

You call this 'Healthy'?

JULY 10, 2010

HIV manual another reason to abstain from 'Nobody's Fool'

It's July. Judging from dueling yard signs that dot our city, the attention of many in our community has turned to the Nobody's Fool youth program delivered by Planned Parenthood Waco.

In past years, Pro-Life Waco has challenged Nobody's Fool based on the views of the Planned Parenthood founder, Margaret Sanger; the "It's Perfectly Normal" book given to children at Nobody's Fool in past years; and to various Planned Parenthood websites.

Here, I point to a publication released last January by International Planned Parenthood Federation. The title is "Healthy, Happy and Hot." To appeal to children of the world, IPPF has produced a visually attractive piece with bright colors and silhouettes of youths jumping and dancing in a happy, carefree manner.

The 18-page publication "is a guide for young people living with HIV to help them understand their sexual rights and live healthy, fun, happy and sexually fulfilling lives."

The content is so outrageous it is difficult to share in a family-oriented newspaper. I aim for a PG-13 rating. Keep in mind that the following quotes would be far worse if presented more fully.

■ "Young people living with HIV may feel that sex is just not an option, but don't worry — many young people living with HIV live healthy, fun, happy and sexually fulfilling lives. You can too, if you want to!"

■ "Many people think sex is just about . . . intercourse . . . But, there are a lot of different ways to have sex . . . There is no right or wrong way to have sex. Just have fun, ex-



JOHN PISCIOTTA

Board of Contributors

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plore and be yourself!"

■ "Some countries have laws which say people living with HIV must tell their sexual partner(s) about their status before having sex. . . . These laws violate the rights of people living with HIV."

■ "There are many reasons that people do not share their HIV status... They may worry that people will find out something else they have kept secret, like they are using injected drugs, having sex outside of marriage or having sex with people of the same gender. . . . Get involved in advocacy to change laws that violate your rights."

■ "Some people have sex when they have been drinking alcohol or using drugs. This is your choice."

You might question the relevance of "Healthy, Happy and Hot" because the publication is not directly from Planned Parenthood Waco. Planned Parenthood Waco, however, is an affiliate of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, which is in turn an affiliate of IPPF.

Whether local, national or worldwide, Planned Parenthood has the same name and a unified vision. "Healthy, Happy and Hot" is consistent with so many other sources which clearly reveal the Planned Parenthood sexual agenda for children.

The "character" of Planned Parenthood, justifies the message on Pro-Life Waco yard signs: "Just abstain from Nobody's Fool."

John Pisciotta is co-director of Pro-Life Waco, which has led protests of Nobody's Fool.

Nobody's Fool opponent plays loose with facts

JULY 16, 2010

A column in the July 10 Tribune-Herald by John Pisciotta seeks to connect a document published by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) with the local Planned Parenthood's annual event, Nobody's Fool. The IPPF publication is intended to be used in sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries, where HIV/AIDS rates are epidemic and where the stigma of being HIV positive can be as dangerous as the disease itself. It was not intended for Waco, Texas.

Planned Parenthood of Central Texas' only agenda in Waco is to ensure that quality, comprehensive reproductive health care and education are available to all. At the Nobody's Fool event this Wednesday, we aim to do three things: encourage abstinence, promote parent-child communication and provide medically accurate, age-appropriate information about healthy relationships, responsible decision-making, contraception and disease prevention.

Clearly, the referenced IPPF publication is not age-appropriate for children ages fifth through ninth grades, and it is not one that is distributed at Nobody's Fool or at our four health centers.

Texas teens and pregnancy

Teen pregnancy rates in Central Texas are higher than the state average, which is the highest in the nation, so it's disturbing that anyone would want to prevent teens from getting information about how to prevent pregnancy and

disease. Planned Parenthood encourages teens to stay abstinent while recognizing that someday they will become sexually active. We want to ensure that when that happens, they are prepared.



FELICIA CHASE GOODMAN

Guest columnist

Planned Parenthood relies on scientific research and facts to help us determine the type of education and information we provide at our health centers and at Nobody's Fool. There is a wealth of data demonstrating the effectiveness of abstinence-based comprehensive sex education — the kind taught at Nobody's Fool.

