



Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel

ANNUAL REPORT

2005

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Chairman's foreword

Despite the paucity of formal complaints for the Panel, 2005 was a busy year. We had direct involvement in the passage of The Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Bill through the Scottish Parliament, we commented on high profile issues of health and sexual protocols that directly affect the readers of teenage magazines, held a highly successful TMAP Forum with a keynote presentation from the Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP, Minister for Children, Young People and Families, and amongst many other engagements, presented at the launch of the Scottish Parliament's sexual health strategy.

Panel Activity

One formal complaint was upheld by the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel during 2005, referring to the sobering account of the experience of a 15 year old Zambian girl forced into prostitution to provide for her family. The article covered the girl contracting HIV, and her subsequent rescue, rehabilitation and treatment through the auspices of a UK-based charity.

The complainant correctly identified the failure to refer in the article to the age of consent in the UK. While that would clearly have been a clumsy intrusion into the narrative, the panel judged that this could and indeed should have been added to the accompanying information panel.

This was the first time in the work of TMAP, that the issue of the differing age of consent in different jurisdictions has been raised. The outcome resulted in the reissuing of the Guidelines with a clarification that the UK age of consent must be included whatever the origin of the story - reflecting the nationality of the readership.

The panel continued to monitor the overall content of teenage magazines, noting useful articles on contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), sexual abuse, and the demands of early single motherhood, (but with few references to other options for young women facing an unplanned pregnancy), and what we considered to be generally helpful responses to readers' problems.

Bliss's "Be Sexy, Be Sussed" campaign, and Cosmo Girls' "Inner Girl" section were both aimed at increasing teenage girls' confidence and knowledge, with a focus on empowerment, so that they can take responsibility for their own lives. In December CosmoGirl! launched a campaign for better sex and relationships education "Just Say Know". Both of the campaigns are featured elsewhere in this annual report.

Whilst teenage pregnancy has fallen, deteriorating sexual health, particularly the incidence of STIs in teenagers, remained a focus of Government concern. The increasing threats to the confidentiality of sexual health services for young people continued to engage the attention of TMAP - research having repeatedly shown that confidentiality is a prime requisite of teenagers, if they are to use the sexual health services in their own or any other location.

The year was marked by a series of legislative proposals in both Westminster and Edinburgh. The potential to criminalise journalists on teenage girls' magazines and their readers, together with teachers, counsellors, youth workers and health professionals, could have been the outcome. Seeing these as serious threats to both the health of individual young people and to the public health, TMAP collaborated with other agencies in highlighting our concerns.

Scotland

The Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Bill 2005 reached the Scottish Parliament on 1 April. TMAP liaised with the PPA Scottish Office developing amendments to the poorly drafted Clause 13, which effectively criminalised all early consensual relationships with a wide definition of "sexual offence" which included non-sexual touching and kissing as well as more overt sexual contact.

I was honoured to be asked to speak at the launch in April of the Scottish Parliament's sexual health strategy entitled "Respect and Responsibility" on 1st April. I developed the theme as young peoples' need for their confidences to be treated with respect, but also focused on the responsibility of the influential audience of teachers, youth and healthcare staff (with a light sprinkling of parliamentarians) to bring all pressure to bear to amend Clause 13 to prevent the criminalisation of all early consensual relationships. Worryingly only one person in the hall had apparently recognised the implications for young people of this Bill. In the event, the clause remained un-amended by the Scottish Parliament.

TMAP was also concerned that magazine journalists and health professionals could be constrained from giving important sexual advice to Scottish teenagers as a result of this legislation being passed in the Scottish Parliament.

If left as read, Clause 2(3)(d) allowed application for Risk of Sexual Harm Order (RSHO) to be made for:

Communicating with a child, where any part of the communication is sexual.

Subsequent breach of the RSHO would be an offence and on conviction on indictment the offender could be imprisoned for up to 5 years.

The Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP) was in correspondence with the deputy minister for justice in Scotland outlining our concerns about the potential harm the bill could cause. If taken literally, an RSHO could have been applied to magazine editorial staff who write '10 best kissing tips' or to agony aunt columns advising worried teenagers about sexual problems, as well as those providing support and protection for young people in the teaching and health professions.

On the eve of the Bill's final reading in June, David Thomas, as the TMAP secretariat and director of legal and public affairs at PPA, responded to a letter from the deputy justice minister, which commented that Chief Constables would rule on whether an RSHO should be applied in a particular case, saying:

"I retain considerable concerns as to allowing Chief Constables to interpret the regulations, rather than there being a clear provision on the face of the Bill to permit the giving of advice where it is intended for the benefit of the child."

At the final debate in the Scottish Parliament on 2 June, we did not make the face of the Bill - which was always going to be very difficult given the late start to our campaign, but we did achieve a very similar result with this on the record statement by the deputy minister for justice, Hugh Henry:

"...to do with concerns expressed in relation to sex education, sexual health advice or indeed what may be included in some teenage magazines, and the fear that teachers, doctors and journalists or editors might be caught by the provisions in the bill.

I want to put it on record and to give the assurance that groups or individuals communicating with a child about sexual matters for the purposes of sex education or health education will not result in an application for a risk of sexual harm order. However, I would not want that to be taken as carte blanche for irresponsible and inappropriate activity, either by any individual in those professions or by any groups. Responsible people behaving in a responsible manner and acting appropriately for the purposes of their profession would not be exposed to the risk of an application for a risk of sexual harm order.”

The explicit inclusion of teenage magazines, and the references to editors and journalists acting responsibly and appropriately for the purposes of their profession, was a great result for TMAP and for common sense.

Health

Disturbingly, the rate of increase in STIs continues to be most evident in young women aged 15-19 and young men aged 20-25.

In screening studies, 10% of young women under 25 were found to be infected with Chlamydia, with its high risk of silent tubal infection with subsequent increased incidence of both infertility and life-threatening tubal pregnancy.

The Government’s aim to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy was revealed to have some success with a 10% drop in the overall pregnancy rate of teenage girls since the TPU was set up in 1997, and the multiple strands of the strategy developed and implemented.

