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Kelly Osbourne Backs Campaign to Stop Unplanned Pregnancies

Call for action comes as new research reveals Britons' blasé attitude towards unprotected sex

London, 00:01 GMT 26 September 2008 (World Contraception Day): Kelly Osbourne today joins UK and international health groups, to highlight the shocking ambivalence of the British public towards the use of contraception and address the burgeoning problem of unplanned pregnancies, on World Contraception Day.

Ignorance around contraception is highlighted with more than a third (38%) of those who are sexually active in the UK admitting they risked pregnancy by having sex without using contraception. More than half (52%) also admitted not talking to their partner about contraception before having sex, according to new independent research carried out by Kudos Research on behalf of Marie Stopes International¹.

Supporting World Contraception Day, Kelly Osbourne said: "This campaign is important because it empowers young people to make informed choices about contraception. Today, young women face many pressures and challenges when dealing with relationships and sex, but my message is simple when it comes to contraception: it's your life, it's your body and it's your choice. When to have a baby is one of the biggest decisions in your life. Talk to your partner and your doctor about the best contraception and protection to empower you to make a conscious family planning decision."

In the UK, there are over 16 methods of contraception available. However, more than half of the recent survey respondents were unable to name five or more methods, and 43% of respondents admitted to not having discussed their contraceptive options with their contraception prescriber or provider¹.

"Couples are focusing on the heat of the moment, and not the potential consequences of their sexual encounters. It is vital that couples discuss contraception before having sex. We hope World Contraception Day encourages people to consider their contraceptive choices and the many contraceptive options available, to ensure pregnancies occur by



choice, not chance“ said Pauline Beddoes, Nurse Manager at Marie Stopes International.

“Experiencing an unplanned pregnancy can be very traumatic and upsetting, and the impact of deciding whether or not to continue with the pregnancy can cause long-lasting distress to women and their partners. In the UK, where family planning support and access to contraception is available for all, many unplanned pregnancies could be prevented” she continued.

The UK has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Europe², and the rate of abortions in England and Wales has increased more than eight-fold since legislation came into effect in 1968³. As well as significant personal crisis, unplanned pregnancy and abortion cause an increasing burden on society. In the UK during 2006 – 2007, abortions cost the National Health Service an average of £650 per abortion⁴.

On the 40th anniversary year of the United Nations declaring contraception and family planning a basic human right, World Contraception Day highlights the impact of unplanned pregnancy to educate young people on making informed choices about contraception and help prevent unwanted pregnancies. In 2008, the campaign aims to educate young people about making informed choices on contraception under the campaign motto ‘Your body, your life, your choice’. Seventy countries are expected to participate in World Contraception Day 2008.

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Notes to Editor:

For more press information on contraception and sexual health go to <http://press.your-life.com>

This campaign is initiated and financed by Bayer Schering Pharma.

Survey results

Kudos Research independently surveyed 1000 men and women about their views on contraception and family planning, on behalf of Marie Stopes International.

Other statistics showed:-

- On average people over the age of 30 were less likely to use contraception, and were less aware of the diversity of contraceptive methods available than those under 30¹
- London has the highest rates of protected sex across the UK, with 64% of Londoners revealing that they **did** use a method of contraception. However, The Midlands has the highest rate of unprotected sex, with 43% admitting they **did not** use a method of contraception¹
- Nearly half (43%) of respondents obtain contraception from their GP¹
- The contraceptive pill was the method of contraception most frequently discussed by the patient and contraceptive prescriber / provider. Long-acting reversible methods such as the contraceptive implant, Intrauterine System (IUS) or Intrauterine Devices (IUD) were less often discussed (16%, 12%, 13%)¹

World Contraception Day

In 2008, 70 countries will be involved in educational activities and events to mark World Contraception Day, including 39 countries in Europe; 9 countries in Asia; 18 countries in Latin America; and 4 countries in Africa.

World Contraception Day 2008 is supported by Kelly Osbourne and six international and regional sexual and reproductive health organisations, including: Marie Stopes International; the Population Council; the European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health; the International Federation of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology; Centro Latinoamericano Salud y Mujer; and the Asia Pacific Council on Contraception.

The six international and regional sexual health and reproductive organisations are:

MARIE STOPES INTERNATIONAL (MSI)

Marie Stopes International (MSI) is one of the largest sexual and reproductive health agencies in the world. In 2006 alone, MSI provided nearly five million people in 38 countries with high-quality, affordable and culturally appropriate health services including family planning, maternal and child health care, safe delivery and obstetrics, safe abortion and post abortion care, diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, voluntary and confidential testing for HIV/AIDS and prevention of mother-to-child transmission as well as information and education. For more information visit the website of Marie Stopes International: www.mariestopes.org.uk

THE POPULATION COUNCIL

The Population Council is an international, non-profit-making, non-governmental organisation, which seeks to improve the well-being and reproductive health of current and future generations around the world and to help achieve a humane, equitable, and sustainable balance between people and resources. The Population Council's Reproductive Health programme seeks to improve sexual and reproductive health outcomes – especially for disadvantaged populations in developing countries – through the development and introduction of appropriate technologies, assistance to policymakers in formulating evidence-based policies, and innovations in service delivery. For more information visit the website of the Population Council: www.popcouncil.org

EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CONTRACEPTION AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (ESC)

The ESC was founded in France in 1988 and is a leading medical society in the field of contraception and family planning internationally. ESC's primary aim is to both provide information and improve access to contraception and reproductive health care internationally. In order to achieve its objectives, the ESC strives to harmonize the legal situation internationally and to promote availability of all established methods of contraception. For more information visit the website of the ESC: www.contraception-esc.com

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PEDIATRIC AND ADOLESCENT GYNECOLOGY (FIGIJ)

One of the main tasks of FIGIJ is to improve the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents around the world. An important part of this is to diminish the mortality of teenage mothers. One method of doing this is by preventing unplanned pregnancies in adolescents by the use of



contraception. This is a very serious public health problem. For more information visit the website of FIGIJ: www.figij.org

CENTRO LATINOAMERICANO SALUD Y MUJER (CELSAM)

CELSAM is a non-profit organization that aims at improving sexual and reproductive health in women and their partners, through information, orientation and education. CELSAM has a strong presence in Latin America where it conducts its activities. CELSAM's regional network provides information to women and their partners on topics related to women's health, from puberty to adulthood. For more information visit the website of CELSAM: www.celsam.org

ASIA PACIFIC COUNCIL ON CONTRACEPTION

The Asia Pacific Council on Contraception (APCOC) was founded in 2006 by leading contraception and family planning experts to highlight the importance of family planning, with safe and reliable contraception across Asia Pacific. Its main goal is to provide women with the right information, education and communication (IEC) to offer them the opportunity to make informed choices in contraception. For more information visit the website of APCOC: www.apcoc.net

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References

¹ Kudos Research (www.kudosresearch.co.uk) on behalf of Marie Stopes International, 2008.
Data on file

² A League Table of Teenage Births in Rich Nations, UNICEF. July 2001

³ Statistical Bulletin, Abortion Statistics: England and Wales: 2007, ONS & DH, June 2008

⁴ House of Commons Hansard Written Answers for 16 Jun 2008, Health: Abortion,
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080616/text/80616w0026.htm>
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