

Gender and Sexuality Diversity Forum Update

There are no updates from the last meeting.

Attached is some information you may find useful for your organisation or Forum discussion.

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Sex and the cities: publicity

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Safe sex poster in Manchester

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The UK continues to have high rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease among young people.

"There is no point in having excellent sexual health and contraception services if nobody knows they are there," says Jon Dunn, teenage pregnancy co-ordinator of [Manchester City Council's](#) joint health unit.

Last year the council acknowledged that despite its efforts the under-18 conception rate was still very high and that young people were under-using its sexual health services.

In a drive to better promote these services, the council launched a poster campaign with the theme 'Any plans for tonight... like unprotected sex?'.

The campaign ran on billboards and bus shelters over Christmas and New Year 2007-08 and was designed to remind young people of the unintended consequences of their actions, while also alerting them to local sexual health and contraception services.

The teenage pregnancy partnership, which includes the council and local primary care trust (PCT), used quarterly conception statistics to tell them when the campaign would be most effective. The statistics identified an autumnal spike in under-18 pregnancies that might be linked to the transition period from school to college and its new-found freedoms.

As a result, the poster campaign was re-launched in October to counter this trend.

This campaign is targeted around college sites and supported by education outreach workers giving talks in colleges on sexual health and contraception. The main campaign will be run again in the city centre at Christmas.

In addition, the team has launched a website to provide information on all of the city's sexual health services, including where to get emergency contraception, details of NHS walk-in centres and distribution points for a condom scheme.

Mr Dunn says the main challenge facing the campaign was pitching it at the right level. "It is a sensitive subject and with a universal promotion it had to be non-offensive but speak to young people in a way that wasn't too young and simplistic, such as cartoons."

The council's internal creative agency worked with local young people, who are featured in the campaigns. "They look like Manchester residents," says Mr Dunn, who believes the local feel gives the campaign the edge over similar national approaches.

As to whether it is impacting on under-18 pregnancies, he says concrete evidence will not be known until the statistics are published next year. "But we do know that the website usage goes up after the campaigns and we are getting anecdotal evidence that more young people are attending clinics after seeing the posters. We think we're having an impact via the campaign. Fingers crossed, this will show in next year's data."

Find out more

[Manchester City Council](#) Jon Dunn, teenage pregnancy co-ordinator, Manchester Joint Health Unit.

Tel: 0161 234 3358. Website: www.anyplanstonight.co.uk/site

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