

SPUC school talks – supporting materials

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Read the British Humanist Association and Education For Choice press release:

<http://www.humanism.org.uk/news/view/1009>

Milton Keynes presentation to parents

Author/attendee: Matthew Haughton

Date: 28 September 2011

Location: Meadfurlong School

Speaker: Antonia Tully

SPUC news item: <http://www.spuc.org.uk/news/releases/2011/september21>

SPUC blog: <http://spuc-director.blogspot.co.uk/2011/09/milton-keynes-public-meeting-to-hear.html>

Supporting organisations: Milton Keynes Tamil Forum; Milton Keynes Muslim Association; Sri Lankan Muslim Community Foundation Milton Keynes; Milton Keynes Islamic Society; Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture Organisation

Event recorded

The presentation was held at a school on the Fishermead estate and was attended by approximately 50-60 people, roughly equal split between male and female attendees.

I estimated that 80% of people in the room were Asian Muslim based on the number of people that went to pray between the presentation and the Q&A session. 2 males and 5 females were non-Asian (this includes Ms Tully).

I mention these approximate demographic stats as it is suggestive about the possible intent of the presentation.

Please read the summary of the half hour presentation below (and listen to the enclosed recording if you wish) to make up your own mind.

My views

I've called this a presentation rather than a meeting due to the nature of the proceedings, there was no teacher there to support the teaching of SRE. The presentation was basically Ms Tully talking followed by questions that only Ms Tully fielded, this was a seminar with the following summary message

- Approach your school and ask about their SRE programme
- If they are using one of the top 3 resources (which is very likely) then meet with them and politely ask them to change it to ... (no alternative suggested)
- When they refuse to change it then withdraw your child
- If they tell you they can't do that then they're breaking the law and you should contact Ms Tully and a solicitor

Of course Ms Tully said approach the school in an open manner to discuss but she left the discussions with only 1 direction 'don't teach the top 3 resources or I'll withdraw my child'

There was no discussion, debate nor alternatives forwarded, the aim of the meeting was obvious - almost to the point of propaganda.

No request for funds or donations was made so this wasn't fund raising.

However, this was obviously deliberately targeted at a Muslim community where there is very likely to be support for withdrawal from SRE due to the nature of the religion. The other striking fact is that SPUC are a pro-life, anti-abortion group - what are they doing involving themselves in primary school curriculum?

It wouldn't be an unreasonable conclusion to say that SPUC has ulterior motives to just being pro-life and they are using the Islamic faith to forward their agenda - an agenda about which I'd rather not speculate.

I'd be interested to hear the opinions of others.

Following are the headlines from Ms Tully's presentation

(listen to recording for full details)

What on Earth are they teaching our children at school?

'All about us Living and Growing' - Channel 4

'BBC Active – Whiteboard'

'Christopher Winter Project'

These could be taught in your child's primary school

First things to do is find out what is being taught at YOUR child's school - if it's one of these programmes then you have a cause for concern.

Now an explanation as to why these programmes prepare a child for sex

Stage 1: 5-7 years

- creates a conflict between home and school (because you're not teaching your child about sex and the school is)
- Summary: makes young children conscious of sexual organs

Stage 2: 7-9 years

- clip from 'Living and Growing' - explaining what sexual intercourse is with cartoon characters in clip
- clip includes a child's voice exclaiming that the adult cartoon characters 'do look happy don't they'
- Ms Tully argues that even if it is deemed ok to give biological details this clip goes much further and almost advertises sex
- another clip explains about the female and male anatomies, including the clitoris and what happens during sexual intercourse
- cited anonymous parents' concerns about their children coming home from school showing and interest in sexual organs when they hadn't before
- In Ms Tully's experience boys think this is a joke and girls think this is a worry – both negative approaches to sex (again no traceable citation provided)
- Ms Tully addresses the argument that this is on TV, pop videos etc - she argues that in the classroom children are primed for absorbing information and so it's much worse
- Summary: teaching children exactly how to have sex

Stage 3: 9-11 years

- this stage primes children for talking about sex
- stimulating an interest in sex
- prompting children to experiment
- making private and intimate issues public
- Summary: makes children think that sex is normal, fun and that they can do it - and gets them talking about it

Clip from BBC Active - more of the same - explanation of sperm and egg

Christopher Winter - more of the same

Other organisations and the law

Following organisations promote these resources

- Family Planning Association
- Sex Education Forum
- Health in Schools Programme

Ms Tully makes the statement that primary schools are not required to teach SRE by law
Science curriculum not required to teach it
No obligation to follow guidelines from LEA

Family Education Trust is also concerned about SRE in schools

Prof David Paten from University of Nottingham

Graph showing that SRE doesn't help teenage pregnancies - They haven't been changed since implementation of 'explicit' SRE - £300m spent - teenage pregnancies not changed at all - but STI's have escalated because of sex education

Parent's action

- ask to see SRE policy at child's school
- only legal requirement is that there is a policy in place
- law requires governors to consult with parents
- many schools only consult with parent governor and that's not enough
- ask what resources are used to teach SRE
- have been stories of schools not allowing parents to view resources

