

Bristol Community Family Trust.txt

From: Harry Benson [harry.benson@virgin.net]
Sent: 20 January 2002 22:42
To: 'ownershipconsultation@culture.gov.uk'
Subject: Consultation on national broadcasting

Dear Ms Jowell,

I am writing in response to the government's request for public consultation on national broadcasting.

As I understand it, Christian organisations are currently banned from applying for national broadcasting licences. There can be no reasonable defence for this blatantly discriminatory act. No doubt your government is not directly responsible for its imposition. It would be to your credit to remove the ban. It would also be to your discredit to continue as things are. Surely there is no sensible reason why any religious organisation - whether Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, or whatever - should not be allowed to broadcast its programmes freely. Provided no laws are broken, what has the government to fear in continuing to restrain such transmissions?

As a Christian, I have to put up with the transmission of a great many programmes that are deeply offensive to me, whether atheist, anti-Christian or immoral - to my subjective interpretation. All five terrestrial channels produce such programmes every day. Yet I do not resent this or choose to complain. I have choice and I have an "off button". I would far rather accept the producers freedom to produce offensive material than rely on the dubious merits of state censorship. That is what we have now. State censorship. It's surely time that your inclusive and open-minded government removed this murky blot.

With kind regards and thanks

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What is "Bristol Community Family Trust"?

BCFT aims to reduce family breakdown in Bristol by strengthening and building confident and committed relationships within families through the provision of ongoing relationship education and mentor-based support

- Community Family Policies in the USA have shown that reducing city-wide divorce rates by up to half within a decade or two is a realistic and achievable goal.

- The few documented examples of successful outcomes from family interventions strongly suggest that ongoing relationship education and ongoing support are both essential.

- The Bristol Community Family Trust (BCFT) is being set up to apply these principles and to offer them to all couples in Bristol as the new healthy norm.

- The main relationship education tools used will be the "PREP" skills-based course and the "FOCCUS" inventory - two of the best researched, most effective and most widely used relationship education programmes in the world.

- Support will be provided from a pool of ordinary married "mentor" couples, trained to share their experience of life together and to facilitate couples as they work through the FOCCUS inventory. This support is always on a couple to couple basis.

- By accessing couples at various key stages through which they typically pass - whether getting married, having a baby, or sending a child to primary school, etc - in time such education and support will become seen as normal, healthy and ongoing.

- The key ingredients to the success of this project are therefore (1) use of the best possible programmes, (2) recruitment and training of mentor couples, and (3) co-operation of those who have access to couples - such as the registrars, midwives or headteachers.

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- The project will be rolled out in stages, starting with pre-marriage as "stage one" and new parents as "stage two". In order that the project becomes self-sufficient, couples will be asked to pay commercial rates up-front. However they will also be offered a "no-quibbles" money-back guarantee if they are not satisfied with their course. Mentor couples will not have to pay for their course, however donations will be gratefully accepted to help cover training costs.

- Initial funding to establish the project has been sought from the Lord Chancellor's Department for the fiscal year 2002/2003. Mentor recruitment and training will commence via Bristol churches in January 2002. The intention is to launch publicly "stage one" city-wide marriage preparation via the civil registrar and churches by September 2002.

If you need application leaflets for mentor training or couple training, or any other information, or if you would like to offer help, please contact me.

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