound information, accessibly presented.

I was able to raise the need for swiftly responsive, confidential sexual health services for young people when the Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP, Leader of the Conservative party, attended a lunchtime Q & A session at PPA offices in Spring 2004. Hopefully this will be realistically addressed in their health policy development.

Research over many years has consistently shown that young people hesitate to seek such advice if confidentiality is not assured. The panel is concerned with the destruction of young people's privacy following the implementation of the Children Act 2004, which will set up a database with extensive details of every child under 16 (and their parents/guardians) - all without their knowledge or consent. This would appear to be at odds with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

An associated concern is the imminent NHS Care Record Service and the current lack of information as to how sexual health records are to be handled. For example, will attendance at STD clinics remain confidential, protected by law as at present, or will those records be transmitted to the proposed NHS national data spine, and be accessed by any future health and social care team? Will family planning records be accessible by all future providers of health services?

The panel is concerned that the success of the government's vital policy drive to improve the sexual health of young people risks failure if these issues of confidentiality and privacy are not addressed in policy, implemented in practice, and shared with both public and health professionals.

After careful consultation the TMAP Guidelines have been amended this year. It seemed to the panel that in relation to magazines where 25% or more of their readers are under 16 (formerly 15), our task should be aligned with the law on the age of consent (see Annex 4).

The health of young people remains high on the government's agenda, with a major focus on sexual health. The teenage girls' magazine industry continues to be seen as both reliable and respectful by its readers – a voice to be

trusted. This unique position is recognised by politicians as supplementing information from both school and parents. The real choices available to young women faced with the life-crisis of an unplanned pregnancy are rarely dealt with in an unbiased way in school sex education programmes. With abortion and adoption frequently ignored, keeping the baby is often the only option explored. Sadly, the tabloid press shows little respect for the young women undertaking this huge task, the teenage mother is generally stigmatised in the media and in much of society.

All too often research shows young people feel let down by the educational system, and even by their parents, as they struggle to develop knowledge and understanding of their own sexuality, to formulate their own personal values, to become socially confident and competent in their relationships. But teenagers continue to find teen magazines' light-hearted fun tone, allied with accurate information and relevant true-life stories, a cheering beacon in the adult world of mixed messages.

TMAP continues to monitor these magazines' sexual content and adjudicate on the currently few formal complaints.

The panel has worked effectively this year and we have welcomed several new members including importantly a teacher, Henrike Tjoonk. I thank all panel members for their thoughtful deliberations, and Roger Ingham for alerting us to current research. It has been a privilege to chair the panel through what has been a politically active year, with legislation that has the potential to impact profoundly on the lives of young people.

It was with delight that the panel learned that Clare Hoban had achieved the prestigious bronze award of *The Lawyer* magazine's annual best practice awards in the legal profession, for her work with TMAP on the Sexual Offences Bill.

Finally, I would like to thank Nick Mazur, Clare Hoban, and Victoria McEvedy of PPA for their energy and commitment to the work of the TMAP secretariat throughout 2004, and to welcome David Thomas to the TMAP secretariat as PPA's director of Public & Legal Affairs.

DR. 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 under 16 years of age.

The Panel

The Panel consists of representatives from the fields of child public health, teenage sexual health, sex education, research, law and publishing and is chaired by Dr Fleur Fisher.

In 2004 the Panel was expanded to include one further publisher seat, and an additional seat for a non-publisher.

The TMAP secretariat, from November 2004, is run by David Thomas, director of public and legal affairs for the PPA.

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.

Dr Diana Ernaelsteen CBE

Dr. Diana Ernaelsteen CBE is a paediatrician. From 1983 to 1995 she was senior medical officer to the Department of Health and senior medical adviser to the Department of Education and Her Majesty's Inspectorate (OFSTED). Diana was consultant medical adviser to the Department for Education and Employment from 1995 until 2002. She is honorary senior consultant

paediatrician to the Tavistock Clinic and was previously chairman of the National Association for the Education of Sick Children.