(as an aside Ms Tully mentions that a clause in 2003 sexual offences act protects teachers from prosecution under that act - so sexually explicit material can be shown in the classroom - quite a nasty insinuation that primary school teachers are like legally protected paedophiles)

- arrange parent's meeting
- ask where else SRE is being taught (e.g. Science) parents can't withdraw child from Science lessons and SRE can be taught under Science curriculum
- write to your local authority if you're unhappy
- write to your MP anyway - urge them to oppose any moves to make SE compulsory - this is a real threat
- coalition government currently has no plans to make it compulsory - but they are conducting a review this may need to compulsory legislation

Wrap up

Worry about teaching SRE irrespective of parents' wishes - Ms Tully's own position is that families should drive this and should have a say as to what SRE is taught to their children

Remember: Your children are YOUR children

Parents are better than professionals when it comes to talking about sex

Wakefield presentation to parents

Author/attendee: Norman Ralph

Date: 4 October 2011

Location: Outwood Memorial Hall

Speaker: Antonia Tully

SPUC news item: <http://www.spuc.org.uk/news/releases/2011/september30>

It was an interesting experience I can say!

I didn't take too many notes as I was already rather conspicuous as I was one of the only young (ish) people there. Essentially the gist was around mobilising parents to take more direct action at their children's schools around sex education. Most of the talk was misguided at best and blatantly distorting the truth at worst with some rather extreme claims about the use of pornography to teach sex (rather than video resources to educate about sex...).

Some of the Q&A was quite interesting though as I got the impression that the local members were a little less enthusiastic than the speaker and it quite quickly became a bit of a gossip fest about what people had heard about whom.

Bournemouth presentation to parents

Author/attendee: Karen Preston

Date: 13 October 2011

Location: Durley Dean Hotel

Speaker: Antonia Tully

SPUC news item: <http://www.spuc.org.uk/news/releases/2011/october07>

Local press:

http://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk/news/9296363.Campaign_s_anger_at_school_sex_lessons/

This talk was advertised extensively on local media, so it was surprising that only 30 people attended, including a handful of parents of school-age children. Lack of parent attendance was significant given the degree of concern parents apparently have, over the issue of sex education in schools, according to Ms Tully.

Ms Tully's concern is not that sex education is taught in schools but who does it and with what resources.

These resources, she claims, promote sexual activity, introduce young people to the means to have sex (via contraception) and create unwanted pregnancies, giving rise to the need for abortion.

She went straight into specific clips from two resources available to schools: Channel 4 Living and Growing and the BBC Interactive package. The clips were shown out of context. She omitted to comment on the guidance given to schools, the powers of governors' to influence resources and presentation, the expectation that schools will work in partnership with parents and that parents can withdraw their children if still not unhappy.

It took a comment from an audience member to underline these processes that empower parents to be involved in how sex and relationship education is offered in school.

One of Ms Tully's concerns is that although the sex education materials are currently used in PSHE – a non-compulsory subject, they can be placed within the science curriculum, and as science is a compulsory subject, parents would not be able to withdraw their children. (This has apparently happened in Tower Hamlets who are addressing this issue, but there was no evidence presented to suggest any other schools are doing this).

The point was made to Ms Tully that these programmes are part of an extensive PSHE curriculum that looks at the sex act in the context of loving relationships. It is presented to children through their primary years. The materials are used sensitively by teachers who have the children's wellbeing at heart and know what resources are appropriate for those in their care.

Ms Tully condemned the materials for 'breaking down children's natural reserve', 'setting up conflict between home and school' and making 'intimate areas no longer intimate'. There was no evidence to back these emotive claims. She speculated on how children react to these programmes saying boys generally take it as a joke and girls respond in a more worried way – again little actual evidence was offered to support this. There was no mention of the follow-up that's provided in schools after these programmes are shown or indeed the helpful conversations parents can have with children to share thoughts on these topics.

The audience's reaction to the resources spoke volumes. They called the images of cartoon people making love 'pornographic', 'shameful', referring to masturbation as 'perverse'. The focus seemed to

be on adults' own reaction to these images rather than any open discussion on what children may need and benefit from.

When the point was being made that parents do have recourse to influence what their child's school does, an audience member declared this was not a debate and they had not come to the meeting to hear other views, they had come just to hear Ms Tully.

Ms Tully assumed that parents would gladly take responsibility for talking to their children about relationships and the place of sex in these relationships in a sensitive, informed and appropriate way when the time was right – I admire her optimism!

Was this presentation so poorly attended because the majority of parents are happy with the way schools deal with sex and relationship issues and are grateful their children get the input they do? Ms Tully then implied that by using these resources teachers are somehow abusing their positions as educators.

She also made the rather confused assertion that children have the capacity to 'switch off' from the constant barrage of sexual imagery in the media, and the community at large, but don't have the capacity to 'switch off' in the classroom!