In fact, Baylor University's Michael Sherr, director of the School of Social Work doctoral program, and Preston Dyer, professor emeritus, recently published a study that evaluated a comprehensive sex education program for minority youths in Miami. Sherr and Dyer found that comprehensive sex education can postpone the age at which young people engage in sexual intercourse and can increase the number of youths who discontinue sexual activity.

Nobody's Fool started 21 years ago in response to calls we received from frantic parents who needed help talking to their kids about sex and other sensitive issues. Parents still need help, and the conversations continue. Not all parents



Staff photo — Jerry Larson

A sign for Nobody's Fool in a yard on Austin Avenue.

are prepared or comfortable discussing these issues with their children, and not all children are comfortable approaching their parents. Healthy communication between kids and their parents, guardians or other trusted adults is a key component to any sex education program, and Nobody's Fool helps both kids and their parents start the conversation.

In that spirit, I 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 & Dinner at the Waco Convention Center at 6 p.m. Tuesday.

Felicia Chase Goodman is the CEO of Planned Parenthood of Central Texas. Nobody's Fool begins at 8 a.m. Wednesday at the Waco Convention Center.

Our perspectives challenging Nobody's Fool.

Letters to the editor of the Waco Tribune-Herald.

July 14, 16, 20 & 21.

My thanks go to John Pisciotta's Tribune-Herald Board of Contributors column July 10. Another morally insane piece of advice for young people coming from Planned Parenthood has been exposed to the light of day.

Consider the advice in the "Happy, Healthy and Hot" literature, advocating that those living with HIV should feel free to pursue sexual expression that could spread the disease to others without feeling any guilt. Does any responsible adult need any more reasons to abstain completely from Planned Parenthood and its "Nobody's Fool" program for young people?

Joe Goodson
Temple

It's laughable that Felicia Chase Goodman, CEO of Planned Parenthood of Central Texas, in her July 16 guest column, "Nobody's Fool opponent plays loose with facts," accuses John Pisciotta of playing loose with the truth while she explains away the article linking Planned Parenthood's agenda in Waco as being different from its agenda in Third World countries.

How can a website that is meant to help slow the spread of AIDS and HIV promote the idea of having sex with anyone, anytime, without disclosing the sickness? It appears this philosophy is already being taught to the young in this country as they are brought to Planned Parenthood events like Wednesday's Nobody's Fool conference, there to be indoctrinated as fools.

If your pastor disagrees, ask him to explain his theological reasons for supporting this anti-Christian organization.

Pastor David Arnett
Bible Way Church
Waco

So I'm all about "don't" rather than "do." That's the complaint from Kirby Pope's July 14 letter about my commentary on a Planned Parenthood publication.

Compared to Planned Parenthood, I do advocate more don'ts regarding sex. The gist of Planned Parenthood's counsel on sex for children (and seniors) is, "Just do it if it feels good to you."

Regarding "Healthy, Happy and Hot" from International Planned Parenthood, there is one "don't." After affirming the individual right to have sex while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, Planned Parenthood issues this warning: "It is not OK to have sex with someone who is so drunk or high that they are staggering, incoherent or have passed out."

This would be funny if it wasn't so sad and appalling.

John Pisciotta
Waco

Felicia Chase Goodman attempted to minimize the importance of the International Planned Parenthood Federation publication by indicating it was intended for developing countries and irrelevant to the United States.

Yet in the brochure, there is no mention of its being geographically specific. More importantly, her attempt to sound reasonable by stating the brochure is not age-appropriate for fifth-graders is contradicted by the brochure itself, as it clearly states it is for "young people," ages 10 to 24.

The most insidious fact about all this is that Planned Parenthood is in the business of marketing to potential clients. Make no mistake: Waco's Nobody's Fool event is a fishing net to catch new business. As CEO of Planned Parenthood, Goodman's sense of judgment is clouded by her need to sexualize children early and fill her appointment book.

Susan Riedley
Simi Valley, Calif.

Kirby Pope wrote that Planned Parenthood of Central Texas has full health care available for women. But Planned Parenthood performs abortions every Thursday in Waco, destroying innocent lives.