Dr Roger Ingham

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

Dr Ingham 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 currently a member of the Government's Independent Advisory Group for the Teenage Pregnancy Unit and was a member of the Sexual Health and HIV National Strategy core group. He was consultant for the Channel 4 series "Generation Sex", and a survey he directed was featured extensively in the first of the programmes (Sex from 8 to 18).

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.

Lysanne Currie

Lysanne Currie has been editorial director of *Sugar* magazine since January 1999, overseeing *Sugar* (UK), *Sugar* (Germany), *16* magazine and new magazine launches. Since 2002 she has also been editorial director of *ELLEgirl*. Lysanne joined *Sugar* in December 1996 as deputy editor, moving on to launch *16* magazine in Germany. She has freelanced on a wide range of titles from *Melody Maker* to *more!* magazine, joining *19* magazine in 1992 as a junior sub-editor and moving up to become features editor.

TMAP has welcomed a number of new Panel members since the last Annual Report.

Henrike Tjoonk

Henrike Tjoonk has been a teacher at Ricards Lodge High School since 1997, which is a girl's comprehensive school in the London Borough of Merton. Henrike is Head of the PSHE / Careers and Citizenship Department and she is also a Year 11 tutor. Sex and Relationship Education plays an important part in the PSHE curriculum.

Rimi Atwal

Rimi Atwal has worked in the magazine industry for ten years across both consumer and contract publishing companies working in sectors as diverse as dance music, extreme sports, health & beauty, TV soaps and youth. Rimi joined Emap in 2001 as Publishing Director of *Smash Hits* and *Mixmag* and in 2002 launched *Sneak*, Emap's unique teen weekly gossip and lifestyle magazine. Her current role as Group Publishing Director of Youth includes portfolio responsibility for all three of Emap's teen titles - *Smash Hits*, *Sneak* and *Bliss* as well as *Mixmag*.

Lynsey Bushell

Lynsey has worked in the magazine industry for just over 5 years, starting her career at Marketforce where she had responsibility for the women's weeklies connect portfolio including, *Now*, *Woman* and *Woman's Own* and the specials brand extensions. Lynsey moved to her current role as Assistant Publisher on *Mizz* in June 2002 also working on *Mizz* specials and brand licensing range. Lynsey also carries out work across the connect women's weeklies portfolio.

Alfie Lewis

Alfie Lewis started his career in magazines as an ad sales exec in the Computing division at VNU. Since then he has worked at Redwood Publishing and for the past 10 years at BBC Worldwide, working at some time or other on all of their Youth and Children's titles. His current role is Publisher of the BBC's Teenage titles, including *Top Of The Pops Magazine*. He is learning to play Bluegrass banjo, to the embarrassment of his friends and 4 year old son.

Judith Secombe

Judith embarked on her media career in 1987 working for business magazine *Media Week*. Since joining The National Magazine Company in 1996 Judith has worked on a variety of titles including *Company*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Prima* and *Best* and for the last two years has been Publisher of *CosmoGIRL!* and *Cosmopolitan Hair & Beauty*.

Two Panel members said goodbye during 2004. TMAP thanks them for their considerable contribution over the past year.

Sharon Christal

Sharon Christal has been editor of IPC Media's *Mizz* magazine since March 2001. She initially joined *Hair* as an editorial assistant and was promoted to deputy editor before moving to *Mizz*. Alongside her role as editor, Sharon heads both the 'Specials' strategy and the brand licensing programme for *Mizz* which includes watches, fashion, calendars, and cosmetics.

Nicki Brown

Nicki Brown has been involved with the magazine industry for 13 years and has worked for both business to business and consumer publishing companies. Nicki has been with Emap for eight years and during that time has published magazines in the health, homes, parenting and most recently youth market. Her current role is youth group publishing director with specific responsibilities for *Bliss* and *J17*. Nicki also deputises for the managing director and helps run the Emap Elan business. She has a 4 year old daughter.

Complaints

There were no complaints in 2004 that fell under the adjudicatory remit of TMAP.

There were however two non-adjudicatory complaints, which the panel reviewed and commented upon.