However, as research reveals (and see also Roger Ingham’s report on page 18), the results vary widely over different parts of the country, from the satisfying 35% drop in some very deprived areas outside London, contrasting with unaltered or even slightly raised rates in some London boroughs. The link shown between larger falls in teen pregnancy rates and well-established school-based sex and relationships education with accessible and youth-friendly contraceptive services is significant. For the first time, the Department of Health (DH) has set targets for sexual health for all Strategic Health Authorities, Trusts and Primary Care Trusts, though without ring-fenced funding. It is good to see that concerns about sexual health are not focussed only on teenagers.

Protocols

Within Government, departmental responsibilities were recently reorganised, with the Teenage Pregnancy Unit moving from the Department of Health (DH) to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

A new draft of the guidelines for multi-agencies working in cases of suspected child abuse (again previously emanating from the DH), was released in September by the DfES.

Whilst there was much that was useful, there was universal alarm at the chapter on sexual health, which proposed using a protocol which would demand that any professional should formally assess all under 18 year olds who confided in them and who were judged to be, or likely to be, in a sexual relationship. In the situation of any suspected abuse, the protocol set out that both partners should be referred to the police, who in turn would keep such 'soft' data permanently on their police database, whether or not charges were laid, and this information would be shared within the wide group of agencies concerned with child protection.

During September, David Thomas and I attended an urgently convened meeting of some twenty concerned organisations, where it was decided to develop a joint statement that the governing bodies of our varying organisations could sign as reflecting their policy on this issue. We also agreed to raise the finance from our organisations to commission a legal opinion on the proposals from an expert Human Rights lawyer. A joint statement was released, and sent to parliamentarians and ministers. A further statement was also prepared on behalf of the joint signatories and presented by Baroness Simon to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Human Rights.

At the annual TMAP Forum on October 12th the crowded audience were fortunate to be addressed by the Minister for Children, Young People and Families, the Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP. A short summary of the Minister's presentation can be found in the TMAP Annual Forum report on page 23.

The Minister spoke of the value placed on the continuing contribution that teenage girls' magazines make to the provision of accessible accurate information in a format acceptable to young people. She was concerned with the "myth" that a majority of under-16s are sexually active, spoke of the need to emphasise the benefits of delaying sexual debut with encouragement to seek advice before first becoming sexually active, and the importance of

condom use to cut the troubling levels of teenage STIs. She admitted that school sex and relationships education remains “patchy”, and looked for new materials to empower young people to resist the pressure to have sex.

The Minister was questioned by the well-informed and concerned audience on the proposed new DfES guidance. There were comments that it seemed to cut across the DH’s long efforts to improve teenage sexual health. Its necessity was queried in the light of the helpful DH guidance published in July 2004, on the confidentiality of teenage sexual health services. The Minister replied that she was awaiting the full results of consultation before taking any decisions.

Even mandatory reporting to police of those sexually active young people under-thirteen is not a sure fire way to catch abusers. It can often take a long time for any young person to trust professionals enough to tell even a significant part of the story, and a detailed history is essential if a case is to be made against an abuser. In the UK, it is statistically rare for children’s complaints of sexual abuse ever to reach the courts.

It may be queried whether parents realise the impact that this potential criminalisation of young consensual relationships will have on future job opportunities. Young people placed on the sex offenders register will be forbidden to work with children in any capacity, regardless of their age or the circumstances which led to their inclusion on the register.

This potential disaster could have been prevented if the many informed representations at the time of the passage of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 had been heeded. The Home Office’s confusion of child abuse with consensual early sexual relationships has now resulted in the DfES producing draft guidelines that breach both professional ethical codes and the law.

It is unique for such a varied group of signatories to develop a joint statement at speed and with such unanimity of views. But the group were well aware that young people will only confide in, and seek advice and treatment from, professionals whom they trust. The aim of the signatories is to prevent the effective destruction of sexual health services for young people by overturning their legal rights to privacy.

In December, a legal opinion by Stephen Grosz of law firm Bindmans, confirmed in detail that the latest DfES guidance contravened Human Rights legislation. The opinion can be downloaded from:

<http://www.tmap.org.uk/cqi-bin/go.pl/news/article.html?uid=10405>.

Parental rights

The publication of the new draft guidelines by the DfES in Autumn of 2005 revived, for older members of the panel, memories of the Gillick court action of twenty years earlier. In this landmark case, Mrs Victoria Gillick took Wisbech HA to court in order to ensure that her daughters could neither receive contraceptive advice, nor abortion counselling, without her knowledge and consent.

That case reached the House of Lords in 1985, with a final judgement of great importance in establishing both the right to confidentiality and the ability of under-16s to give consent for their own medical care if they were judged by their doctors capable of understanding the issues. It also established the duty of the doctors to make every effort to persuade the young person to involve their parents in such decisions if at all possible, whilst recognising the reality that in some families this would be against the young person's best interests. The concept of the Gillick-competent child is now firmly established in medical practice and legal judgements.

In September last year, Sue Axon, a mother of five, took the Department of Health to court, seeking the "right to know" for parents with girls under the age of 16 who were being advised on obtaining an abortion. The arguments centred on the current DH guidelines allowing teenage girls confidential family planning advice, which Axon argued increased the likelihood of them having underage sex and then an abortion, which she opposed. The action was eventually defeated in the High Court.

The DH guidance states that although doctors should try to persuade children to tell their parents or another family member, terminations could take place without parental consent or knowledge if the child was mature and intelligent enough to understand the implications.

Mr Justice Silber ruled that parents had no right to know unless the child decided otherwise. The judge said that "To force a child to tell her parents may lead her to make a decision that she later regrets or seek the assistance of an unofficial abortionist", but added that "Everybody involved in this case is agreed that a young person should be encouraged to involve his or her parents on any decision on sexual matters."

Mr Justice Silber said the Gillick case and other arguments led him to support the July 2004 guidelines, which effectively confirmed the Fraser guidelines laid

down by Lord Fraser in the Gillick case nearly twenty years earlier, see Appendix 1 on page 47.

In summary this has been a year when concerns about the effects of legislation on both the sexual health of young people and the public health has produced an effective informal grouping across a wide professional spectrum, in which TMAP has become involved only after careful consideration.

