



**Children and Families Overview and
Scrutiny Committee
26 November 2008**

**Report from the Director of Policy
and Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected: ALL

**How Parents and Faith Communities Can Encourage and Sustain
Healthy Relationships amongst Young People – *Task Group Report***

1.0 Summary

1.1 The Final Report of the Healthy Relationships task group.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Children and Families Overview and committee agree the recommendations set out in the task group report.

2.2 That the report is forwarded to the Executive.

3.0 Detail

3.1 On the 10 October 2007 the Children and Families Overview Committee agreed to set up a task group to consider how to involve parents and faith groups in talking to young people about sex and relationships.

3.2 The task group included the following members:

- Councillor Ahmed
- Councillor Joseph
- Councillor Motley (Chair)
- Mrs Bondzi- Simpson, A Parent Governor
- Miss P Palmer, a member of Brent Youth Parliament
- Rev. Stone, A member of Brent Multi Faith Forum

4.0 The task group took evidence from a wide range of witnesses including:

Parents Groups
Parents whose teenagers had become parents
Brent Youth Matters, Youth Group
Local Faith Organisations
Brent Multi Faith Forum
NHS Brent

5.0 Key findings of the task group

- 5.1 The task group found that Brent had one of the highest teenage conception rates in the UK, and a disproportionate number of sexually transmitted infections. Although recent statistics highlight that this is on a downward trajectory, the council cannot afford to be complacent. A recent report by the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group, which advises the government on its teenage pregnancy strategy found that other European nations that had reduced teenage pregnancy rates found that they rose again if work and commitment in this area of work is not maintained.
- 5.2 The task group found that talking to young people about sex and relationships is a challenge for many parents and they would welcome further support on how to broach this issue with their children.
- 5.3 The task group found that talking about sex and relationships can present challenges for faith leaders as they believe that young people within their congregations adhere to the religious view that sex should only take place within the context of marriage. Therefore they deem it unnecessary to discuss these issues and believe that if they do, it could act as a form of encouragement.
- 6.0** The final recommendations of the task group can be found on page 5 of the task group report

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