1. *Bliss*

The Panel discussed an article in *Bliss* in which a 14-year old model was made over to look 19 in the light of correspondence to TMAP from the parent of a reader.

The Panel noted this raised concerns by crossing the 16 years threshold given the target readership of the magazine.

The Panel agreed that trying to define appropriate words or phrases that editors can and cannot use was not the function of the Panel, nor was it a desirable approach.

The Panel view was such that whilst this was a non-adjudicatory issue, there were concerns about some aspects of this article.

2. *Smash Hits* Advertisement for *Bliss*

The Panel discussed a complaint regarding an advertisement of *Bliss* within *Smash Hits*, wherein a younger reader had been upset by the *Bliss* cover advertised, in particular a reference to a dead baby kept in the fridge.

The Panel was concerned about the particular storylines on the cover, which included references to self-harming, and indirectly to possible abuse, recognising the long-term physical and psychological damage this could cause. Sucking blood also raised health awareness issues such as HIV. It was suggested that all headlines taken together could lead to normalisation of views.

The Panel noted that the TMAP remit covered editorial content, not advertising, which came under the remit of the Advertising Standards Authority.

The Panel noted that no complaints had been received regarding the *Bliss* cover itself, and it was agreed that the EMAP email response to the above complainant was very fair.

Sector information

New launches in 2004

Sorted was launched in January 2004. It is described by its editor as "sharp, smart, argumentative, funny and irreverent" and aims to attract a readership previously ignored by the publishing world with 12 - 16 year old teenage boys the target audience.

Hey Girl! was launched in September and contains the exploits of the Powerpuff Girls in comic strip format combined with real-life photography. Target readership is girls aged 6 - 12 years.

ElleGirl became a monthly in 2004.

UWIWGI (You Want It We Got It) was launched locally in Chichester in July 2004, but has just gone nationwide. The magazine claims to buck the traditional magazine approach that targets girls and boys as separate markets, and is aimed at 7 to 11 year olds.

Dare was launched in October 2003, but closed eight months later in May 2004. Target audience was 11 – 15 year old girls.

Research and publications in 2004

Dr Roger Ingham, director of the Centre for Sexual Health Research, University of Southampton, member of TMAP and the Independent Advisory Group of the Teenage Pregnancy Unit writes:-

For this year's brief summary of recent research I focus on just two areas of work that are highly relevant to young people in relation to their sexual health and well-being. They each attract much media interest, some of which is poorly informed, highly misleading and frankly unhelpful. The areas are abstinence-only education and variations in abortion choices across the country.

The **abstinence-only education** movement has been attracting a great deal of attention in the UK, partly as a result of the summer visit of an organisation called *The Silver Ring Thing*. This is one of many organisations established in the USA to encourage the view that abstinence until marriage is the only way to keep clear of any sexually transmitted infections and/or unplanned conceptions. The movement as a whole has received a massive boost of funding from the USA Government over the past few years to support work in schools as well as through youth organisations, churches, etc. The media attention gained by the summer visit, as well as the claims made by the movement in their well-oiled publicity machines, encourages some UK national and local politicians, as well as some small (but very vocal) groups here, to suggest that the approach be adopted in this country. This, of course, would run counter to the Government's current strategies in relation to sexual health and teenage pregnancy.

So, what it is about and does it work? These are not easy issues to summarise since there are many different organisations with rather different approaches, and actually 'measuring' their impact is a very challenging task. The common elements of nearly all approaches – and the key criteria for USA Government funding – are stressing the need for complete abstinence from sexual contact and detailed (mis)information on the unreliability of all forms of contraception. In other words, the message being heard by many young people in the USA is that there are no safe alternatives to abstinence. A recent review by Democrat Senator Waxman, however, provided a large number of examples of programmes in which the information being provided was simply wrong.

The issue of whether the approach 'works' is a highly contentious one – of course, sexual activity is such a complex behaviour that to imagine that any one programme would have a major effect is probably much too simplistic. Publication of a major review commissioned by the US Government has been mothballed, which has led some researchers to suspect that it does not show what the Government wanted it to show.

