

From: Catherine Evans [CatherineE@brookcentres.org.uk]
Sent: 10 November 2005 12:14
Subject: Brook's Wise Up! Campaign update #2

Dear colleagues

Legal and policy developments

Three weeks since the launch of Brook's *Wise Up!* campaign to promote and protect young people's rights on sexual health, you will no doubt be aware that the key issue of confidentiality for young people under 16 is currently being widely debated in the media, as the Judicial Review of the Department of Health's guidance on confidentiality is heard this week in the High Court. Brook has been actively involved in presenting to the media the case for upholding confidentiality. We understand the decision on this case is likely to be reserved until a later date.

The joint statement published on 23 October by Action on Rights for Children (ARCH) with 21 signatories from a range of influential organisations representing health and education professionals, young people and children, including Brook, also helped sustain the debate and communicate the concerns we all share about child protection guidance that could lead to young people's right to confidentiality being routinely breached. ARCH has also co-ordinated productive meetings with Peers and relevant shadow spokespeople.

The consultation on Working Together to Safeguard Children closed on 28 October and we are now awaiting the Government's response.

We were encouraged to see that in relation to the judicial review the Department of Health's lawyers have been quoted as arguing that without confidentiality, many teenagers will not seek vital sexual health and contraception advice. We hope this will be reflected in the final government decision on this issue.

Parliamentary developments

Since the first campaign update (circulated on 21 October), 56 MPs have signed the Early Day Motion in support of the *Wise Up!* campaign (EDM 829, tabled on 21 October by Stephen Williams MP)

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=29151&SESSION=875>

We would still like to gain more signatories, so please do remind any parliamentary supporters of this continuing opportunity to back the campaign in this way. Brook can also provide a model press release for any MP who would like to publicise their support for the campaign in their constituency (for more details please contact Catherine Evans by e-mail: catherinee@brookcentres.org.uk)

Support for the campaign

We have also received further statements of support from individuals and organisations including the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Terrence Higgins Trust. It's not too late for others to add their voice to the campaign, so if your organisation wants to endorse our campaign objectives, please send a short statement of support (max 75 words) to wiseup@brookcentres.org.uk

Spreading the word

Next week Brook's Chief Executive, Jan Barlow, will be speaking about the campaign at a conference on sexual health in general practice, organised by the Royal College of General Practitioners. The manager of the Brook Centre in Birkenhead, Harriet Gill, will also be contributing to the debate at that conference. Val Buxton, Brook's Head of Policy and Development, is speaking at a UK Youth Parliament event on sex education this weekend. Jan Barlow has also spoken about the campaign at a Citizens' Jury organised by the General Medical Council about young people and confidentiality, and at the Westminster Diet and Health Forum.

Health and youth professionals have been requesting copies of free *Wise Up!* campaign materials (posters and walletcards), and next week we will be mailing information out to thousands of professionals working with young people. If you would like to order any free materials please send an e-mail to wiseup@brookcentres.org.uk

For more information about the campaign, please visit Brook's website. http://www.brook.org.uk/content/M1_WiseUp.asp

We will continue to keep you updated on any significant campaign developments.

Best wishes

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