

SEXUAL HEALTH, PREGNANCY & CONTRACEPTION:

The law in the UK says that nobody - male or female - should be having sex before they are 16. Any adult involved in sexual activity with a child under 16, or indeed anyone preparing a child for sex, will be dealt with very severely by the courts. Nevertheless the state does give confidential assistance to children under the age of 16, including contraceptives and abortions where necessary.

SEXUAL ADVICE for YOUNG PEOPLE:

Brook Advisory Centres offer free, confidential advice about sex and contraception to people under the age of 25. You don't have to be having sex, nor wait until you are 16 if you want their help. There is a website showing where all of their centres are at www.brook.org.uk and a free helpline on 0800 0185 023 during normal office hours.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs) and HEALTH:

The National AIDS Helpline provides free and confidential counseling and advice about HIV, AIDS, sexual health, local services, clinics and support services. They can give advice in other languages in the evenings, on freephone 0800 917 2227, as follows:

Cantonese Sunday
Bengali Monday
Urdu Tuesday
Arabic Wednesday
Gujarati Thursday
Hindi Friday
Punjabi Saturday

You may also find the website at www.avert.org/help.htm (which has links to many helplines) is very useful.

In the UK, anybody who knowingly infects another person with any sexually transmitted disease faces imprisonment. Lastly, we emphasize that it is sensible to use condoms to prevent disease.

CONTRACEPTION:

Both men and women can obtain advice on birth control and free contraceptives from their doctor or from the Family Planning Association. Their website is at www.fpa.org.uk and you can call them free in office hours on 0845 122 8690.

HAVING A BABY:

For advice on all aspects of pregnancy, visit a family planning clinic. To find your nearest clinic, contact the Family Planning Association. They can supply free pregnancy tests. If you are pregnant, visit your doctor as soon as possible. (Remember, you can choose to see a woman doctor.) Ante-natal and post-natal care is free in the UK and it is very important that you and your baby receive regular check-ups both before and after the birth.