An alternative way of assessing the impact of the approach is to see what happens to those young people who sign a 'virginity pledge' as they get older. Richard Bearman of Columbia University has been doing just this, and early in 2004 he published some important results. These were based on data from a longitudinal study that has been collecting data on various aspects of health from about 12000 young people for over six years. By comparing those who reported that they had signed the 'pledge' with those who had not signed it he was able to draw some useful conclusions.

First, almost 90 percent of those who signed the pledge during their early teenage years broke it; in other words, they did indeed have pre-marital sex. Second, they did start having sex somewhat later than those who had not signed the pledge. Third, they did not just have sex with the person they would eventually marry – they tended to have rather more partners once they had started, almost as if they were 'catching up' on their non-signing contemporaries. Fourth, the likelihood of having a sexually transmitted infection (as measured from biological tests rather than by self-report) was as high amongst 'pledgers' as it was amongst 'non-pledgers'. Finally, in areas where more than 20 percent of young people had signed the pledge, the rates of STIs were actually twice as high than in other areas.

In such a survey, it is difficult to know precisely what has had the effects found, given the complexity of the area. However, it does seem that making an early commitment to abstinence until marriage is clearly not effective and that in areas where there is a high level of supposed commitment to abstinence contraception use is poor. Bearman explains the higher rates of STIs in some areas by pointing out the difficulties faced by young people who have made a public pledge in using local services for testing and treatment.

So, despite all the hype and claims, the research available so far does suggest quite clearly that there are no advantages to adopting an abstinence-only approach, and that providing information and good services is still the best way forward. It is true that teenage pregnancy rates have been falling in the USA over the past few years, but this could be for all sorts of reasons other than the growth of the abstinence movement. Fewer young people having sex could be explained by an increase in young women's ability to resist coercion (which requires empowerment skills to be encouraged), and (over and above this) lower conception rates can be explained by improved services for young people and improved use of effective contraception.

The study on **variations in abortion choices** was carried out over two years by some colleagues and myself at the Centre for Sexual Health Research, with funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and the final report was launched in the summer². The focus was on exploring some reasons why there is so much variation in the *proportions* of conceptions that

² Lee, E., Clements, S., Ingham, R. and Stone, N. (2004) *A Matter of Choice? Explaining National Variation in Teenage Abortion and Motherhood*, York, York Publishing Services (and available in pdf file from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation website – www.jrf.org.uk).

end in termination; in other words, not just the rates per thousand women who get pregnant or have an abortion, but the percentages of those who get pregnant who choose one or other option.

The study involved some detailed statistical analyses of data on conceptions and outcomes, surveys of local health commissioners, teenage pregnancy coordinators and others, and over one hundred detailed interviews with young women who had early pregnancies and either chose a termination or continued their pregnancy.

Without going into detail on the statistics, the results can be summarised as showing that there is large variation by geographical area, with those areas that have high rates of teenage conceptions also tending to have lower abortion proportions. In other words, in those areas where more teenage conceptions occur, a smaller percentage of those women opt for abortion, and vice versa. What characterises these different areas is the level of deprivation as assessed through census data – areas with greater levels of deprivation have higher conception rates and lower abortion proportions. The variation is huge, with the percentages of under-18 conceptions that end in abortion ranging from about 20 percent to about 75 percent. There also appeared to be an impact of service availability – higher abortion proportions were found in areas with more accessible services for young people.

The detailed interviews revealed a lot about some of the reasons for these variations in outcomes. There were generally strong anti-abortion attitudes amongst most young people prior to their becoming pregnant, but these views did not necessarily affect the eventual decision about what to do when they did get pregnant. This was highly influenced by their life circumstance at the time. Generally, if they had aspirations for higher education or a decent job, then they opted for abortion. If they had few prospects or plans for the future, then they opted to carry on with the pregnancy (indeed, in many cases, having a baby early was reported to have given them a real purpose in life and to have led to increased self-esteem, despite the often difficult financial and living arrangements they had to endure). Some of the young people, in making the decision, were influenced by their parents or their partners (if they had one) but insisted that the final decision had been their own in nearly all cases.