The definitive DfES guidelines on Working Together to Safeguard Children have been published, and the response to the consultation from the Minister for Children, Young People and Families was awaited with some anxiety. However as both a parent and politician; indications from her Department that responsibility taken for the health and safety of young people would be underpinned by evidence-based principles; together with the Minister's presentation and response to questions at the TMAP Forum, provided some reassurance that our concerns would be heeded - and which proved to be the case.

The magazine industry and its people remain as dynamic as ever. On the one hand we said goodbye to Rimi Atwal, Lysanne Currie, Judith Secombe and right at the end of the year Alfie Lewis; whilst at the same time welcoming Caroline Evans, Duncan Gray, Di Roach and Lisa Smosarski representing the magazine publishers.

We also said goodbye to Dr Diana Ernaelsteen CBE, who has given invaluable wise counsel to TMAP since it was first established in 1997, and to Henrike Tjoonk, who has recently provided helpful insights from a teacher's perspective. I am delighted to welcome Cathy Fallon and Anna Martinez who bring to the Panel their extensive experience in sex and relationships education.

Finally, I would like to thank Nick Mazur, PPA's deputy chief executive, David Thomas and James Evans of PPA, and Kathy Crawford of PPA Scotland, for their energy and commitment to the work of the TMAP secretariat throughout 2005.

DR FLEUR FISHER

January 2006

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.

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 TMAP secretariat is run by David Thomas, director of legal and public 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 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.

New panellists

TMAP has welcomed several new Panel members since the last Annual Report.

Duncan Gray

Duncan has worked in the magazine industry for 8 years having previously worked on consumer events and exhibitions. The majority of his time in magazines was spent working on *Top Gear* magazine as Creative Solutions Manager and as Associate Publisher on a number of launches. He was promoted to Associate Publisher, Teen Magazines with responsibility for *Top Of The Pops* and *It's Hot!* magazines in November 2005.

As a father of three under-4s he has no spare time, his only escape being his treasured iPod on the commute to and from work.

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.

Di Roach

Di has worked in the magazine industry for 10 years, starting her career at Auto Trader as Marketing Assistant. Since joining the National Magazine Company, Di has worked in a variety of roles including Online Manager and Brand Marketing Manager and most recently Assistant Publisher of CosmoGIRL! and Cosmo Hair & Beauty.

Lisa Smosarski

Lisa has worked in the magazine industry for 8 years, and has spent 4 years editing youth brands. She is currently the editor of Bliss magazine, and the former editor of Smash Hits and teen website mykindaplace.com.

Lisa is also the author of The Smart Girl's Guide to Friends.

Past Panellists

The following Panel members sat on TMAP in 2005, but stood down during the year. TMAP thanks them for their considerable contribution in 2005, and wishes them well in their careers:

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 role as Group Publishing Director of Youth included 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 role as Assistant Publisher on *Mizz* in June 2002 also working on *Mizz* specials and brand licensing range. Lynsey carried out work across the connect women's weeklies portfolio.

Lysanne Currie

Lysanne Currie was editorial director of *Sugar* magazine from January 1999, overseeing *Sugar* (UK), *Sugar* (Germany), *16* magazine and new magazine launches. She was also editorial director of *ELLEGirl* from 2002. 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.

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.

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. Alfie's role as Publisher of the BBC's Teenage titles included *Top of the Pops Magazine*.

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 was Publisher of *CosmoGIRL!* and *Cosmopolitan Hair & Beauty*.

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 Relationships Education plays an important part in the PSHE curriculum.

TEENAGE MAGAZINE ARBITRATION PANEL ADJUDICATION

Adjudication date: 12 April 2005

Article

“Forced to sell my body...by my sister” Real Life feature article, March 2005 issue of Sugar magazine.

The article featured a young woman in Zambia who, having lost her father, was forced by her sister and cousin to engage in prostitution at the age of 11 to help feed her family.

The article was written in the first person, and clearly demonstrated the pain and guilt endured by the young girl, but also described how a sexual relationship developed at 13 resulting in pregnancy.

The young woman joined World Vision's Sanduka Project and was helped through the birth. She continues to receive financial help from the Project that has enabled her to support her family, resume schooling and leave prostitution behind - a phase of her life that she clearly regretted. Her cousin has since died of Aids.

At the end of the article Atomic Kitten and one of the magazine staff were featured who had visited the Sanduka Project in Zambia.

Complaint

The complainant had received a response from the editor, but was dissatisfied that this did not address the main concern that selling your body for money was illegal, and this was not mentioned within the article.

The article was reviewed in the context of section 3.3 of the TMAP Guidelines:

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.

The Complaint was Upheld

Rationale

The Panel, in reaching their conclusion took into account a number of mitigating factors, most notably the general tone of the article which warned of the emotional and physical horrors of prostitution; that the article clearly set out the dangers of unprotected sex; and also the positive impact of charities which enable people to regain control of their lives. The panel was

keen to stress the importance of magazines reflecting the lives of young girls in other parts of the world, and that this article was praiseworthy in that respect.

The Panel also noted that prostitution in Zambia is not illegal.

The Panel also noted that a warning that underage sex is illegal appeared on pages 124 and 125 of that issue of the magazine.

As well as prostitution, which was graphically described in terms of sexual abuse, the young woman engaged in a sexual relationship whilst only 13, and fell pregnant. The Panel noted that there was no comment on the illegality of this relationship, which in the UK could result in criminal charges being brought.

The Panel, whilst recognising that this was not a UK story, determined that the article should have directly referred to underage sex being illegal in the UK because the readership is predominantly UK-based and the focus of the Guidelines. There were editorial concerns as to how this might be achieved given the context, but whilst not a direct concern for the Panel, there were views as to how this could have been brought about without distracting from the storyline, including a separate box or incorporation into the Atomic Kitten report.

The Panel however recognised that the Guidelines were not absolutely explicit on country of origin, and TMAP will respond to this issue by clarification of the Guidelines to Editors - that they must refer to the illegality of underage sex in the UK regardless of the origin of any story that reports on underage sexual activity or abuse as set out in section 3.3 of the Guidelines.

