



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**LIFE: Sex at 13 is not normal and should not be encouraged by schools**

The national pro-life charity LIFE has described as ~~perverse~~ and ~~highly unsuitable~~ materials issued by the taxpayer-funded organisation Brook, which suggest that looking at pornography, having sexually explicit conversations, and entering sexual relationships are normal for children as young as thirteen. The advice is contained in recent guidance issued by Brook, with the approval of the Department for Education, intended to be widely distributed among English schools.

A LIFE spokesman, Niall Gooch, said ~~most~~ parents will find it astonishing and completely unacceptable that Brook is attempting to corrupt their children in this way. The vast majority of young teenagers are not involved in sexual activity, and this is perfectly right and proper. They are simply not emotionally and psychologically ready for such relationships and premature sexual activity can be enormously damaging for them. It is also illegal for children to have sex before the age of sixteen; the age of consent is in place to protect young people from exploitation and mistakes.

~~Describing~~ things as normal inevitably makes them sound acceptable. It is therefore reckless in the extreme for Brook to describe pornography and sexually frank conversations in this way. We should be fighting the sexualisation of young people, and the insidious influence of pornography, tooth and nail, not simply accepting them as fact of life. Pornography can do enormous damage to individuals and their relationships, and contributes towards a sexualised culture which is bad for everyone.

~~The government's~~ own guidance on SRE states that ~~effective~~ sex and relationship education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. Brook, and the Department for Education really must think again about this ludicrously wrong and bad advice. Schools are meant to be guiding pupils, teaching them right from wrong, not encouraging them to wallow in the worst aspects of our society.

**END**

**For further media comment please call the LIFE Media Hotline on 07867 744502**

**LIFE is a pro-life charity that supports anyone facing a crisis pregnancy, pregnancy loss or after an abortion, and strives to engage, inspire and inform the next generation.**