Amongst the many other findings that came out of the work, two deserve attention. One was that very few of the young women had really thought about – and/or had the chance to discuss - options prior to their becoming pregnant. Most schools were reported to have ignored the issues, although some were reported as having used outside speakers from pro-life organisations to 'preach' about the sin of abortion. Few offered the chance to discuss alternative viewpoints, to consider the issues from the women's point of view; instead, the decisions about what to do were generally made after the 'crisis' of pregnancy had occurred (in nearly all cases, quite unexpectedly).

The other is that reports on how they were dealt with during the procedure itself varied widely. In the more specialist agencies (such as bpas – often paid by the local NHS to carry out the procedures on their behalf) the reports were generally much more positive – being treated with respect, not being judged, and so on. In some of the other sites, we received many negative reports of staff being somewhat condescending, making negative comments and criticisms, and so on.

The final report concludes with some clear recommendations – for example, better training for providers would be very helpful to increase the respect given to young women regarding their choices, making the process itself somewhat easier to navigate, and more mature attention being given to the topic in school-based sex education programmes.

DR ROGER INGHAM

TMAP events

The **TMAP Annual Forum** was held on 20 October 2004.

Tackling issues such as peer pressure, poor communication, poor uptake on contraception and alcohol abuse, are areas in which the Teenage Pregnancy Unit can work in partnership with teenage magazines, according to its representative Alison Hadley. At a time when STIs are increasing and the teenage pregnancy rate is unacceptably high, Hadley said it was essential to "get messages into the mainstream".

Addressing an audience of some 30 delegates at the forum, Alison described the Unit's work both in terms of advertising in magazines and on the radio, and working with editorial teams on features that underlined the topline messages of the campaign. The Government's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, launched in 1999, aims to halve the rate of under eighteen conceptions by 2010 and increase to 60 per cent the participation of teenage parents in education and training.

Alison called on magazines to continue to cover issues such as peer pressure, maintaining a healthy balance of talking about the issue without adding to the pressure. She also asked delegates if they could begin to bridge the gap between children and parents through editorial and include a 'package of risk management' into magazines, reinforcing the message that alcohol leads to unprotected sex and higher levels of regret.

Alison Hadley was joined by Patricia Hindmarsh of Marie Stopes International, TMAP panel member Dr Roger Ingham of Southampton University, Anna Martinez of the Sex Education Forum, Simon Blake of the National Children's Bureau, and the forum moderator, TMAP chairman Dr Fleur Fisher.

All speakers agreed that the role of teenage magazines in disseminating information to young people was essential and criticised the conservative backlash, particularly prevalent in the US with the 'abstinence' movement. Dr Ingham described how a small minority of people in the UK had an undue influence and advised teenage magazines to be confident in terms of sensible coverage of these issues. He said magazines had to show they were supportive of the rights of young people.

In conclusion, Dr Fisher said society need to value and recognise the next generation, respect its rights and encourage self-awareness - areas in which teenage magazines remain an influential medium.

TMAP October 2004

ANNEX 1

Contact:

David Thomas

Secretariat
The Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP)
Periodical Publishers Association
Queens House
28 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6JR

Tel: **020 7405 0819**

Internet: **www.tmap.org.uk**

Email: **david.thomas@ppa.co.uk**

ANNEX 2

Youth TGI³ Figures 2004

Title	Average age	% of readership under 16 - Youth
<i>Mizz</i>	12	91%
<i>Smash Hits</i>	12	84%
<i>Top of the Pops</i>	12	85%
<i>Shout</i>	13	84%
<i>TV Hits</i>	13	73%
<i>Sneak</i>	13	78%
<i>Dare</i>	12	-
<i>Its Hot!</i>	12	86%
<i>Bliss</i>	15	71%
<i>Sugar</i>	14	73%
<i>CosmoGIRL!</i>	15	66%
<i>ElleGIRL!</i>	n/a	-

Sources: - Youth TGI (Autumn 2004)

3-Youth TGI (7-19s)

Youth TGI is a survey of 7-19 year olds with data released twice a year (Spring and Autumn). In total, about 6,000 interviews are conducted in March-May and October-December each year.