Formal Recommendation

TMAP will circulate a note to all Editors of teenage magazines falling within the remit of the Panel, stating that regardless of the source of any material, articles published in magazines for a UK audience must adhere to the Guidelines and contain appropriate statements.

Dr Fleur Fisher

Chairman of TMAP

Magazine Sector information

Recent Closures

19

19 published its last issue in May 2005. Publisher IPC blamed the closure on the changing market: "The boundaries between the teen market sub-sectors have become blurred and sales patterns suggest that readership at the older, young women's end appears to have migrated to the fashion and celebrity markets."

Just Seventeen

Just Seventeen was launched in 1983 and started up a market for general interest teen magazines. May 2005 was also the last edition of *J17*, which went on sale on 12 April.

ELLEgirl

ELLEgirl, which launched in 2001 as a joint venture between Hachette and former *Elle* owner Emap, closed in the Autumn of 2005.

Research and publications in 2005

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:-

In this year's research summary, I concentrate on some of the studies that were commissioned to support the Government's teenage pregnancy strategy. Early on in the life of the Teenage Pregnancy Unit (TPU), a widespread consultation was undertaken amongst researchers and practitioners in order to establish some priority areas for further research. Through this process, a number of areas were identified and work was commissioned from various universities and other agencies under the overall direction of the TPU's Research Manager, Dr Catherine Dennison. All of these projects have now been completed. Summary and full reports are available on the TPU website, details of which are provided below. Space permits just some highlights here.

The major study was the **national evaluation** of the overall strategy, carried out by a team from a number of colleges within London University along with the British Market Research Bureau (BRMB). The study carried out regular tracking surveys amongst young people (over 9000 aged between 13 and 21) and parents, monitored the rates of under-16 and under-18 conceptions, interviewed a wide range of people, including local coordinators, young mothers, policy-makers, and others. The main aims of the study were to assess the extent to which the strategy was working, and to explore factors that appeared to make it more or less successful in different areas.

Key results were that, overall, there has been a roughly ten percent reduction in the under-18 conception rate since the launch of the strategy. However, the extent of change varies quite considerably, with the majority of the country showing decreases (some in the order of 35 percent) but some areas, mainly concentrated in London, showing increases or no change. Apart from these London boroughs, greater reductions were found in the more deprived areas, indicating that the strategic work has been well targeted.

Results from the tracking survey revealed that awareness of the national campaign (including the teenage magazine advertisements and radio slots) increased over the period, with the key messages about condom use and sexually transmitted infections being the most strongly recognised, but those about resisting peer pressure being less affected. Young people were less

likely to overestimate the proportion of young people having sex before the age of 16 years.

There was a steady but modest increase in the proportions of young women who reported that their school's SRE had 'fully met their needs', although the figure is still low at 30 percent; there was no change for young men. Use of designated young people's contraceptive services showed a steady increase, as did the use of websites and helplines for information and advice. There is still quite widespread confusion regarding confidentiality and the under-16s.

In terms of support for young mothers (the other major strand of the strategy in addition to prevention), there is still quite widespread isolation and loneliness, and the numbers engaging in education or employment/training did not vary much across the period. There was strong support amongst many of the young parents for the personal support offered by Sure Start Plus, Connexions and other schemes.

A very important finding was that there has been sustained interest in the campaign in the regional and national press and that there has been a fairly dramatic shift in the nature of the coverage; over the period of the evaluation, the proportion of articles that were positive in nature (that is, supportive of the aims of the strategy) increased quite substantially. This may suggest a promising change in the culture surrounding young people and sexual issues in the UK.

The overall conclusions of the research team is that the strategy has made a very promising start, but that sustained effort needs to be continued to ensure future progress. Amongst their recommendations is that school-based sex and relationships education (SRE) should be a compulsory part of the national curriculum.

The national evaluation covered the whole country and provided a broad brush assessment. In order to supplement these results, and to explore issues in rather closer detail, the TPU undertook a '**deep dive**' exercise. This involved selecting three areas that had shown large decreases in rates over the period and comparing these with three similar areas (in terms of levels of deprivation and some other indices) that had not shown decreases (or had shown increases). Detailed interviews (carried out by TPU staff and others) were held in each area with key senior people from health, education, social services, the youth service, the voluntary sector, and others. The aim was to

try to establish what had led to the differences in outcomes between these apparently similar areas.

The key results were very revealing, and showed quite clearly that the successful areas had engaged earlier in relevant activities, had established strong multi-agency partnerships with senior level staff committed to the strategy, had well-established school based SRE programmes and support, had established accessible young people friendly contraceptive and advice services (especially for young men), had an active youth service involvement, had undertaken extensive staff training for many of those working with young people, and had targeted especially vulnerable young people, such as those looked after in foster care or homes.

The other projects commissioned by the TPU covered a wide range of issues; space does not permit a detailed summary of each of them. The areas explored were:

the medium- and long-term consequences of teenage births for parents and children – two studies, carried out at the Universities of Essex and Southampton, used data from the 1970 national birth cohort studies (involving many thousands of people completing questionnaires every few years since their birth in 1970). By comparing data from before and after a teenage birth, it was possible to identify the factors that are more likely to lead to an early birth as well as the subsequent impact on the mother and child.

seaside and rural areas – there are higher under-18 rates in some seaside and rural areas than would be expected given their other characteristics. This study (*Living on the Edge*) explored three typical seaside towns and their rural hinterlands to try to establish the factors associated with these higher rates.

the educational experiences of pregnant young women and young mothers of school age – important findings include that less than half of the young women said they were attending school regularly at the point of conception; the majority reported improved attendance after their pregnancy was revealed and following the birth; the value of specialist units for those who had been poor attendees or excluded prior to pregnancy and the contribution made by reintegration officers to informing decisions and providing ongoing support to the young women.

