

Welcome to the March edition of 4 Thought Solutions Newsletter. The objective of this newsletter is to provide short abstracts from larger articles about what is going on in the field of sexual health and contraception. We will accept short articles or information on events for advertising giving you the opportunity to share with others what you are doing. Hope you all had a good Mothering Sunday.

For our subscribers in the Wirral area, please note that there are a number of 4 Thought Solution sexual health training courses currently being advertised in your region, to book on to a course contact: [suzannecottrell@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:suzannecottrell@wirral.gov.uk) or [Lynne.Loughran@wirral.nhs.uk](mailto:Lynne.Loughran@wirral.nhs.uk)

### **The need to get the balance right over pregnancy tests and sex education in Merseyside schools**

Should we be throwing our hands up in horror at the news that Merseyside schoolgirls are being offered pregnancy tests? Or should we be glad that health bosses have taken such decisive action? Although Wirral schools are among the first in the country to offer the service, a pilot scheme involving five Liverpool schools has commenced. But this controversial move does not – or it certainly should not – signify that the powers-that-be have given up on sex education. It is vital that a practical balance is struck. While we applaud the provision of easily-accessible testing – as long as it is supported by comprehensive counselling – we urge the education authorities to continue investing wisely and diligently in sex education, thereby hopefully reducing the need for such tests. <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/views/our-view/2010/02/04/the-need-to-get-the-balance-right-over-pregnancy-tests-and-sex-education-in-merseyside-schools-100252-25758207/>

**Schools could be kept open all year round as 'community hubs'** MORE than 160 schools could be opened up to wider use in a move expected to improve communities and better children's educational results. If the scheme is approved by Sheffield Council, the city's 27 secondary and 135 primary schools will be included in a plan to make use of facilities beyond the end of the school day and during the 13 weeks every year they are closed for holidays. <http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/localnews/Schools-could-be-kept-open.6047097.jp>

**Newsweek Examines Role Of 'New' Female Condom In Efforts To Combat Spread Of HIV In D.C.** Women's health experts are watching closely to see whether a recent grant to provide no-cost female condoms in Washington, D.C., will "really make a difference" in the area's HIV/AIDS rate among women. The goal of the program is to empower women to take control of their own health and safety. The \$500,000 grant from the MAC AIDS Fund will allow health centre's in the district to promote and distribute the latest version of the female condom, FC2, which FDA approved in March 2009. The female condom can be inserted several hours before intercourse, allowing a woman to protect herself without having to persuade the man with whom she's sleeping to change his behaviour. The program aims to reduce the district's HIV transmission rate, particularly among women. HIV is the leading cause of death among black women ages 24 through 39 in D.C. About three percent of black women in D.C. have HIV, compared with a rate of 0.7% for the U.S. Population. <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/182059.php>

The FC2 condom was launched a year ago this month - <http://www.femalehealth.com/> or <http://www.fc2.us.com/fc2inthenews.html>

**Contraceptive Pill Not Associated With Increased Long-Term Risk of Death, Study Finds** — Women in the UK who have ever used the oral contraceptive pill are less likely to die from any cause, including all cancers and heart disease, compared with never users, according to research published online in the *British Medical Journal*. The results show a slightly higher risk in women under 45 years old who are current or recent users of the pill. The authors stress that the effects in younger women disappear after about 10 years. Furthermore, the benefits in older women outweigh the smaller excess risks among younger women. The study continues to find a higher rate of violent or accidental death among oral contraceptive users compared with never users. The authors are unable to explain this persistent finding. 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100311191810.htm>

**Researcher Presents Risk-Free Treatment for Low Female Sexual Desire** - Researchers are currently testing a new drug, Flibanserin, which was developed as an antidepressant and affects neurotransmitters in the brain, to treat women with low sexual desire. However, experts 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010  
<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100309111639.htm>

## **Prevalence of Cyber-bullying and Its Psychological Impact on Nonheterosexual Youth Revealed**

Schools are typically on guard against students who bully by inflicting repeated violence on other students. But technology has given rise to a relatively new form of bullying which inflicts emotional harm in a stealth manner, working through Web sites, chat rooms, e-mail, cell phones and instant messaging. 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010 <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100308182503.htm>

## **Teenage pregnancy 'can be positive'**

Teenage pregnancy can "make sense" for young people and have a positive effect on their lives, according to the authors of a new study. The book, *Teenage Parenthood: What's The Problem?*, argues teenage pregnancy is not necessarily the result of ignorance about contraception or low expectations. Its authors say the majority of teenage mothers they interviewed were more motivated to succeed at school or work because they wanted to provide for their families. Dr Claire Alexander of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) said teenage mothers were often stereotyped as "dysfunctional and immoral". She said: "In contrast to the ignorance, fecklessness and hazardous consequences reiterated in policy and media, our research makes it clear that young parenthood can make sense and be valued and can even provide an impetus for teenage mothers and fathers to strive to provide a better life for their children." The study shows a fall in the number of teenage pregnancies since the 1960s and early 1970s. Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2010 <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/latest/2010/02/13/teenage-pregnancy-can-be-positive-115875-22040425/>

**Rape victims partly to blame** More than half of Britons believe some rape victims should take responsibility for being attacked, research has suggested. In a new poll, 56% of those questioned felt that there were certain circumstances where the victim should be held partly accountable. Of those, 28% thought people who wore revealing clothes should take some of the blame if they were sexually assaulted. Among women, 23% said if someone danced provocatively at a nightclub they should be held partly responsible, and 15% said the same if they had accepted a drink from their attacker. The research, called *Wake Up To Rape*, was carried out to mark the 10th anniversary of the Havens, which runs sexual assault referral centres in London. Dr Jan Welch, clinical director at the Haven in Camberwell, south-east London, said: "Unfortunately, women have bought into the idea that sometimes the rape victim is to blame. Under no circumstances is a woman at fault for being raped."