Ms Tully's main concern is that if we tell children about sex and discuss contraception, we tell them how to do it, so they will! Yet, she had no clear evidence to back up her claims and would not consider that our inadequate sex education may be playing a role in our huge teenage pregnancy problem.

When the point was reiterated that parents can exercise choice and control by influencing school practice and withdrawing their child, she said she was not just concerned about her child but ALL children. Ms Tully seems to be keen to take on all the decision making for ALL parents with little recognition of the rights of parents to think, judge and make choices for themselves and their children.

She made a final point that from July to November 2011 the government is reviewing the PSHE curriculum, which includes sex education. MS. Tully fears that sex education will become compulsory. No doubt there will be more heated presentations around this topic yet!

Leaflet handed out at parents' events



Society for the Protection of Unborn Children

Campaign Bulletin: Giving parents a voice in the fight against harmful sex education

Autumn 2011

CHILD
SENSITIVE
INFORMATION
INSIDE

Sex education: A role for parents

Parents should take the lead in educating their own young children about sexual matters. This is a role for them, not for schools. Primary schools can support families, but only parents can judge when their child is ready to hear about these things.

Many parents are undermined by the message from schools and the media that children should be taught about sex by professionals. Parents should have the confidence that they are the best people to give their own children sensitive information about sex.

In fact, government guidelines on sex and relationships education seem to recognise the crucial role of parents. Yet this is often not reflected in what happens in the classroom.

The Department for Education guidelines produced in July 2000 make no fewer than 91 references to the role of parents. The emphasis is on schools consulting with parents about the nature and content of sex education. Parents should insist that the school leaves the intimate aspects of sex for them to cover at home with their own children.



"Vulgar, dirty" sex education spoils my school days

Abbie Ireland is 26 years old and has spoken out at the way in which the sex education she received at her Catholic secondary school cast a shadow over her otherwise happy school days.

"It was so horrible," she says now. "I was told about sex in such a vulgar, dirty way. I already knew about how babies were made. I didn't want to hear all these details about how to do a 'hand job' or a 'blow job' in a mixed classroom. It made sex seem so negative to me."

Fortunately Abbie was able to talk to her parents and her mother withdrew her from many of the classes.

Abbie is now a mother herself and is determined to protect her son. She feels confident about answering her child's questions in a natural way when they arise.

"My innocence was taken from me by those sex education lessons," says Abbie. "That's something which never comes back."



POSED BY MODEL

Action for parents: Find out what sex and relationships education programme is being used in your child's school. Ask to see the resource to find out whether the intimate details of sex will be given. Let the school know that you would like to cover these issues with your child. For help and support please contact: Safe at School on 020 8407 3463.

The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children is committed to fighting against explicit SRE in schools because it is inciting young children to become sexually active in their teens, or even before. Illegal, underage sexual activity fuels teenage pregnancies, rising rates of sexually transmitted infections and the tragedy of teenage abortions.

Take action today

- Let the government know your views and experience of SRE by responding to the Department of Education's consultation. See page 3.
 - Please send me copies of SPUC's free briefing on the consultation
- Alert other parents to the dangers of anti-life sex education in schools
 - Please send me further copies of this bulletin
 - 5 15 25 other
- Organise a seminar or public meeting in your area to inform other parents
 - I would like to organise a meeting or seminar and will call Safe at School on 020 8407 3463

Please print

Title _____ Full name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

*Phone _____

*Email _____

I would like to support SPUC. Please send me details of how I can: Become a member Make a donation

*Please include these if you are happy to be contacted by phone/email

Please return this form to: SPUC, 3 Whitacre Mews, Stannary Street, London SE11 4AB

It is surprising to hear that a girl was taught to do a 'hand job' and 'blow job'. This is something we have never seen elsewhere, nor would expect to be taught.

Programmes which provoke premature sex

Department of Health sex ed programme tripled teen pregnancies



Teaching teenagers about sex does not stop them becoming pregnant. In fact the evidence shows the opposite. One

example of this was the Young People's Development Programme (YPDP), which aimed to teach young people aged 13-15 about sex in the hope that fewer pregnancies would result. The result of this programme was a shocking increase in the number of girls becoming pregnant.

The YPDP took place from April 2004 until March 2007 and was funded by the Department of Health. The initiative took place in youth clubs rather than schools. This was because the teenagers involved were identified by teachers and social workers as difficult and would not be at school regularly.

Twenty-seven youth clubs were selected for the programme. The researchers selected 27 other clubs for comparison. The teenagers at the YPDP clubs were taught about sex and drugs by youth workers using a variety of activities and styles.

The programme was highly rated. The teenagers loved the activities and the staff liked the relationships they built with the teenagers.

But the results were disastrous. This programme led to 3.5 times as many pregnancies in the targeted groups as in the comparison youth clubs. Indeed so devastating were the final results that the researchers recommended that no such programme should be used again, except as part of a research project.

This publicly funded project was developed by the Department of Health in conjunction with the fpa (Family Planning Association) and carried out to the highest research standards. The report was published in 2009 and published in the British Medical Journal..

