

Scottish Government

***Consultation on Registration of Civil
partnerships and same-sex marriage***

Response by:

Christian Concern

The Christian Legal Centre

**Christian
Legal Centre**

**Christian
Concern**

Questionnaire:

Scottish Government consultation on Registration of Civil partnerships same-sex marriage

Closing date: 9 December 2011

E-mail response to: familylaw@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

About Us

Christian Concern is a policy and legal resource centre that identifies changes in policy and law that may affect the Christian heritage of our nation. The team of lawyers and advisers at Christian Concern conduct research into, and campaign on, legislation and policy changes that may affect Christian freedoms or the moral values of the UK. Christian Concern reaches a mailing list of over 40,000 supporters. <http://www.christianconcern.com>

Christian Concern is linked to a sister and separate organisation, the Christian Legal Centre, which takes up cases affecting Christian freedoms. <http://www.christianlegalcentre.com>

Andrea Minichiello Williams CEO
Christian Concern & the Christian Legal Centre
020 7935 1488
077 12 59 1164
andrea.williams@christianconcern.com

Executive Summary

The Scottish Government is consulting on proposals to redefine marriage in order to allow two men or two women to marry, and also to allow civil partnerships onto religious premises with religious services.

We note the following in summary:

- Civil partnerships were introduced with the promise that they would remain non-religious. It is not appropriate to now extend them onto religious premises with religious ceremonies. Doing so blurs the distinction between marriage and civil partnerships.
- Introducing religious civil partnerships and/or homosexual marriage has huge implications for freedom of belief. Individuals and churches are likely to be sued under equality legislation if they do not wish to participate, regardless of any conscience safeguards, which have never worked in the past. Many Christians have already lost their jobs because of the promotion of homosexual rights.
- Introducing homosexual marriage would undermine the concept of marriage, which is meant to be between a man and a woman for the procreation of children. A homosexual relationship cannot create the same family unit for the benefit of society.
- Homosexual marriage damages children. Children brought into homosexual marriages will be denied either a father or a mother, yet all of the evidence suggests that children are best raised with both a mother and a father.
- Evidence shows that children with homosexual parents can become gender confused and are more likely to practice homosexuality themselves.
- The proposed reforms will force a new definition of marriage onto the whole of society to fulfil the demands of a minority who want to push a political agenda.

Question 1

Do you agree that legislation should be changed so that civil partnerships could be registered through religious ceremonies?

No. Civil partnerships were introduced with the promise that they would remain non-religious. It is not appropriate to now extend them onto religious premises with religious ceremonies.

Allowing civil partnerships to be registered through religious ceremonies would both undermine marriage (please see our answers to Question 2 and Question 10) and also pose a significant threat to freedom of belief.

Religious Freedom

It is vital to protect freedom of belief and conscience in Scotland. Although the Scottish Government has suggested that the proposed reforms to allow civil partnerships to be registered through religious ceremonies will be voluntary, we are not convinced that religious bodies will be free from litigation under equality legislation if these proposals are implemented, nor do we believe that religious bodies are likely to retain the freedom to 'opt out' in the future.

Over the last few years the increase of legislation promoting homosexual rights has led to very serious restrictions on freedom of belief for Christians. In particular, the interpretation of the Equality Act 2010 in the Courts has resulted in several individuals who hold to mainstream Christian beliefs losing their jobs after sexual orientation rights were held to take precedence over their right to manifest their beliefs.

For example:

- Lillian Ladele, a Civil Registrar, was forced to resign after being disciplined by Lambeth Council for refusing to officiate at civil partnership registrations in line with her Christian beliefs. Lillian lost her case for religious discrimination in the Employment Appeal Tribunal. The decision was upheld by the Court of Appeal.¹
- Many prospective foster parents, such as Eunice and Owen Johns, have been stopped from fostering children because of their Christian beliefs. The Johns were deprived of an opportunity to foster after they conceded that they would not promote homosexuality to a young child in their care. The High Court upheld the right of Derby Council to stop the Johns from fostering children as their beliefs contravened the Council's 'equality and diversity' policy.²
- Gary McFarlane, a relationships counsellor, was sacked by Relate Avon for gross misconduct after expressing, on a training course, a possible future conscience objection to providing sex therapy to homosexual couples because of his Christian beliefs.³
- A Judge ruled that two Christian owners of a guesthouse, Peter and Hazelmary Bull, had acted unlawfully in restricting their bookings policy for double rooms to "married couples only",

¹ *Ladele v London Borough of Islington, Court of Appeal [2009] EWCA Civ 135*

² *Eunice and Owen Johns v Derbyshire County Council [2011] 1 FCR 493, [2011] Fam Law 471*

³ *McFarlane v Relate Avon Limited [2010] EWCA Civ B1; 2010 IRLR 872*

ordering the couple to pay a fine of £3,600 in damages after refusing to offer a double room to a homosexual couple.⁴

- Dr Sheila Matthews was dismissed from her role on the local authority's adoption panel after requesting to refrain from voting when homosexual couples were being considered by the panel as potential adoptive parents. Dr Matthews brought a claim against Northamptonshire County Council on the grounds that she had been discriminated against because of her faith. However, her case for religious discrimination was rejected by the employment tribunal.⁵
- Theresa Davies, a registrar with Islington Borough Council, was demoted from her job because of her refusal to preside over civil partnership ceremonies. Her case did not proceed to an employment tribunal because her complaint had the same facts as those in a previous case involving registrar Lillian Ladele.⁶
- Andrew McClintock, a Christian Magistrate sitting on the Family Panel at Sheffield Magistrates Court, was forced to resign because he was not allowed to opt-out of cases which would require him to place children in the care of homosexuals, as he believed that that was not in the best interests of children. Mr McClintock lost his bid to have his freedom of conscience recognized by an employment tribunal.⁷
- Several Catholic adoption agencies have been forced to permanently close after refusing to place children in the care of homosexual couples, against their religious ethos.⁸