Survey samples are split equally across three age bands, 7-10, 11-14 and 15-19. Elements of the survey are unique to each age group allowing clients to conduct detailed analysis of the youth market in terms of products, brands and media consumption.

ANNEX 3



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 women 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. 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.

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.



TMAP guidance and information

Accurately addressing the legal age of consent

When featuring editorial that addresses sexual activity involving young people under the age of 16 it is important to highlight the legal position and to do so accurately.

The law

In England and Wales, the law on sexual offences has been updated. Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the legal age for young people to consent to have sex remains 16, whether that person is straight, gay or bisexual.

The purpose

The aim of the new law is to improve the protection, safety and rights of young people and make it easier to prosecute people who pressure or force others into having sex they don't want. Forcing someone to have sex is a crime.

Under 16s

Although the age of consent remains at 16, it is not intended that the law should be used to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age, unless it involves abuse or exploitation.

Editors should note that this intention forms part of the guidelines issued to police superintendents as to how they interpret and implement the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The Act can be downloaded from <http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2003/20030042.htm> and the Guidelines from <http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/section7/sexoffencesact2003.htm>

Under the Sexual Offences Act a person under 16 still has the right to confidential advice on contraception, condoms, pregnancy and abortion.

Further information

Contact David Thomas (PPA director of public & legal affairs and TMAP secretariat) on 0207 400 7520 or david.thomas@ppa.co.uk

ANNEX 5

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE COVERAGE OF SEX RELATED ISSUES IN TEENAGE MAGAZINES

Teenage magazines play a valuable role in educating teenagers about life. In particular they are used as a source of information about sexual and other emotional issues. To ensure that teenage magazines continue to take great care in providing accurate and informative advice on sexual matters, the industry including publishers, retailers and editors, have produced a set of Guidelines on how sex related material should be treated.

The Guidelines cover magazines where young women aged under 16 years make up 25 per cent or more of the total magazine readership.

If you are unhappy with an article in a teenage magazine, you can make a complaint in the following way:

- You should firstly write to the editor of the magazine, as it is important for them to know about your concerns.
- If you are not completely satisfied with the response from the editor, you can write to the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP). This panel is made up of experts from the field of law, public health and child health care and development and also the magazine publishers themselves. TMAP is administered by the Periodical Publishers Association (PPA), the industry organization for magazines in the UK.
- All complaints will be carefully considered. If a complaint is clearly not in breach of the Guidelines your letter will be responded to immediately. All other complaints will be considered at TMAP meetings, held quarterly. They will write to let you know when the next meeting is to be held and that they will respond to your complaint at this time.
- If the magazine is considered to be in breach of the Guidelines, TMAP will write to the editor of the relevant magazine to inform them of the breach. A copy of this letter will be sent to you.
- If the magazine is considered to be in breach of the Guidelines, it will be highlighted in TMAP's annual report that will be made available to the Home Office, the publishing industry and other interested parties. You will also be able to obtain a copy.
- There is a separate code for advertising which is supervised and administered by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). The ASA will make the final decisions on any complaints about advertising within teenage magazines.

Examples of teenage magazines regulated by the Guidelines include:

Bliss (Emap Elan)

CosmoGIRL! (The National Magazine Company)

Mizz (IPC Media)

Sugar (Hachette Filipacchi)

Top of the Pops (BBC Magazines)

To contact TMAP or obtain a copy of the Guidelines or Annual Report please write to:

David Thomas
Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel
c/o Periodical Publishers Association (PPA)
Queens House
28 Kingsway
London WC2B 6JR
Tel: 0207 405 0819/Fax: 0207 404 4167

TMAP is a self-regulating body whose remit is to ensure that the Guidelines are adhered to. Breaches are highlighted in a formal way ensuring that mistakes are unlikely to happen again.