Wiggins M, Bonell C et al, Health outcomes of youth development programme in England: prospective matched comparison study. *BMJ* 2009; 339:b2534

The Christopher Winter Project – teaching children how to have sex

Year 1 (ages 5-6): children are shown pictures of naked babies to teach them about male and female genitalia. They learn the names 'penis' and 'vagina'.

Year 2 (ages 6-7): teachers give a lesson on challenging gender stereotypes. Children are given cards with cartoon body parts ranging from "foot" to "penis"; the aim of the lesson is "to focus on sexual difference and to name body parts".

Year 3 (ages 7-8): children learn from their teachers that "there are different kinds of families and all are equally valid".

Year 4 (ages 8-9): children return to learning about body parts in lessons on babies.

Year 5 (ages 9-10): teachers tell children that masturbation is a perfectly normal way to explore their bodies. Discussion of sexual attraction includes same-sex attraction as well as heterosexual.

Year 6 (ages 10-11): children are given cartoon pictures of sexual intercourse. Children learn that "...the man's penis gets stiff and the woman's vagina gets slippery ...It should feel nice."

The Christopher Winter Project takes a step by step approach to prepare children for having sex.

This is very similar to the sex education teaching resource for primary schools called "Living and Growing", which is produced by Channel 4.

This is not surprising as the Christopher Winter Project makes extensive use of the most sexually explicit sections of the DVDs from the "Living and Growing" programme.

Safe at School has campaigned vigorously to expose "Living and Growing". Parents should oppose the Christopher Winter Project programme with equal force.



Action point:

Parents: Find out if the Christopher Winter Project is being used in your child's primary school. Voice your concerns to the headteacher and the governing body of the school. Please call Safe at School for advice and support on 020 8407 3463.

The [study](#) under attack in the left hand column did indeed show negative results for the sex education provided. However, the second author [wrote that](#) 'we should stress that the Young People's Development Programme (YPDP) was not a traditional sex education intervention and our evaluation should not be used to inform criticism of sex education. Previous studies consistently suggest sex education programmes do not increase early sexual activity nor teenage pregnancies. YPDP did include sex education but this was a relatively minor part of a much more substantial intervention.' So SPUC's using this study is completely under false pretences.

Let the government know your views on sex education

Sex Education: How can you respond to the Department of Education's consultation



The Department of Education is carrying out an internal review on personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) education. PSHE is the part of the school curriculum in which sex and relationships education (SRE) is taught.

Despite repeated statements from the government that they have no plans to make PSHE compulsory, they are nonetheless carrying out this review.

The Department is open to receiving evidence with regard to the teaching of PSHE and its effects, including SRE. SPUC is encouraging parents to respond to this and is preparing a briefing document to help people.

The closing date for submissions is 30 November 2011.

Action point:

Contact SPUC to order a free copy of the PSHE Consultation briefing. Please use the order form on the front of this bulletin.

No evidence that compulsory sex ed for young children will combat HIV and AIDS

A leading UK expert on sexual health issues for young people has said that there is no evidence to support the recent claim made by the House of Lords Select Committee on HIV and AIDS that compulsory sex education it is "essential" to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS. Professor David Paton of Nottingham University said that call from the Select Committee was "surprising".

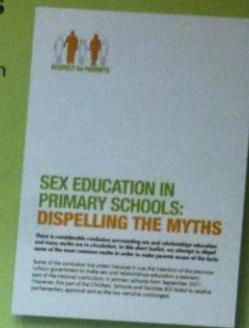
In his response Professor Paton listed the dangers of compulsory sex education:

- It would remove the right of parents to withdraw their children from SRE content that is inappropriate for their child.
- It would force all schools to follow the same curriculum.
- It would force primary schools to teach SRE irrespective of their pupils' circumstances and parental wishes.

Sex Education in Primary Schools: Dispelling the Myths

Many parents are confused by sex and relationships education in primary schools. Family Education Trust has produced an excellent leaflet for parents and others which states the truth about many of the myths surrounding this issue.

Here are some of the points taken from the leaflet which every parent needs to know:



- "Primary school governing bodies are required to consider whether sex education should be taught as part of the school curriculum, but they are free to decide not to teach it."
- "There is no requirement in national curriculum science at either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 to teach children about the sexual organs, sexual intercourse, contraception, sexually transmitted infections or same-sex marriage."
- "There is no evidence to suggest that sex education explains why teenage pregnancy rates in the Netherlands are lower than in Britain."
- "Education law in the UK is clear that parents bear the legal responsibility for the education

of their children and that children must be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents."



Action point:

Order copies of this leaflet to give to parents so that they are fully informed. Contact: Family Education Trust, Jubilee House, 19-21 High Street, Whitton, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 7LB.

Tel: 020 8894 2525 www.famyouth.org.uk
email: info@famyouth.org.uk

The left hand column seems intended to generate fear that the Government intends to make sex and relationships education compulsory, despite the fact that they have made very clear that they are not going to do that.