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ukpress/article/ALeqM5ieJ2C2X7UccS9pY47ThJUGYAGvFQ>

[www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/02/16/2820499.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/02/16/2820499.htm)

Also review [http://www.personalarms.com/f\\_acquaintance\\_rape.htm](http://www.personalarms.com/f_acquaintance_rape.htm)

## **Aids 'could be beaten in 40 years'** (22.02.10) [pa.press.com](http://pa.press.com)

A global mass-population screening programme could rid the world of the scourge of Aids within 40 years, a South African expert has claimed. Testing most of the world's population for HIV then treating those found to be infected would halt transmission of the virus by 2015, according to Professor Brian Williams. By 2050, when a large proportion of HIV carriers undergoing treatment will have died, the epidemic would effectively be over, he argues. The price would be enormous, costing around £2 billion in South Africa alone. But this would be offset by eradicating the massive disease burden of HIV/Aids, and saving the lives of productive, working-age individuals, Prof Williams believes. <http://www.recentnews.co.uk/Aids-could-be-beaten-in-40-years/363419> There are a number of articles this month on HIV to be found at [http://www.sciencedaily.com/news/health\\_medicine/hiv\\_and\\_aids/](http://www.sciencedaily.com/news/health_medicine/hiv_and_aids/)

**Ovarian cancer in Australia:** an overview, 2010 - provides a comprehensive picture of national statistics on ovarian cancer using a range of data sources, with the latest available data and trends over time presented. Throughout this report, the term 'ovarian cancer' refers to invasive ovarian cancers; borderline tumours are not included. Feb 2010

[http://www.cnet.ngo.net.au/component/option,com\\_/Itemid,0/option,content/task,view/id,46829/](http://www.cnet.ngo.net.au/component/option,com_/Itemid,0/option,content/task,view/id,46829/)

Also released in February - **Reproductive health: findings from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health.** By Jayne Lucke, Deborah Loxton <http://www.alsw.org.au/> Drawing on a major survey of Australian women conducted over time, this report examines contraception, women's aspirations for motherhood, reproductive histories, problems with fertility and related treatment and advice-seeking behaviour, maternal health and wellbeing, and participation in the paid workforce.

## **Looking for Resources check out:**

### **The Volunteering Fund will offer two grant funding schemes**

A local grant scheme –to support volunteering in health and social care. Applicants should be connected at a local level to commissioners (e.g. Primary Care Trust, Local Authority). A national portfolio scheme – larger

grants to enable national organisations to deliver more strategic or developmental volunteering programmes. Information on national portfolio projects will be available in Spring 2010, with expressions of interest being invited in March 2010. <http://www.volunteeringfund.com/index.htm>

**Standards for the management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)** The launch of the new *Standards for the management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)*. to support the commissioning and provision of high quality care for STIs across all settings. The standards were produced by MedFASH for the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) and were launched on 21 January, at the House of Lords. The launch event was hosted by Baroness Gould of Potternewton, Chair of the Independent Advisory Group on Sexual Health and HIV. <http://www.medfash.org.uk/>



<http://www.teenlifecheck.co.uk> - The NHS Teen LifeCheck for 12-15 year old's. Here they can check out their life and see how their are getting on.



<http://www.etc.org.uk/Forprofessionals/Resources> -Education For Choice produces a range of resources to provide young people, parents and professionals with clear, up to date and accurate information about abortion.



**Forthcoming Events** - To book onto these events please use the contact details listed.

**From April 2010** – In London, Birmingham and Oldham - Sexual health and young people - an introduction, a specially designed one day course for non-specialist staff. In today's challenging financial environment, we appreciate how difficult it may be to secure training for non-specialist staff, who nevertheless have an essential role supporting the sexual health of young people. To help these non-specialists, Durex via Catalyst is offering 90 places on a specially designed one day course run by two of the UK's most prestigious organisations in the field: sexual health charities [Brook](#) and [FPA](#). <http://www.durexhcp.co.uk/durex-catalyst/powering-excellence.php>

**Child and Adolescent Health and Well-Being: Delivering 21<sup>st</sup> Century SRE in Schools** Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010 London <http://publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/AC25-PPE.php>

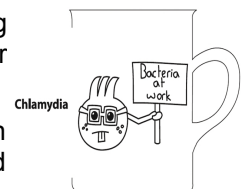
If you fancy a little trip away from home:

**Australasian Sexual Health Conference** to be held from 18 - 20 October 2010 at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Sydney, New South Wales. <http://www.sexualhealthconference.com.au/>

### Previously Listed Events

**Contraceptive Technology** March 18-21, 2009 - San Francisco April 1-4, 2009 - Washington, DC

**Training:** Remember 4 Thought Solutions Ltd provides training programmes ranging from, workshops, single days or tiered programmes. So please contact us to discuss your organisations sexual health training needs [info@4thoughtsolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@4thoughtsolutions.co.uk)



We are expanding our product range. The images from the Snap Clap game have been reproduced on Mugs. These mugs are an easy way to introduce sexually shared infections.

Snap Clap a fun and versatile resource suitable for training workshops, educational settings, with a range of professional and non-professional groups. Check out the website for more information <http://www.4thoughtsolutions.co.uk/pr.html>



**This** newsletter is for you if you have any questions, research or audits you would like assistance with or if you would like to contribute news items, event listings, vacant positions, items of interest then please email any contributions directly to the editor at [info@4thoughtsolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@4thoughtsolutions.co.uk)

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