

Family Education Trust

(Family and Youth Concern)

A Company Limited by Guarantee No. 3503533; Registered Charity No. 1070500

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FPA AT ODDS WITH PUBLIC OPINION IN DRIVING WEDGE BETWEEN CHILDREN AND PARENTS, SAYS FAMILY GROUP

Press release – 10 November 2005

For immediate release

Today's assertion by the *fpa* (formerly the Family Planning Association) that it is out of step with social changes over the past two decades to say that parents are the best judges of a child's welfare shows the extent to which the organisation has been blinded by its own ideology to the strength of public opinion.

In her intervention on behalf of the *fpa* in response to Sue Axon's High Court challenge to the government's policy of preserving the confidentiality of under-16s seeking an abortion, Nathalie Lieven held that, 'children have autonomous rights that must be protected by the courts' and dismissed as 'paternalistic' the generally-held view that parents are best placed to judge what is in the best interests of their own children.

Director of the Family Education Trust, Norman Wells, commented:

"The *fpa* is lending its support to a radical children's rights agenda that views children as autonomous individuals rather than members of a family and, as a result, parental responsibilities are being usurped by those whose interest in them is professional rather than personal. Parents are the primary protectors of their children, yet they are being sidelined in the name of the so-called 'right' of the child to confidentiality.

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Trustees: Arthur Cornell MEd F.Coll.P (Chairman); Betty, Lady Grantchester; Eric Hester BA (Vice Chairman)
Dr John Guly; Simon J Ling MA FCA (Hon Treasurer); Denis Riches BSc (Secretary);
Mrs Valerie Riches (Founder President); Dr Trevor Stammers; Robert Whelan MA

Sponsors: John Bonnar MA MD FRCOG; Peter Dawson OBE BSc FRSA; The Baroness Elles; The Duke of Montrose;
The Baroness O'Cathain OBE; Professor Dennis O'Keeffe; Sir John Peel KCVO FRCS FRCP; J S Scott MD FRCS FRCOG

“The family unit is the basic building-block that lies at the foundation of a stable society. At a time when we are facing escalating social problems as a direct result of family breakdown, it is extraordinary that the *fpa* should be seeking to drive a further wedge between parents and their children. The way to address the growth in antisocial behaviour among young people, drug abuse, underage sexual activity and the spiralling rates of sexually transmitted infections is to show parents proper respect and encourage them to take their responsibilities seriously, not to remove them from the equation.”

For further information:

Norman Wells 020 8894 2525

Family Education Trust is an educational charity committed to promoting stable family life and the welfare of children and young people.

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