Three separate studies explored aspects of the **attitudes and behaviour of young people in black and minority ethnic groups** in relation to various aspects of sexual activity, contraceptive use and teenage pregnancy. Key findings include:

- evidence of the diversity of sexual behaviour among and between ethnic groups often grouped together as 'Black' or 'Black and minority ethnic';
- irrespective of ethnicity, young people who regularly drank alcohol, smoked tobacco and had experimented with illicit drugs were much more likely to have had sexual intercourse;
- there were marked variations in relation to reproductive and sexual health attitudes and outcomes amongst Bangladeshi, Indian and Jamaican young people. Cultural factors, such as the level of involvement with young people from other ethnic groups, the role of religion, parents' attitudes, and peer-group norms, were found to be strong influences on young people within each of these ethnic groups;
- young parents from all the participating communities, though especially Muslim, placed a high value on motherhood and children. Most young parents had clear career or educational goals and did not view their early parenthood as obstructing the realisation of their aspirations;
- family support, and the close relationship of the young parent's mother, were crucial to a positive experience of early parenthood. Young mothers in all three locations described community-based services, such as Sure Start Plus, as providing valuable support, but their experience of contacts with doctors in hospital and general practice, and with hospital-based midwives, was far more mixed.

Finally, my own Centre published a research report entitled the **Choreography of Condom Use**. This presents the results of a fairly large study (funded by the Big Lottery Fund via Brook) involving a questionnaire survey, detailed interviews and sexual diary-keeping. The aim was to look at the efficiency of condom use, rather than just the extent of use. In brief, the results indicate a fair degree of inefficiency in use (late application or early removal), very low levels of use during oral sex, and lower use when other forms of contraception are being used. The implications for STI prevention

are immense, and the report recommends, amongst other things, that greater attention be paid through educational and advisory services to *how* condoms are used rather than just *if* they are used.

Further information:

Details of the Teenage Pregnancy Unit commissioned research covered above can be found on their website: www.dfes.gov.uk/teenagepregnancy and then following the link to *Research*.

The *Choreography of Condom Use* report can be found on www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/cshr and then follow the links to *Publications* then *Reports available from the Centre*.

DR ROGER INGHAM

January 2006

TMAP Annual Forum

The TMAP Annual Forum was held on 12 October 2005.

Giving the keynote presentation at the TMAP Forum, the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP) was praised by the Minister for Children Beverley Hughes, for demonstrating the seriousness with which the magazine industry treats teenage sexual concerns.

Opening proceedings Dr Fleur Fisher, chair of the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel, highlighted the "extraordinary interaction between teenage magazine readers and editors" and how this could be used to help tackle the "lamentable" lack of information about issues such as AIDS and STIs. Dr Fisher added "There is a powerful link between editors and readers with over half a million contacts per year. The Department for Education and Skills (DFES) would be amazed if they had 50 letters a year."

Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP

Addressing nearly 60 gathered publishers, editors and health and education professionals, the Minister said that magazines had a crucial role in informing teenagers about sex with so many young people receiving advice on the issue through the medium. She added that "Each week agony aunts are a trusted and authoritative source of information."

The Minister said that the Government would be looking for the support of the industry, through articles and agony advice columns, to reinforce key messages on helping young people to avoid sex too early and giving advice on sexual protection later on.

The Minister identified a number of key messages that government wished to put across: to avoid pressure to have sex; the advantages of waiting to have sex; to destroy prevalence of the myth that lots of under sixteens are having sex; and to use condoms.

Beverley Hughes described teen magazines as having a crucial role, and wanted magazines to complement the government's approach, in which TMAP too had a crucial role. The Government had a difficult balance to achieve - to decrease pregnancies and STIs, but without ignoring the fact that young people are sexually active and thus need support. In this respect, the Minister

said that magazines can promote or trivialise sex, and TMAP shows the importance placed on responsibility, and working constructively with the Government.

Setting a challenge to the industry, Beverley Hughes said more debate needed to be stimulated about young people waiting to have sex and how they could be encouraged to seek advice before becoming sexually active; and how there could be increased interaction between parents and editors of magazines.

Introduction

Setting the scene for the Forum, the Chair Dr Fisher said that TMAP was set up in 1997 to monitor the sexual content of teenage girls' magazines, and adjudicate on the currently few formal complaints against those magazines. TMAP is also responsible for the development of those guidelines and works closely with the Home Office in this regard. Dr Fisher added:

"Originally the TMAP remit applied to magazines where 25% or more of readers were young women under 15. Last year this was amended to magazines where 25% or more of readers are young women under 16, which now brings it into line with the age of consent. The sexual health of young people is high on the Government's agenda - teenage pregnancy, and the incidence of STI's.

"Tessa Jowell, Britain's first minister for public health met, with editors and publishers of teenage girls magazines in these offices a year ago. She was impressed by the huge number of contacts between readers and their magazines, and their influence on their loyal readership.

"A curious feature of UK society is that the concern of both public and politicians has thus far focussed on magazines for girls. The tone of teen mags is that they talk with not at their readers. Disappointingly there is not an exact parallel sector for boys, though there is evidence of a growing interest in this area.

"The theme of this forum is the impact of external influences on children and teenagers and the role of education in enabling informed choices to be made. Children today spend more time watching television than they spend in school, and added to the time they devote to films, magazines, computer games, the internet and popular music, it's clear that the media constitute by far their most significant leisure-time pursuit. Many have argued that the

media have now taken the place of the family and the school as the major socialising influence in contemporary society.

"Public debate on these issues needs to be informed by serious, in-depth research, and that it is vital that educators are able to use the media in constructive and creative ways. There is a need to move beyond a merely defensive approach, and to find new ways of empowering young people, both as critical consumers of media and as producers in their own right.

"I spoke earlier this year at the formal launch of Scotland's sexual health policy on "Rights and Responsibility" - which is a useful theme for today. The rights of young people in our society to both information to empower their choices, and to accessible services to support them.

Society is presently smarting from clear failures of implementation of child protection policy. There is currently confusion in the overlap between society's responsibility to protect children from abuse and the proven need for young people to be respected as individuals as they develop their sexual awareness, knowledge and experience.

"This is evident in new guidelines currently out for consultation. Confidentiality is crucial to young people to engender trust in those best placed to help them and advise them on the best approach based on their own personal development and circumstances.

"An evidence-based policy is essential with EBM the new buzz word in healthcare. I'm sure we will repeatedly touch on this issue during the morning."