Parents taking action against explicit DVDs

Angry parents speak out to protect their children

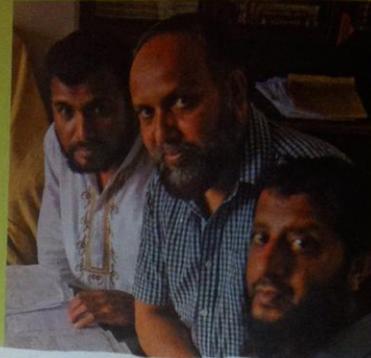
Safe at School is supporting parents in the London borough of Tower Hamlets who launched a local campaign to protest about explicit sex DVDs being shown in science lessons. A number of primary schools in the borough were using the "Living and Growing" programme in science lessons.

Parents were worried that this was effectively introducing compulsory sex education by the back door. Science is a national curriculum subject and parents do not have the right to withdraw their children.

Pressure from parents forced the Tower Hamlets local authority to issue a statement giving parents the right to withdraw their children from compulsory science lessons "where a school is using non-statutory sex and relationship materials".

However, there is no evidence that the Department for Education has approved such a move or that schools will implement this.

Antonia Tully of the Safe at School Campaign said: "The key point here is that there is nothing in the national curriculum for



Thursday June 30, 2011, East London Advertiser
'Stop teaching our youngsters about sex in science lessons'
Parents angry eight-year-olds are shown explicit DVD

by Mike Brooke
mike.brooke@towerhamlets.co.uk

withdraw my children from lessons which are unaccepta-

Press coverage following a public meeting in Tower Hamlets addressed by Antonia Tully of the Safe at School campaign.

science in primary schools which requires them to teach anything sexual. Primary schools should not be using science lessons to teach young children about sex."

Mohammed Goni (centre) with Habib Rahman (front) and Ahmed Hussain are parents at the Clara Grant primary school in Tower Hamlets. They collected over 260 signatures from parents at the school protesting against explicit sex lessons

Action point: Contact Safe at School to organise a public meeting in your area to inform parents and others about what young children are being exposed to in sex education or science lessons.

Safe at school – helping parents to protect their children

Safe at School is an SPUC service which gives advice and support to parents who face unacceptable SRE in their children's schools.

Antonia Tully (pictured right) co-ordinates the activities of Safe at School. Antonia is married with five children at school, aged between 10 and 17 years old. You can contact Antonia by emailing safeatschool@spuc.org.uk or by phone on: 020 8407 3463.

Visit the Safe at School campaign webpage at: www.spuc.org.uk to see: • Checklist of points for parents to find out what is happening in their children's schools. • Press coverage of other parents protesting about *Living and Growing*. • Share your experience of SRE with other parents.



Society for the Protection of Unborn Children

3 Whitacre Mews, Stannary Street
London, SE11 4AB

Telephone: 0201 7091 7091

Web: www.spuc.org.uk

Email: info@spuc.org.uk

The Tower Hamlets meeting generated a lot of press, such as in [the Telegraph](#) and [Pink News](#), not least because of some of the other groups invited to co-sponsor it.

Cambridgeshire talk to school pupils

Authors/attendees: Anna Ward and Emma-Rose Cornwall from Feminist Action Cambridge, who had just given a pro-choice presentation

Date: 29 February 2012

Location: Comberton Village College

Event recorded

The notes that follow don't capture the insidiously quasi-rational tone of the talk - the speaker used quite emotive language [the baby's skull is crushed with forceps] but in a very matter of fact tone of voice, which gave it a very odd feel - she came across as trustworthy, and even said a few things that I agreed with - but then said totally outrageous things in the same, reasonable tone of voice. But anyway, hopefully this gives you the idea, and some of the 'facts' they use.

As we all enter the lecture theatre there is a large projection with film and music overlaid. The looped video shows children playing outside, a baby lying on a man's chest asleep, then sitting up and eating, an [extremely lifelike] animation of a baby in the womb. The text: 'I feed', 'I grow', 'I move' fades in and out.

As an opener the woman giving the talk introduces herself and explains that it is her job to give these talks, and then explains a bit about SPUC, and explains that SPUC believes 'everyone has the right to life regardless of situation'.

She references the universal declaration of human rights article 3- 'the right to life' and the UN convention on the rights of the child.

She describes SPUC as 'defending life from conception to natural death' and says that the abortion act 'effectively classes the unborn as a non-person'.

She goes on to talk about when life begins, and shows a medical diagram of the womb and ovaries which traces the path of the ovum down the fallopian tube into the middle of the womb where fertilisation occurs and then on to implantation in the uterus lining. She pinpoints the moment when she believes life begins i.e. at fertilisation before implantation occurs- she is careful to say that this is just her opinion, that it doesn't make sense to her to put the moment of 'life beginning' anywhere else, but that others do. The ovum is repeatedly referred to as 'you': 'you travel down the fallopian tube', 'you send a signal to your mother to make the womb lining thick' even before fertilisation has occurred.

