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## NEWS ROUNDUP

### Lessons in life

The emphasis on personal health and sexual education in schools is directed towards avoiding teenage pregnancy. However few young people realise the reasons for infertility in later life. Lisa Jardine, the new head of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), feels this is something young women should be warned about. She wants children to be taught about infertility at school as part of their sex education. "If one in seven of us in the modern world is going to have problems with infertility", she says, "then instead of all the teaching at school being about how to stop getting pregnant, someone had better start teaching about how you do get pregnant, because there are going to be a lot of extremely disappointed people out there".

This is something that Clare Brown, Chief Executive of Infertility Network UK and More To Life, has long advocated: "There is a perception that IVF treatment will fix any fertility problems but it doesn't work for everyone. We need to start telling children at an early age that their fertility is precious and that they need to be aware of the possibility that when they are ready to try for a family it may not be that easy".

National Infertility Day (on 19 July 2008 this year) is a unique event aimed at raising awareness of infertility and all the surrounding issues and providing support and information to patients, their friends and families. It provides delegates with an opportunity not only to gather information but also to discuss infertility issues in general.

For more information on National Infertility Day 2010 and to book online visit [www.nationalinfertilityday.com](http://www.nationalinfertilityday.com) or visit the national charity's website at [www.infertilitynetworkuk.com](http://www.infertilitynetworkuk.com). For support on involuntary childlessness visit [www.moretolife.co.uk](http://www.moretolife.co.uk). Alternatively call the new freephone telephone number 0800 008 7464.

### Vote USA 2008 issues: abortion

Abortion could be one of the key deciders in the forthcoming American presidential election. Roe v Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that established a constitutional right to abortion,

continues to fuel controversy. A recent poll has shown that 51% of Americans believe abortion should be available in most cases and 46% who say it should be illegal. The Democrat presidential candidate, Senator Barack Obama is committed to appointing judges who would not overturn Roe v Wade. The Republican nominee, Senator John McCain, has switched from supporting Roe v Wade to now saying it should be overturned. Despite having anti-abortion lobbyist, Sarah Palin, as his running mate, McCain is likely to focus on the economy, health care and Iraq.

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/7150660.stm>

### ED due to work-related stress

Work-related stress may cause erectile dysfunction (ED) in up to 1 in 10 men. Of the 54% of these men who would consult their doctor about this, the average delay is 17 months from the onset of symptoms. Dr David Edwards, an Oxfordshire GP, comments: "Workplace stress clearly has a strong impact on the incidence of ED in men. Men should think about the underlying cause of their ED, including how to combat their stress levels; not staying too late at work, a balanced and healthy diet, and regular exercise". The SortED in 10 Campaign, sponsored by Bayer Schering Pharma, supported the research and highlighted that erection problems are very common, affecting half of all men aged between 40 and 70 years. Men should ask their GP or nurse about what help is available. Oral treatment for ED is only available on the NHS for certain medical conditions.

Source: [www.sortEDin10.co.uk](http://www.sortEDin10.co.uk)

### Books on prescription

Medication has an important role in helping people with emotional problems, and is often very effective. However, as recommended by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), people can also be helped by reading appropriate 'self-help' material. Many self-help books have been shown to be very useful in helping people to overcome a range of

psychological problems. The use of books as a means of providing psychological therapy is known as 'bibliotherapy'. In 2003, Neil Frude from Cardiff and the Vale Trust compiled a list of books highly recommended by their clinicians and launched the award-winning Cardiff Book Prescription Scheme aimed at helping people with mild to moderate psychological problems. It allows highly recommended self-help books to be prescribed by GPs, Practice Counsellors, Community Mental Health Teams and other health providers. A 'prescription' for the recommended book is issued by a health professional and can be exchanged for a book (taken from a list of 33 books covering 20 of the most common psychological problems – see Booklist) at any local branch library, free of charge. For further information contact your local PCT and/or the following websites:

Booklist for Wales: [http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/language/A4\\_booklist.pdf](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/language/A4_booklist.pdf)  
Alphabetical list of PCTs: <http://www.nhs.uk/ servicedirectories/Pages/PrimaryCareTrustListing.aspx>

Source: <http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/small/en/home/health information/mentalhealth/bookprescriptionwales>

### Spermcatcher

Play "Spermcatcher", part of the new Brook condom campaign, at [www.spermcatcher.net](http://www.spermcatcher.net). A3 posters and four different coloured postcards are also available, and can be ordered by calling 0870 750 3082.

### Contraception for elephants

Conservation programmes for elephants in Africa have been so successful that numbers need to be restricted. A programme of long-acting reversible contraception has been developed. This video is fascinating, but the size of the transvaginal probe brought tears to my eyes!

Source: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/06/080605-contraception-video-wc.html>

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