Dr Fisher then introduced four presentations from acknowledged industry experts;

Mark Limmer, currently Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Manager in Rochdale, who reported on the recent major report on young people and alcohol, of which he was co-author;

Professor David Buckingham, founder and Head of the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, and Dr Sara Bragg, Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies in the Centre for Continuing Education at Sussex University, who provided real insight into how the media impact on young people and how professionals can respond positively to aid their personal development; and

Lisa Hallgarten of Education for Choice, which is a voluntary sector organisation promoting the rights of young people to access information and services so that they can make informed choices about unplanned pregnancy and abortion.

“It makes you more up for it”

One in five young women aged 15-16 had gone further sexually than intended because they were drunk, reported **Mark Limmer**, co-author of a highly respected study into young people and alcohol.

The study of school-aged young people’s perspectives on alcohol and sexual health also showed there was a need for targeted information especially for boys and black and minority ethnic (BME) young people. It additionally highlighted the need for better ways to utilise young people’s informal networks, especially those of friends and parents.

Key findings of the study showed that alcohol is seen to increase confidence and provide a subsequent excuse. There were higher rates of alcohol abuse amongst white girls, those with lower educational aspirations and the sexually active. National data suggests that there are links between deprivation and ‘riskier’ sexual activity. Critically, sex and alcohol are perceived to have a very positive impact on young people’s lives, outweighing potential risks.

The study, entitled "*Sexual risk taking amongst excluded young men: what motivates and underpins their decision-making?*" identified that there was awareness of vulnerability through alcohol, but that no effective strategies have been developed in response. Informal sources of information and support are the most acceptable to young people. further information from: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ihr/courses/doctorate/currentstudents/marklimmer.htm>

The Facts of Life?

How do young people respond to media images of love, sex and relationships - and what can we teach them about this? This was the question posed by **Professor David Buckingham**, head of the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, at the Institute of Education, see <http://www.childrenyouthandmediacentre.co.uk/>

Research carried out by the Centre showed young people are often enthusiastic about the media as a source of sexual learning, and the media are now on a par with mothers as a ‘useful’ source of information. However

young people feel that parents underestimate their maturity and their need for sexual information, and can easily get access to sexual material, and actively seek it out.

Young people also feel they have the right to make judgements about what they do and do not like seeing or reading, and as they grow older, they are less inclined to reject or be shocked by sexual material.

The study showed that teenage magazines are seen as a valuable source of information. Particularly this is because of privacy ('no strings attached') and being 'not too serious': 'They don't tell you what to do... they just put it in and see what you think about it'. However they are also read critically, and sometimes ridiculed - at least in public.

Young people value media as a source of information compared with parents or teachers but they do not necessarily trust what they find - they are 'media literate' consumers. Children are aware of media regulation, and see it as necessary but they reserve the right to make their own judgments.

Teen Magazines as a Teaching Aid

Dr Sara Bragg of Sussex University reported on the development of teaching materials by the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, on media, sex and relationships for Key Stage 3 (12-14 year olds). The goals of the Centre were to build on research which indicated that *not* using the media in sex education is a missed opportunity.

Their approach has been to develop talk-focused, student-centred group debates that retain flexibility. Key elements of the teaching materials are teenage magazines - focusing on problem pages, advertising - such as the creation of a health education campaign, and TV soaps.

The approach has been welcomed, both by teachers and students. They liked a change from worksheet-focused PSHE work, and appreciated the more open approach - students liked sharing views, and being able to 'speak our minds'.

Much of the teaching material is available to download free from the website www.mediarelate.org

A world without Education For Choice...

Lisa Hallgarten of Education for Choice talked about the need for quality sex and relationships education for all young people, to give them a chance to think about the kinds of decisions and actions that might lead to and result from an unintended pregnancy.

Both young men and young women needed to understand that they have the right to make decisions concerning their own bodies and lives, and to be aware of the impact of alcohol and substance use on their ability to make choices and to use contraception.

Young people of all communities must be able to access appropriate and sympathetic professionals to support them in access to contraceptive and sexual health services, and support their decision-making process and access to abortion if required.

The media must work closely with health educators to ensure that positive and accurate messages are available to the public: not just provide messages about risk, but messages celebrating pleasure and promoting emotional well-being.

Parents must be involved, informed and supportive, confident enough to discuss pregnancy prevention and pregnancy choices with their children. Young women choosing parenthood must be able to take that positive choice because parenthood is one of several life choices that are realistically open to them. For those choosing abortion, this too is an informed choice, and they are doing so in the full knowledge of all their options and all the support that would be available to them if they chose parenthood. Their decision to be or not to be mothers is therefore free from pressure or coercion.

Further information from <http://www.efc.org.uk/>

TMAP October 2005

Magazine Campaigns

The editors of two teenage magazines report on their recent campaigns to improve sex and relationships education in the classroom:

***Bliss* - "Be sexy be sussed"**

Report by the Editor, Lisa Smosarski

Since July 2002, *Bliss* magazine's Be Sexy Be Sussed campaign has had a clear mission. We want:

- To have sex education start at an earlier age and be taught by trained professionals.
- To have confidential, school-based drop-in centres, staffed by trained professionals, to look after students' emotional, physical and sexual health.
- To see a national curriculum for sex education introduced which covers the emotional as well as physical aspects of sex.
- To see GU clinics opened outside of school hours to make access easier for students.

What have we done?

Be Sexy Be Sussed has empowered *Bliss* readers to say no to sex with confidence. The campaign is all about teaching teenage girls how to protect themselves both emotionally and physically. Using eye-catching features, surveys, petitions and competitions, we've highlighted these important issues and more.

Having such an established sub-brand, like Be Sexy Be Sussed, that can be used as a vehicle to get the message out to young people, has proved invaluable. We regularly have *Bliss* readers quote the 'Be sexy, be sussed' mantra back at us, proving it's a phrase they use in everyday conversation.

Earlier this year, *Bliss* teamed up with Brook's 'Wise Up' campaign, in a bid to protect teenagers' confidentiality. A survey and petition, run on blissmag.co.uk, showed how important an issue it is to Bliss readers, and helped to raise awareness of the potential changes in law.