I wonder if Pope knows that abortion is part of the "full health care" that is available? If he doesn't, then he has limited information on what Planned Parenthood really offers women.

Thanks to John Pisciotta for defending the unborn, even when many people speak bad of him.

Silveria Cuevas
Waco

It saddens me to think how many children will be exposed again to Planned Parenthood's sex education conference. Innocence will be lost thanks to "well-meaning" parents. An institution funded mostly by the killings of unborn babies cannot possibly be a good source of neutral information on sex and abstinence.

Many parents have the attitude that children "will do it anyway." But every parent knows that with an expectation like that, you are asking for what you get.

Wake up, Waco. Protect your children. Take some responsibility and teach your children yourself.

Asti Hoover
McGregor

If one really wants to lessen the influence of Planned Parenthood on the lives of poor, uninformed youth, then there are two things we must do: Pray sincerely that God will rid our community of abortions done at the Waco Planned Parenthood offices; and secondly, Christians must reach out to these young people with positive alternatives to sex.

Young people (especially girls) don't want to have sex. They just don't have or can't afford anything else to do.

Some make light of the importance of self-esteem, but this is the basis of a young person saying "no" to sex.

There must be a nonjudgmental approach that helps children and parents.

Clara Slaughter Cobb
Waco

Defense of Nobody's Fool.

Letters to the editor of the Waco Tribune-Herald.

July 14, 16, 20 & 21.

It's summer, and again I see the usual "epistle" from John Pisciotta with his condemnation of Nobody's Fool. Does he ever have anything positive to say toward bettering our community? All I ever hear or read from him is "Don't."

His activism sounds much like my Baptist upbringing, with a list of "do not do this." Seldom heard is, "Do this." Even with my limited education, I learned long ago you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.

The Central Texas community is in need of more positive help from its citizens, not this annual tirade of negative words and actions.

Mr. Pisciotta, I'll see you again this summer for Nobody's Fool but, as usual, I'll be working to better the knowledge of our young people. Why don't you put your money where your mouth is and join the team that helps? That would be Planned Parenthood of Central Texas, where full health care is available for women. It's not all about HIV/AIDS. It's a well-rounded education for young people and women in need of low-cost health care.

By the way, the only yard signs I've seen are for "Nobody's Fool."

All of this reminds me of a quote: "Minds are like umbrellas. They work best when open."

Kirby Pope
Waco

The only way to stop abortion is by preventing unwanted pregnancy. The only way to do that is by education from the time of puberty, such as through the Nobody's Fool conference and with easy access to contraceptives.

Making abortion illegal has been tried and failed with awful results. Remember the horrors it caused. It forced women into dirty backrooms with untrained "operators" or to their own bedroom or bathroom with the end of a coat hanger.

Howard L. Smith, M.D.
Marlin

To those who criticize today's Nobody's Fool event — which will be held from 8 a.m. to noon at the Waco Convention Center — I wonder if they've ever attended this event, and do they live outside the realm of reality?

Tuesday's letter by Susan Riedley saying Planned Parenthood "sexualizes children" was absolute nonsense. Has she watched TV, read a magazine or shopped at the mall lately? The sexualization of our society and children is everywhere.

I want my children to know all of the facts before they're in a situation where they have to make a sexual decision — and, yes, they'll be in that situation no matter how virtuous they are.

My 13-year-old daughter has already had conversations with her peers about sex. I know this because she and I have had many candid conversations about sex. My 9-year-old son also is beginning to ask questions. It's a reality that our children are exposed on a daily basis to sex. It's "foolish" to deny it.

To those sponsoring and working today's event: Have courage. Some of us live in reality and appreciate your efforts.

Terri Evans
Hewitt

The reaction to today's Nobody's Fool conference is a wee bit asinine.

How can we stand by and let this glaring problem slap us in the face? Texas has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation, yet when some of us try to be proactive and address the situation head-on, others call foul.

I never had the opportunity to attend Nobody's Fool, but, as a student at Waco High, I know many friends who would have benefited from the program. Our children deserve to know the facts. Unfortunately, many parents are far too timid to talk to their children about sex, and, as a result, their children are forced to learn about it on their own and unwanted pregnancies occur.

Ian Larson
Waco