

Morality Forum Update

12/06/98

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Recently a number of people sent replies to the Questionnaire on Teenage Pregnancy to the Cabinet Office Social Exclusion unit. Thank you for your effort and time. A lot of members of Family and Youth Concern also wrote replies but there were undoubtedly many replies from those with opposing views. We have to pray for a sensible approach from the Government. Recently there was a new project initiated by Boots in Glasgow in conjunction with a local NHS Trust to set up a Family Planning Clinic in Boots Chemists. They would be dispensing free condoms and contraceptives as well as advice to teenagers without parental consent or knowledge even for those teenagers under 16 years old. The major fear about this is that the project is a pilot scheme which if successful will be expanded around the country. Then other chain stores may also participate.

I have posted two articles about this issue below. The Chairman of Boots is Lord Blyth. (House of Lords, London, SW1A OWP.) I wrote him a letter at the House of Lords to express my horror at this development and to explain why my family would not be shopping at Boots. Lynda Lee-Potter's article below gives a number of good reasons to be concerned about Family Planning Clinics.

Valerie Riches of Family and Youth Concern suggested if you want to make your feelings known about this that you could go to your local Boots and ask to talk to the Manager.

God Bless You,
ITN

Robin Marsh

Tel/Fax 0181 421 4220

118 Boxtree Lane, Harrow Weald, HA3 6JE.

Lynda Lee-Potter: Daily Mail December 2nd This dogma that blights girl's lives

BOOTS the Chemist is hosting a pilot scheme offering free contraception and the morning-after pill to children. There will be no lower age limit and no need for parental knowledge.

Tina Mackie is the doctor in charge of the experiment, which opens this week in Glasgow, and she says: 'It's extremely exciting.' That's the last word I'd choose, since I find it depressing, destructive and defeatist. It's part of the culture which believes that if dangerous or illegal behaviour is taking place, we are duty bound to facilitate the situation. This is called being realistic, facing the facts, living with the world as it is and not burying our heads in the sand. In this case, it means children are getting the message that under-age sex is perfectly permissible, when all research shows that it turns them into sad individuals who feel worthless and have low self-esteem. Girls use sex as a way of getting affection and end up spurned and humiliated. Children should not be having sex, and the fact that some of them do is absolutely no reason for saying: 'We know it happens so we'll do everything we can to help you.' How can any society flourish without a strong underlying thread of morality? If we don't say certain things are wrong, then inevitably and inexorably they get worse.

How can children thrive if grown-ups are never prepared to stand up and say: 'We cannot condone your behaviour.' How can any of us exist safely and happily without rules?

Twelve and 13 year-olds are not physically ready to have sex because nature has a lot more sense than Dr Tina Mackie.

PUTTING children on the Pill may well affect their future fertility. It will damage their physical and mental health. Girls who begin an active sex life at 13 are in danger of developing cervical cancer in later years. The instances of this savage kind of cancer in virgins is almost unknown. Sadly, we've seen over and over again the disastrous results of facilitating immoral practices. We've seen attempts to reduce the legal age for homosexual sex to 16 or even 13 merely on the grounds that it takes place.

The liberal-minded said censorship was absurd and now our land is flooded with vile and obscene literature.

Nearly two decades ago we stopped being censorious about illegitimate babies and we've observed the resulting tragedy. Thousands of young women who can scarcely look after themselves are trying to bring up infants on their own. It's a sad, lonely, soul destroying task. Inevitably, a lot of them fall to cope and the lives of their children are bleak and sometimes tragic.

Last week three year-old Charlotte Jones was found weeping, having spent 30 hours alone in a wood near Warrington. Her unmarried mother has been charged with abandoning her. Children need daddies, but mothers also need support from loving men, preferably the fathers of their offspring. Morality so often is based on common sense, and it's the people lacking this basic quality who preach destructively permissive dogma. They attack the rest of us by calling us narrow minded, prudish bigots when all we want to maintain are the kind of ground rules which strengthen our society.

Ask any mother if she would be happy to see her 12 or 13 year old embarking on an active sex life and I guarantee the answer would be no.

The pessimists say it's too late, we can't turn back the clock so we should concede defeat. I don't believe that. We must battle on and wisdom will surely win in the end.

Boycott threat to Boots over store family planning clinic Guardian December 5, 1998

Boots is considering closing its first family planning clinic after hardline pro-life campaigners and church groups threatened a nationwide boycott and flying pickets at its stores.

The chemist chain told the Roman Catholic newspaper, The Universe, that it was reviewing whether to keep the clinic, which is aimed at young people, open on an "hour-by-hour" basis after the paper and an alliance of pro-life groups called for a boycott.

Protesters are picketing the clinic at a Glasgow store today and are planning a system of flying-picket protests at other stores across the UK and Ireland.

Since Boots started the family planning clinic in conjunction with a Glasgow NHS trust on Thursday, protestors have promised to do everything in their power to close it down.

Some staff have received telephone death threats and been subjected to abuse. One shop assistant told the Scotsman newspaper: "There have been death threats... A lot of customers have been quite abusive towards staff about the idea too."

On Thursday, management at the Glasgow store called a staff meeting to say they were considering cancelling the clinic. However, by late afternoon it opened without incident.

When Boots was told the Universe, which has a readership of 200,000, planned to run a front-page editorial headlined 'Don't Shop at Boots', it told the paper it was considering whether to keep it open.