The next slide states that at fertilisation 'you' are 'Genetically complete. Human. Alive. Separate' and she goes on to explain that not only your physical characteristics but also your 'personality and temperament' is set in the DNA of these first cells.

She then shows a short film detailing the stages of development of the foetus, which has clearly been made by SPUC but very closely resembles a BBC documentary in style.

Quotes from this:

'7 weeks after conception your fingers and toes have formed and are wriggling'

'7 week old embryos have been photographed sucking their thumbs'

At 6-7 weeks old foetuses 'shrink away from any instruments inserted into the womb including cameras or needles'

At 14 weeks your sense of taste has developed and 'some mothers have their amniotic fluid sweetened' to encourage the baby to ingest it.

'Babies born at 22 weeks weighing 10 oz and 10 inches long have survived outside the womb'

'advances in neonatal care mean that babies born half way through pregnancy can survive'

Much emphasis is placed on the development of consciousness in the fetus- which is first mentioned at roughly the 7 week stage, but the documentary is a little vague sometimes about what developments go with which date mark in the pregnancy. Consciousness, the documentary says is revealed by response to touch, heat, music, 'bright lights shone on the belly', and response to the mothers voice. The fetus is again referred to as 'you' and is described as 'leaping' bouncing' and 'practicing walking' inside the womb, and a looped section of a 3D sonogram showing a foetus wriggling around is set to dance music to give the impression that the movement is purposeful.

video of development of foetus eg when it can taste, when it has hair, footage of baby 'dancing' in the womb with dance music in the background.

End of video – picture of the mother having just given birth looking really happy
video references are from Langman's Medical Embryology (2004)

Methods of abortion- this section of the presentation is titled 'Warning! The Reality of Abortion'

She divides them into surgical and chemical/drug abortion.

The most common is vacuum aspiration, with over 100,000 abortions a year. This takes place up to 14 weeks. Slide says:

the unborn baby is dismembered

D&E uses crushing forceps after 14 weeks [she explains these are like surgical pliers' which pull out parts of the baby, crush the baby's head and pull it out]. Quote: 'surgical pliers pull out the parts of the baby in pieces'

Risks to the mother

RU486

The slide displays these points:

3 visits required

-powerful drugs

-kill and expel baby

Traumatic

two pills, 48 hours apart

'the problem is this can be used up to nine weeks – compare this with development of the baby – the baby will often come away between the two clinic visits, and it might be recognisable as a baby.

We've had a lot of women coming to us for help who have been distressed by this method'.

She shows a slide with a quote from the chairman of the company that manufactures RU486 who says 'it's an appalling psychological ordeal'.

Late abortion

prostaglandin drug – same as the drug used to induce labour

mother goes through labour

very late abortion, at 24 weeks +, 'the baby is poisoned before delivery'

'risks to the mother'

Disability.

The slide accompanying this shows a child with Downs Syndrome smiling.

'The Equality Act 2010 gives greater rights for people with disabilities... whereas the Abortion Act 1967 allows disabled people to be killed before they are born... It is legal to abort [disabled fetuses] right up to the birth of the baby' and 'Over 90% of unborn babies with Downs Syndrome are aborted'.

The Morning after pill:

'can cause an early abortion'

'It contains 2 *drugs* that work in a similar way to RU486'

'it may stop an egg being released from the ovary (i.e. prevent ovulation)'

'it may prevent sperm from fertilising any egg that may already have been released'

'it may stop a fertilised egg from attaching itself to the lining of the womb'

'the tablet is the same dose of hormones you get in seven weeks of contraception tablets, all in one go. We are concerned about the people who are taking this regularly – we don't know what effect this might be having on their health and fertility in years to come'.

What about the mother? Things that might happen to women:

the majority of women having abortions are healthy at the point where they have their abortion [the point being that any health effects are from the abortion not something else]

Points in bold were on powerpoint, the rest is her spoken explanation.

heavy blood loss (from suction)

infection and infertility – occasionally, it's rare, but infections can lead to infertility

miscarriage and premature delivery – risk of damaging the cervix, as it isn't supposed to be forced open during pregnancy so it's very brittle and can get damaged.

Breast cancer [she doesn't say anything about this now, but later in the questions she does]

Death- 'in rare cases women will die from having an abortion'

Next slide shows a picture of Manon Jones, '1987-2005' who was 18 years old and took the RU 486 pill and died in Southmead Hospital, Bristol following seizures and a cardiac arrest.

Post abortion trauma.

The presentation shows a loop of fading in/out symptoms:

'suicidal tendencies'

'guilt'

'depression'

'anger'

'anxiety'

'sleep disturbance'

'drug and alcohol abuse'

She is careful to say that some women experience post abortion trauma, but not everyone. 'We know this from the women who come to us for help, sometimes, years later.' She says 'Post abortion trauma is a form of PTSD' and symptoms include depression, anxiety, sleep disorder, anger, guilt [these words are flying around the screen on the powerpoint with a picture of a woman looking sad].

