

Faith & Policy Watch

October/November 2011

Bye Buy Childhood

Bailey Review

On 11th October, representatives and regulators from the media, marketing and retail industries attended a summit at 10 Downing Street to update the Prime Minister on their progress on the recommendations of the Bailey Review (*Letting Children be Children*).

- The new website, ParentPort, was launched at the Summit and directs people to the relevant bodies to make complaints about advertising, marketing and retailing to children. www.parentport.org.uk
- The Advertising Standards Authority has produced a 'statement on sexual imagery in outdoor advertising', which outlines what the ASA will find acceptable or not on billboards, bus stops and other outdoor adverts. Any adjudication on a complaint will take into account new evidence of public opinion, and the proximity of advertising to locations relevant to children. www.asa.org.uk

- The ASA is also launching a schools engagement programme in 2012. This will provide educational materials to help parents and children understand advertising rules and the role of the ASA.
- Ofcom has produced a new guidance note, 'Protecting the Under-Eighteens: Observing the watershed on television and music videos', and will be reviewing all code of guidance in late 2011/early 2012. www.ofcom.org.uk
- The Department for Culture Media and Sport will be consulting on age rating for music videos in January 2012.
- BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin will offer all new internet customers an automatic 'active choice' of whether or not to activate parental controls for their internet line, within the next 12 months.
- In June 2011 the British Retail Consortium launched 'Responsible Retailing: BRC Childrenswear Guidelines', which offers good practice guidance to BRC members on retailing clothes to under 12s. www.brc.org.uk
- The Advertising Association has produced a 'best practice principle on the use of under 16s in brand ambassador and peer-to-peer marketing', stating that children under the age of 16 should not be employed to actively promote brands and products etc to their peers.

| Contents | |
|---|----|
| Bye Buy Childhood. | P1 |
| Bye Buy Childhood. Party Conferences. | P2 |
| Party Conferences. | P3 |
| Sottish Consultation. Ending VAW. Prisons Week. | P4 |

Inquiry into Online Child Protection

In September, Claire Perry MP and a cross-party group of more than sixty MPs launched a Parliamentary Inquiry into online child protection. Giving evidence at the first meeting, Fleur Dorrell, Head of Faith & Policy at Mothers' Union, spoke about the potential harm of adult content to children, alongside representatives from organisations such as the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and MumsNet. The second meeting in October heard evidence from internet service providers, who argued that whilst they can help make it easier for parents to filter internet content, parents still need to monitor their children's online activities.

Government Equalities Office body confidence pack

The Government Equalities Office (GEO), in conjunction with Media Smart, has launched a teaching pack to help children understand how the media alters and manipulates photos and the impact that digitally altered images of models can have on self esteem. Primary school teachers will be able to download the materials to structure a lesson for year six (10-11 year olds). The teaching pack is available at <http://www.mediasmart.org.uk/resources-body-image.php>



For ideas on how to get involved with the *Bye Buy Childhood* campaign to end the commercialisation of childhood, please contact Mothers' Union for *Taking action on the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood: 5 things you can do in 2012* on 020 7222 5533 or policy@themothersunion.org Alternatively you can find it on the Bye Buy Childhood website at www.byebuychildhood.org , from 8th November.

Party conferences 2011



At the **Liberal Democrats Party conference** in September, the Minister for Children and Families, Sarah Teather MP, made a number of announcements.

- The early years' curriculum will be reviewed and become more focused on how children develop and learn.
- All disadvantaged two year olds will be entitled to 15 hours of free early education.
- The Government will invest £30m over the next four years in relationship support.
- Parental leave will be extended to both parents.
- The Government will pilot an offer of voluntary parenting classes for every parent of a child under five in three areas.

In his Q&A session, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg announced that the Government will set up new £355 million scheme to educate girls across the world between now and 2015. The Girls Education Challenge will aim to give 650,000 girls six years of primary education or, alternatively, up to a million girls three years at a junior secondary school.

The federal party also passed a number of policy motions, which now form part of the Liberal Democrat's national policy priorities.

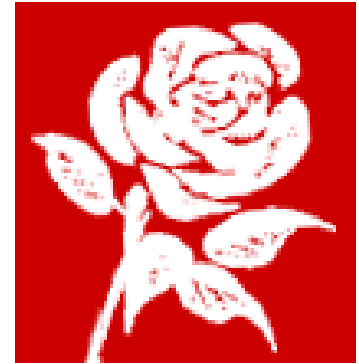
- **A New Purpose for Politics: Quality of Life** calls for Lib Dem policy to support people in making their own choices to maximise their quality of life, through both economic and non-economic means. This includes improving access to mental health services, educating people about the impact of advertising, maximising wellbeing in the workplace and increasing access to flexible working.

