

No fooling parents:

The idea behind Nobody's Fool is a simple one: Give parents the opportunity to supplement the information they share with their children about sex.

Give kids one morning with health professionals from their community; caring adults who want to give kids a small "inoculation" of sorts, before they enter those often-challenging years of puberty.

Now our program is in its 15th year. Although the kids' curiosity and need to inquire have changed little through the years, our world has changed. We hear questions about subjects that most adults were not aware of until their college years. Parents realize the impact of these differences more than anyone else.

At Planned Parenthood we take many calls from parents frantic for help with "those talks" about sex. That's where Nobody's Fool started: parents asking for help in tackling subjects that were never even imagined when they were children.

I love working at Planned Parenthood for many reasons, but helping parents learn how to be better prepared for sensitive conversations and thus more comfortable, that's my favorite. When parents are prepared, comfortable and inviting of questions, children know they can go to them on the tough topics.

In that spirit, let me invite any parent who believes in comprehensive sex education and wants to learn more about Nobody's Fool to reserve a seat at the Nobody's Fool Parent Preview and Dinner to be held at the Waco Convention Center tonight at 6 p.m.

Pam Smalleywood  
Planned Parenthood of Central Texas.

July 19, 2004

Control of what we think

I own a small business in Waco. Over the past several years I have donated money to Planned Parenthood and have even volunteered at Nobody's Fool. As a result of supporting this organization I was recently contacted by an individual who I assume was hoping to confirm that DLM Technologies, Inc. was supporting Nobody's Fool without the knowledge of the curriculum. This woman queried me about my personal knowledge of what was taught, asked me to defend my support of such material and eventually asked me point-blank if I believed in abortion.

My first inclination was to tell her, in no uncertain terms, that it was none of her business. Rather than be confrontational, I answered her questions.

Yes, I am familiar with the curriculum and fully support it. Yes, I would send my child or grandchild to the program without hesitation. Knowledge is a wonderful thing to have, especially when faced with decisions.

And yes I am pro-choice, for I am not able to ever take on the responsibility of making a decision for another individual.

Now with time to think things over, I am deeply disturbed by her inquiry. I was made me think of the Taliban and how they alone have the power to tell you what to read, what to look at, how to dress, what to believe, in effect how to live your life of serious consequences, usually death. Is this the type of society my caller envisions for us here in Waco?

David L. McClatcher  
President  
DLM Technologies, Inc.  
Waco

July 20, 2004

Stop harassment

I find it hard to believe people would boycott Planned Parenthood. Why don't they put their time behind some other issue, such as helping the poor, feeding the hungry, helping a poor neighbor to the doctor or store?

Enough is enough. Stop harassing the people at Planned Parenthood who are good to the poor of Texas.  
Warren Cuevas  
Diamonthead, Miss.

July 24, 2004

Pain of seeing abuse

I would like to answer the March 27 letter from Sherri Forrest and April 1 letter from Becky Weatherly. I agree with both of you. My wife and I raised three great children, one girl and two boys. I agree abortion and unwanted children do not belong in the same sentence. However, I wonder where you have been. What I wrote is true.

I was a state trooper in another state in the 1950s and you would not believe the things I have seen.

If we received a call on a domestic disturbance, we could do nothing unless the person who made the call signed a complaint. If the children were bruised or the wife battered and bleeding, our hands were tied unless a complaint was signed. The wife was usually afraid to sign. But take heart, things are getting better. Now if an officer is called, he can make his own case if he finds a battered wife and hurt children.

I remember going on a call and finding a beautiful 13-year-old girl who hanged herself because she could no longer stand the pain of living. She left a note to that effect.

You are right, young people are educated about sex. Sometimes it is wrong education. That is where Planned Parenthood comes in. They give the right education and help save unwanted children. And as far as the coat hanger is concerned, it is still here or something like it.

I read sometime ago a child is abused every minute of every day. I still believe a good education is the best preventative of evils. Money should be spent on education, not war.  
Billy Graham  
Waco

Aymond's comment is inappropriate

I find it amusing that Bishop Gregory Aymond proclaims Nobody's Fool as "morally inappropriate." (Page 1A, July 7).

Perhaps if some of the hundreds (or maybe thousands if the truth were fully known) of children who were abused by the clergy had the benefit of a wonderful program like Nobody's Fool, they would have recognized the "morally inappropriate" behavior of men those children were taught to admire, respect and obey.

John Pascoita and Bishop Aymond: Go to your dictionary and look up the word "voluntary." Then, if you choose not to endorse, support or participate in Nobody's Fool, you are free to do so.

However, leave those of us alone who recognize an invaluable service to our community which makes accurate, unbiased, complete information about sex available.  
Jim Mckeown  
Waco

July 26, 2004

Where was this outrage before?

Father Timothy Yaverak (July 13 guest column) and Bishop Gregory are on this bandwagon to rid us of the evils that come from Planned Parenthood. There seems to be this outrage from them and the church. I wonder where this energy and outrage was when the abuse scandals were occurring. Where was this quick response via the written media? Was that subject taboo in the community of the religious hierarchy?

And believe me, there was plenty to protest about. On the subject of the sanctity of life, I ask them where was their opposition to the war in which we are now engaged.

We have lost more than 900 lives in this conflict. Where is your pastoral duty to protect the sanctity of life?

If the Catholic Church claims to be the torch-bearer of morality then it must do so not from what can be considered a "safe" issue, but all issues that pertain to the human condition.  
David Reitz  
Waco

July 28, 2004  
Keep this program

Nobody's Fool allows young people to get the facts of life they need to know. Most kids never get sex education at home.

I think when kids have the information they need, they make good decisions. Pro-lifers should worry about abortions, not about Nobody's Fool. It's good for parents, kids and the information they get. Thank goodness for a program in Waco and I hope it continues for years to come.  
Gerald F. Kemp  
Waco