Presentation shows an atmospheric [but anonymous] picture of a woman's shadow seen through a glass door with the name 'Emma Beck 1977-2008' [perhaps they couldn't get permission to use her real picture?] who is reported to have killed herself in 2008 following aborting twins. She left a note saying she hadn't wanted to have an abortion, she is quoted by the SPUC woman as writing in her suicide note 'I told them at the clinic I didn't want to go through with it'.

She talks about their 'sister organisation' and helpline, ARCH: 'abortion recovery and care helpline' where they talk to women who've had an abortion, and men who know someone who have. Some quotes are shown on the presentation- things people have reportedly said on the helpline:

'Abortion didn't end my pain, it began it'.

'If only someone had told me the truth about it'.

'I feel loss, emptiness, guilt and anger'. [and a couple more I didn't have time to get]

Then a video is shown with an American woman named Georgette Forney speaking in front of big Ben. As well as reiterating that women who have abortions get depression and drug/alcohol abuse problems, she also claims 'eating disorders' are a result of abortion.

Quote: 'Women deserve better than abortion... when we have abortions we, in essence, go against our very nature... we're not wired to abort our children'

'We need to make abortion unthinkable'

'Abortion hurts women'

'Abortion is bad healthcare'

Alternatives to abortion [presentation shows a signpost with three directions, adoption and parenting pointing close to the foreground and abortion pointing into the background] with a list of famous people who were adopted: John Lennon, Marilyn Monroe, JS Bach, Eddie Murphy, Oprah Winfrey.

A video is shown of Scottish student Monica McGhee [filmed 2011] who became pregnant at 15 and had a baby while still at school. She comes across as genuine and natural except that the line-'it wasn't the end of my life, but it was the start of someone else's' seems like it might have been fed to her.

'when I found out I was pregnant I suddenly realised how important education was, because it wasn't just for me... I did very well in my A levels so I went to a good university in Scotland...[.]

When I first met my daughter it was the most amazing magical moment in my life [...] My life has changed but it's so much better in so many ways'.

Questions from the students

Question: 'what kind of clinical evidence can you provide for the physical and mental side effects of abortion?'

Answer: 'The government produces quite detailed statistics on abortion, and it lists complications people have had. These are just the ones that are attributed to abortions, there are probably others. With psychological problems it's a lot harder to quantify it and it might be years before women start having these problems. For example I know one woman at ARCH who had two abortions when she was younger. After the second one she found out she was still pregnant, because she had probably been pregnant with twins and only one had been aborted. Once she saw her baby on ultrasound screen and was offered another abortion, she realised she couldn't abort it, and that was when her psychological problems began, so it's very difficult to put figures on it, but we know there are women with problems because they come to us for help. Often people aren't told beforehand that these consequences might result. *[note she doesn't provide any of the 'detailed statistics she mentions, just refers to them in passing].*

Question: 'I notice you haven't mentioned the psychological impact of actually having a child. That strikes me as a bit one-sided'.

Answer: 'Obviously you've had the over view from different people today. All I can talk about is young women who've had kids and how they feel. It's made them want to be more successful. [Refers back to Monica who had the baby at 15] - 'she was lucky because her mum was very supportive and looked after her baby so she could go to university. What's going to be absolutely

key is the support network around her, if they don't want her to have the baby it's going to be very difficult'.

Question: 'With disabilities every situation is different...' something slightly muddled to the effect of 'wouldn't it be better to let people decide on an individual basis whether or not to abort?'

Answer: 'I think it depends on your view of how you see and value life. I'd like to see people get all the help they need'.

Question: about the slide with the link to breast cancer which she didn't explain

Answer: 'If a woman has an abortion, particularly if it's her first pregnancy... the cells in the breast start to develop to produce milk... and if she has an abortion that process is cut off, and this can leave the cells in her breast in a half-changed state and statistically, this can increase the risk of developing breast cancer'

She gives a reference to a website called 'abortion and breast cancer link'.

Question about whether the morning after pill causes abortion.

Answer: 'It depends on where you decide life begins, it's when sperm and egg [come together]. 'It doesn't make sense to me to say anything other than that but other people disagree'.

Question about making abortion illegal and women's rights over their own bodies

Answer: 'There are certain things as a society that we decide are unacceptable, for example if someone was to beat up an old lady, we'd say they don't have the right to do this' 'we want to move towards a situation where people don't think that's [abortion is] an option'

Question about if the 'mother' was raped

Answer: 'This is obviously the worst case scenario. Rape is the ultimate unplanned pregnancy. I wouldn't condemn any woman who makes the decision to have an abortion. But having an abortion isn't going to make the rape go away. In our organisation we have some people who've been raped and had an abortion and some of them have said that it was like being raped again, like a second trauma. For some people who've been raped and had the baby, even if they don't keep it, something positive comes out of that whole rape experience'

'something positive comes out of a negative'

'not true for everybody... the baby is as much an innocent victim of the rape as the mother'

She tells anecdotes about two people in SPUC/ARCH who were born as a result of rape, who feel they have a right to life.