- **Tackling violence against women** calls on the Government to work harder to prevent violence against women taking place, to protect victims and to empower women.

To read these policy motions, go to:

<http://www.libdems.org.uk/siteFiles/resources/docs/conference/F40%20A%20New%20Purpose%20for%20Politics.pdf> and
<http://www.libdems.org.uk/siteFiles/resources/docs/conference/F26%20Tackling%20Violence%20Against%20Women.pdf>

At the **Labour Party conference**, Harriet Harman MP announced Labour's National Executive Committee's decision that there should always be one female in the leadership team i.e. Party Leader or Deputy Party Leader. Following the changes to some constituency boundaries the Party will also consider using all-female candidate shortlists for parliamentary seats.



At a fringe event on working with the House of Lords, Baroness Royall highlighted the importance of lobbying the Lords throughout the policy making and legislative process, and explained how useful charities can be in providing briefings and technical expertise. Lord Bassam explained that the Labour Peers are keen to forge stronger relationships with the voluntary sector over the next few years.



In his speech to the **Conservative Party conference**, Prime Minister David Cameron outlined the importance of the family in building a strong society. He pledged to '*make this the most family-friendly government the country has ever seen*' through "*More childcare. More health visitors. More relationship support. More help with parenting. And for the 120,000 families that are most troubled - and causing the most trouble - a commitment to turn their lives around by the end of this Parliament.*"

Cameron also reaffirmed the Government's commitment to recognising marriage in the tax system and highlighted his party's commitment to consult the public on legalising same-sex marriage (as opposed to civil partnerships).

In his speech to conference, Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell MP, explained that, through DIFD, the UK will:

- Help to vaccinate a child every two seconds over the next five years.
- Get 11 million children into school in the poorest parts of the world.
- Ensure that 15 million people will have safe drinking water for the first time.
- Provide 10 million women with access to family planning for the first time.
- Get four million children in Pakistan into school for the first time over the next four years.

At a Barnardo's fringe event on child sexual exploitation, the Minister for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, outlined how the Government needs to work better to ensure that children are not sexually exploited by organised criminals, including through raising greater awareness of the issues; training those working with vulnerable children; catching, prosecuting and punishing perpetrators; and helping children to escape situations of sexual exploitation. The Government will be producing an action plan to address child sexual exploitation later in the autumn.

For details of Barnardo's campaign go to:

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/cutthemfree.htm

Scottish Government consultation on the registration of civil partnerships

The Scottish Government has launched a consultation paper on the possibility of allowing religious ceremonies for civil partnerships, and the possible introduction of same sex marriage (equivalent to heterosexual marriage, rather than civil partnership) in Scotland. The Scottish Government is in favour of permitting religious ceremonies for civil partnerships and introducing same sex marriage. However, they also believe that no religious body or its celebrants should be *required* to carry out same sex marriages or civil partnership ceremonies and have given assurances that they will listen to all views. If, following the results of the consultation, the Scottish Government introduces a Bill it will consult further on details. Mothers' Union members in Scotland have been invited to contribute to a coordinated response.



To read the consultation, go to www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/05153328/0

European Year to end violence against women



The European Women's Lobby (EWL) has initiated a campaign lobbying for comprehensive European Union action on violence against women (VAW), which affects approximately 45% of women across Europe. To date, the EU has no binding legislation in place to deal with VAW within its borders but the last few years have witnessed an increased political willingness to change this, with multiple calls from the European Parliament for action. The EWL is also calling for a

European Year on combating and preventing violence against women, which would draw attention to the problem of VAW and its impact on society. In 2009, the European Parliament had asked the European Commission to declare, within the next five years, a 'European Year on Zero Tolerance of Violence against Women', and in 2010, more than half of the MEPs adopted a new written declaration on establishing a European Year of Combating Violence against Women.

To join this campaign, go to www.womenlobby.org

Please pray for all of the women across the world that face violence and abuse each day.

Prisons Week

Prisons Week runs from 20th – 26th November across England and Wales. The week encourages people to prayer for prisoners, their families, victims of crime and those working with prisoners.

Lord you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in His strength and in His Spirit, now and every day. Amen.

www.prisonweek.org