Many A-list celebrities have gladly put their name to the Be Sexy Be Sussed campaign and we've done numerous photo shoots with stars like Jordan, Tina O'Brien, Friday Hill, and Hollyoaks actors, wearing our Be Sexy Be Sussed t-shirts. Like us, these celebrities know how important it is for teenage girls to feel comfortable in their own skin, and that rushing into having sex is a bad idea. "As soon as I heard about the *Bliss* campaign, I couldn't wait to lend my support," says Ex-Atomic Kitten star Jenny Frost. "There's nothing worse than regretting a sexual experience."

Having celebrity backing gives the campaign instant-credibility with *Bliss* readers, and competitions to win celeb-signed campaign t-shirts have been hugely popular.

What has the campaign told us?

Be Sexy Be Sussed has helped us understand what teenagers' thoughts and worries about sex are. Through our surveys, we have discovered that:

- Almost a quarter of 14-year-olds have had sex
- 83% of *Bliss* readers who've had sex were under 16 the first time
- 39% of *Bliss* readers haven't gone any further than kissing
- Many teenagers find it hard to talk to their parents about sex, and six out of ten *Bliss* readers say their parents have never talked to them about the subject.
- 70% of teenagers say they would like more information about sex.
- 60% of girls who have had sex, used a condom.
- 37% of *Bliss* readers who have had sex have regretted it afterwards.
- 32% of *Bliss* readers have felt pressurised into a sexual activity.
- 81% of girls think their school should provide contraception
- Worryingly, alcohol is one of the main causes of underage sex. Two-thirds of *Bliss* readers who've had sex, say they were drunk at the time.

How have *Bliss* readers responded?

We regularly receive letters and emails from Bliss readers about Be Sexy Be Sussed. Here are a selection:

Dear *Bliss*,

I think its great the way you do the BE SEXY BE SUSSED campaign for *Bliss* readers. It's a great way to get girls to be comfortable in their own skin and has helped a lot of my friends! But I really think it would be great if you introduced it into schools. I know my school would be happy to help support your campaign and I would like to give girls that confidence that they need! I believe everyone is beautiful in their own way and would love it if *Bliss* could send me some info, leaflets, maybe even T-Shirts that could be given out as prizes to the most confident girl in school? I have a lot of great ideas and I really hope that you could help me put them into action! Please let me know.

Thanks a bunch, *Bliss*!

Rachel, 14

Dear *Bliss*,

Bliss is da best magazine around - I love it! I take it everywhere with me – it's the best. Oh! and thank you for da 4 pages on 'sick sex trends: are you at risk'. And remember girls, BE SEXY BE SUSSED and trust your instincts, don't stay somewhere you're not comfortable with. THANK YOU *BLISS*, for being such a cool mag, we love you.

love from da biggest blazin' squad and *bliss* fan around in da universe,

13, Chingford

Dear *Bliss*,

Can you please please do me a favour? I would really like you to do a booklet about STI, HIV, AIDS all that also about unsafe sex. What you can get from it? And what do STIs look like? And what STIs can do to you? Please can you do this - I hate going to the doctors and getting lots of leaflets that I don't understand, but I know you will put it a way we all will get.

Laura

Dear *Bliss*,

I'd just like to say that *Bliss* is a guide to life for teenagers. It informs us about life, the dangers of sex and lots more. When we are in PSE we aren't told much, but when we read *Bliss* we are informed of many forms of contraception and STIs and how to notice the symptoms of one. Instead of teaching us about our own health, teachers just tell us about love and "how a baby is made" and without seeming daft...what good is it telling us what we already know! I don't know if it's the teachers sexual knowledge is to blame but maybe the school Sex Ed system should be updated.

Bliss fan

What are we planning to do next?

We will continue to use our Be Sexy Be Sussed brand to teach our readers how to be safe, make sensible decisions, make sure they know the facts and strive to improve sex education and support in UK schools.

More specifically, we've got a web chat with Brook coming up, which will allow *Bliss* readers to discuss issues online with an expert, and we'll be presenting our confidentiality petition to the Children's Minister.

LISA SMOSARSKI

Editor *Bliss*

***CosmoGirl!* "Just say know"**

Report by the Editor, Celia Duncan

The truth is that *CosmoGIRL!* receives over 500 texts, emails and letters every week from readers. That's a staggering amount. Even with the most conscientious of agony aunts on board, there are simply too many reader questions to answer each one personally. But where else can they go? Only a fraction of readers get quality sex education at school, over 70% find talking to their parents embarrassing and doctors, clinics or nurses tend to be used in emergency situations only. It's high time Britain woke up to the fact that most teens get their sex and relationships education in the playground.

What *CosmoGIRL!* is aiming to do with our **Just Say Know** campaign is bring sex and relationships education out of the playground and into the classroom. To make it the business of every school in this country to equip pupils with the accurate up-to-date knowledge, confidence and self esteem they need to maintain their sexual health.

The facts:

- Britain's teen pregnancy rate is still the highest in Europe.
- The number of reported cases of STIs is increasing, with over 100,000 cases diagnosed in the past year alone.
- 72% of our readers turn to *CosmoGIRL!* for sexual health information. It's clear they're not getting the advice from elsewhere.
- 81% of our readers think sex and relationships education could be better and 31% classed the education they did receive as 'absolute rubbish'.
- The only sex education currently compulsory is the 'birds and bees' basics taught in biology. Despite government guidelines on further SRE some schools deliver no extra classes whatsoever.
- Teenage guys don't have the pages of *CosmoGIRL!* to fall back on, they need to be better educated too, sexual health is not just an issue for girls!

Real girls with real opinions

CosmoGIRL! has always been about giving teens a voice, letting them have their say. And our **Just Say Know** campaign is no different. This is first and foremost the readers' campaign - it's the readers who are demanding better sex education our surveys and it's the readers who are contacting us with their views, ideas and experiences. *CosmoGIRL!*'s role is simply to amplify those voices and get them heard right at the top, by the ministers who can help make a real difference.

We were keen to kick off the campaign by focusing on the positive things being done by teens around the country, thereby proving to schools, ministers and parents that there were role models that could be followed.