'[it's] a tiny, tiny number of abortions as a result of rape, in the total number of abortions'

Question: What's your opinion if the baby endangers the mother's life?

Answer [She talks about cancer treatment for the woman during pregnancy]:

'wherever possible I would want to be able to save the life of both mother and baby'

'I wouldn't say the mother has to die to save the baby – sometimes it's possible to delay treatment till after the baby is born'

[the teacher then suggests all the students form a line from pro-choice to anti-abortion at the front of the hall. There are a few towards the anti-abortion end, but most of the 180-odd students are in the middle or at the pro-choice end. Phew!]

Analysis by Education For Choice of claims presented

Milton Keynes

Claim: *Prof David Paten from Uni Nottingham*

Graph showing that SRE doesn't help teenage pregnancies - They haven't been changed since implementation of 'explicit' SRE - £300m spent - teenage pregnancies not changed at all - but STIs have escalated because of sex education

Reality:

- ❖ [Department of Health statistics](#) show a clear fall in teenage pregnancies:
 - The under 18 conception rate for 2010 is the lowest since 1969 at 35.5 conceptions per thousand women aged 15–17
 - The estimated number of conceptions to women aged under 18 also fell to 34,633 in 2010 compared with 38,259 in 2009, a decline of 9.5 per cent
- ❖ UNESCO [International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education](#):
'There is evidence that (SRE) programmes did not have harmful effects: in particular, they did not hasten the initiation or increase sexual activity. The studies also demonstrate that it is possible, with the same programmes, to delay sexual intercourse and to increase the use of condoms or other forms of contraception.'
- ❖ And see the Sex Education Forum overview on the impact of SRE, [Does sex and relationships education work?](#)

Cambridge

Claim:

- *'7 weeks after conception your fingers and toes have formed and are wriggling'*
- *'7 week old embryos have been photographed sucking their thumbs'*
- *At 6-7 weeks old fetuses 'shrink away from any instruments inserted into the womb including cameras or needles'*
- *At 14 weeks your sense of taste has developed and 'some mothers have their amniotic fluid sweetened' to encourage the baby to ingest it.*
- *'Babies born at 22 weeks weighing 10 oz and 10 inches long have survived outside the womb'*
- *'advances in neonatal care mean that babies born half way through pregnancy can survive'*

Reality:

- ❖ Simply looking at images of a six-week old embryo tells a very different story:
<http://gynmed.at/index.php/english/abortion> - via Christian Fiala.

Claim:

The Morning after pill: 'can cause an early abortion'....'We are concerned about the people who are taking this regularly – we don't know what effect this might be having on their health and fertility in years to come'.

Reality:

- ❖ The Family Planning Association [policy statement on Emergency Contraception](#) says 'medical research and legal opinion are quite clear that EC (hormonal or IUD) prevents pregnancy and cannot cause an abortion. This was most recently clarified in a case at the High Court in 2002 during which the judge ruled that "there is no established pregnancy prior to implantation".'

Pregnancy begins at implantation and abortion can only take place after a fertilised egg has implanted in the womb.'

- ❖ NHS Choices [says that](#) 'Taking the emergency contraceptive pill has not been shown to cause any serious or long-term health problems.'

Claim:

- *heavy blood loss (from suction)*
- *infection and infertility – occasionally, it's rare, but infections can lead to infertility*
- *miscarriage and premature delivery – risk of damaging the cervix, as it isn't supposed to be forced open during pregnancy so it's very brittle and can get damaged.*
- *Breast cancer [she doesn't say anything about this now, but later in the questions she does]*
- *Death- 'in rare cases women will die from having an abortion'*

'If a woman has an abortion, particularly if it's her first pregnancy... the cells in the breast start to develop to produce milk... and if she has an abortion that process is cut off, and this can leave the cells in her breast in a half-changed state and statistically, this can increase the risk of developing breast cancer'

She gives a reference to a website called 'abortion and breast cancer link'.

Reality:

- ❖ Abortion does not increase a woman's risk of breast cancer, as explained by [Cancer Research UK](#).

Claim:

Post abortion trauma.

The presentation shows a loop of fading in/out symptoms:

- *'suicidal tendencies'*
- *'guilt'*
- *'depression'*
- *'anger'*
- *'anxiety'*
- *'sleep disturbance'*
- *'drug and alcohol abuse'*

Reality:

- ❖ Post Abortion Trauma is not a recognised medical condition, as explained by [this Education For Choice blog](#) with links:
- ❖ The National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, in a December 2011 [review of abortion and mental health](#), state 'The rates of mental health problems for women with an unwanted pregnancy were the same whether they had an abortion or gave birth'.

Claim:

In our organisation we have some people who've been raped and had an abortion and some of them have said that it was like being raped again, like a second trauma.

Reality:

The implication that abortion is necessarily traumatic is problematic. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [state that](#) 'Women with an unintended pregnancy should be informed that the evidence suggests that they are no more or less likely to suffer adverse psychological sequelae whether they have an abortion or continue with the pregnancy and have the baby.'