Kayleigh, 19, for example works as a sexual health educator on the 4YP bus in Haringey. The bus acts as a place teens can go for advice on sexual health, free condoms (once they've watched a demonstration of how to use them) as well as referrals to local sexual health services. It also visits local schools to provide SRE teaching. Features editor Diane spent the day with her and got to see just how many questions the young people had. The bus was packed all afternoon!

The majority of young people were scathing about the sex and relationships education (SRE) they received at school and the ability of the teachers to cope with teaching this kind of material. One thing that they all agreed on, they wanted information and felt they had a right to know about all aspects of sex so they could make informed choices for themselves.

Sophie attends school in Sheffield. She explained how great SRE teaching has been invaluable to her. Her story appeared next to Kayleigh's to launch our petition.

***CosmoGIRL!*'s Just Say Know Petition**

After hearing the views of teens around the country we compiled a petition with a view to taking it to 10 Downing Street. Petitions demand more of readers than the usual click here and vote mechanic. They actually have to give out personal details, their name and address etc. so we were staggered when over 2000 readers signed up both online and through the magazine.

Here's what the petition demanded:

- Decisive government action to make sex and relationships education (SRE) compulsory within PSHE in secondary schools
- Specialist teachers who don't go red at the first mention of sex and who you feel you can really talk to
- Schools to be assessed on life skills they equip pupils with, not just GCSE results
- For every teen to have access to confidential sexual health services and information
- For teens to be empowered with the self-esteem and confidence needed to protect themselves and maintain their sexual health

The petition went live on cosmogirl.co.uk on the 14 November 2005 as well as in the December issue of the magazine. Readers started signing up to the petition and responding immediately.

We also invited girls to enter a competition to take the petition to Downing Street at the end of February and were overwhelmed by the response. We asked them to tell us about the quality of SRE they had received. Their responses only reinforced why the campaign was so urgently needed, the inconsistencies were astounding. Here are a couple of examples:

"Yesterday my friend turned to me and asked 'How do you know if you have a STI?' Shocked, I replied and explained to her what I knew. This really worried me as my friend and I are both 16 years old and are legally old enough to have sex. How can it be that in this modern world some teenagers still do not know about the dangers of unprotected sex or STIs?

"My school has been relatively good at delivering sex education but I was stunned to find that at my friend's school, she had only been briefly informed of the dangers of sex. Shouldn't all schools be given the same comprehensive sex education? Should there not be a wider curriculum with more time to talk to nurses or doctors about sex? Sex plays such a large role in our society today and I strongly believe in the importance of giving everyone equal opportunities to learn this vital information."

Bethany, 16

“One word sums up the sex education I have received; what?!?! So we learn about STIs and how babies are produced but nothing substantial that will prepare us for the big bad world! I learnt more in a single episode of Footballers’ Wives, not the most moral of programmes! I want to avoid peer pressure, to be warned of guys using you for sex, even do drama projects about tackling the difficulties of having made a sexual mistake. Forget science for a second and focus on a future because if we make mistakes due to lack of knowledge, our future could change!”

Robyn, 15

Getting our point across

On the 27 February 2006, Editor Celia Duncan, Anna Martinez from the Sex Education Forum, *CosmoGIRL!* reader Bethany Cole and her mum Janice took the petition to 10 Downing Street – it had been signed by over 2,000 *CosmoGIRL!* readers.

News of CosmoGIRL!'s petition was picked up by the national press including Radio 1, Radio Five Live, The Guardian online and The Observer reaching over 50 million people. It has also been reported on American news wires!

In the pages of the magazine the **Just Say Know** campaign continued:

Sexual health expert Dr Colm O’Mahony answered the readers most asked questions.

Lauren (19) talked the readers through the reality of being a teen mum.

Emma (18) and Janine (18) were brave enough to share their stories of catching and dealing with an STI.

Krista (15), Zoe (19) and Cynthia (18) told their stories to bring the issue of abortion to the attention of the readers.

In March, Editor Celia met with Public Health Minister Caroline Flint who vowed to look into the issue further. We will continue to work with the government to make our readers' voices heard and their wishes a reality.

By talking openly and honestly about sexual health issues, pregnancy, STIs and the emotional side of sex, we hope to keep this subject at the forefront of readers' minds and we know it's working because they tell us:

"I think it's fantastic how you are campaigning for better sex and relationships education in schools. We have had the absolute minimum of sex ed in our school, and we definitely need more. Teenagers and young people our age have the right to this kind of information without being embarrassed about finding it themselves. I am 100% behind the campaign - keep it up!"

Kat, 14

CELIA DUNCAN

Editor *CosmoGirl!*

ANNEX 1

Contact Details

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ANNEX 2

Youth TGI¹ Figures 2005

Title	Average age	% of readership under 16 - Youth
<i>Mizz</i>	12	91%
<i>Smash Hits</i>	12	85%
<i>Top of the Pops</i>	12	86%
<i>Shout</i>	12	86%
<i>TV Hits</i>	13	71%
<i>Sneak</i>	14	74%
<i>Its Hot!</i>	12	82%
<i>Bliss</i>	15	67%
<i>Sugar</i>	14	71%
<i>CosmoGIRL!</i>	15	64%

Sources: - Youth TGI (2005)

¹Youth 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 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.

TMAP October 2005

ANNEX 4



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 (Panini)

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.

APPENDIX 1

The Fraser Guidelines

It is lawful for doctors to provide contraceptive advice and treatment without parental consent providing certain criteria are met. These criteria, known as the Fraser Guidelines, were laid down by Lord Fraser in the House of Lords' in the case of Gillick vs West Norfolk and Wisbech AHA & DHSS in 1985, and require the professional to be satisfied that:

1. The young person understands the advice being given.
2. The young person cannot be convinced to involve parents/carers or allow the medical practitioner to do so on their behalf.
3. It is likely that the young person will begin or continue having intercourse with or without treatment/contraception.
4. Unless he or she receives treatment/contraception their physical or mental health (or both) is likely to suffer.
5. The young person's best interests require them to be given contraceptive advice, treatment or supplies with or without parental consent.

Although these criteria specifically refer to contraception, the principles are deemed to apply to other treatments, including abortion.