In addition to these cases there have been many incidents of general intolerance against Christians in the public sphere, which, we believe, is a direct result of equality legislation. For example:

- Tory MP Chris Grayling had to apologise and was later not given the job of Home Secretary after he was recorded saying that B&B owners should be allowed to follow their conscience and exercise their Christian faith when dealing with this issue.⁹
- The Conservative Party's candidate for North Ayrshire and Arran, Philip Lardner, was sacked for expressing his view on the case and his views on homosexuality on his website.¹⁰
- Dr Hans-Christian Raabe, a Manchester GP, was sacked by the Home Office from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs after it was discovered that he had co-authored an article

⁴ *Martin Hall and Steve Preddy -v- Peter Bull and Hazelmary Bull [2011] EW Misc 2 (CC)*

⁵ *ET (Case No. 1901629/2009)*, 26 November 2010

⁶ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/5594962/Christian-registrar-demoted-to-receptionist-after-she-refused-to-preside-over-gay-marriages.html>

⁷ *ET 2800834/06; UKEAT/0223/07/CEA*, 31 October 2007

⁸ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/7952526/Last-Catholic-adoption-agency-faces-closure-after-Charity-Commission-ruling.html>

⁹ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/election/article-1277799/David-Camerons-new-Cabinet-Theresa-May-Home-Secretary-Ken-Clarke-Chancellor.html#ixzz1OnFBasf5>

¹⁰ <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article7109552.ece>

entitled *'Gay Marriage' and Homosexuality: Some Medical Comments*, written with six other medical practitioners in 2005, which supported a link between homosexuality and paedophilia.¹¹

These cases and incidents are only a small sample and are considered to be the tip of the ice-berg. They highlight the deep threat to freedom of conscience and belief which has resulted from the promotion of sexual orientation as a right.

In light of these trends, we are concerned that religious bodies will not be afforded sufficient protections and that their religious freedom will be significantly undermined. There must be a robust protection of belief and conscience for those who believe that the promotion of homosexual practices is morally wrong.

Since the Scottish Government is simultaneously consulting on the introduction of full homosexual marriage, any such change will further increase the likelihood of the imposition of a duty on religious bodies to conduct civil partnership registrations in addition to full homosexual marriages. Any such change would signal the effective end of religious freedom in Scotland.

The overwhelming majority of Christian denominations and churches do not recognise or accept the practice of homosexuality and will be opposed to this move; hence the faith groups supporting the new provisions are a tiny minority. Such groups already have considerable freedom under the current law to celebrate homosexual unions in religious services prior to, or immediately after the registration of a civil partnership has occurred. Given this existing freedom, we consider it unnecessary to allow civil partnership registrations to take place on religious premises or through religious ceremonies.

Question 2

Do you think that the proposals in England and Wales on the registration of civil partnerships in religious premises would be appropriate for Scotland?

We do not agree that civil partnerships should be held on religious premises under any conditions. However, we answer the following question in case the proposed reforms are implemented.

It is vital for civil partnership ceremonies to remain entirely non-religious in nature in line with the approach taken by England and Wales since allowing civil partnerships to be registered through religious services would blur the distinction between civil partnerships and marriage even further.

Civil partnerships and marriage cannot be compared. Marriage is a unique institution between a man and a woman which provides the best environment for raising children. Marriage between a man and a woman provides the child with the influence of both a father and a mother, acting in complementary roles. Children cannot be offered this favourable scenario in a civil partnership since they will either be missing a mother or missing a father. Civil partnerships will never be the same as marriage and therefore should not be confused with marriage. If the proposed reforms are enacted, then any resultant religious service should be kept separate from the registration itself, in order to uphold the views of the majority and protect marriage as a distinct union between a man and a woman.

¹¹ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1354325/Christian-drug-expert-Hans-Christian-Raabe-sacked-Government-advisory-panel.html#ixzz1On9AQQZw>

In addition, if Scriptural references or any other Biblical elements were to appear in their services, this would be deeply offensive to the vast majority of Christians, and is completely contrary to 2000 years of church teachings on marriage and sexual ethics.

Question 3

Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in religious premises?

No. It is wholly inappropriate to permit religious celebrants to register civil partnerships on religious premises.

Civil partnership ceremonies should remain entirely non-religious in nature in line with the approach taken by England and Wales, since allowing the use of religious celebrants to register civil partnerships will blur the distinction between civil partnerships and marriage. (Please see our answer to Question 2).

In addition, if religious celebrants are allowed to register civil partnerships in religious premises then those religious celebrants who do not want to register civil partnerships for reasons of conscience or belief will find themselves vulnerable to being sued for discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. This will deeply compromise religious freedom in Scotland.

Due to equality legislation it would be very hard to provide sufficient legal protection for conscience or belief in this scenario, and even if legal protections were afforded, they would be open to change or challenge in the future. In addition, even if conscientious objection was somehow protected under the law, individual religious celebrants may still find themselves on the receiving end of abuse and harassment if they refused to register civil partnership on their premises.

Those who sincerely adhere to Biblical teachings on marriage and sexual ethics, which clearly specify marriage as being between a man and a woman only, need to have their freedom of belief protected.

Question 4: Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in other places agreed between the celebrant and the couple?

No. Please see our answer to Question 3 above.

Question 5: Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to register civil partnerships?

We agree that religious bodies should not be required to register civil partnerships. The overwhelming majority of Christian denominations and churches uphold Biblical teachings on homosexuality and will refuse to register of civil partnerships. These beliefs should be respected.

History shows that no sufficient protections have ever been put in place that have managed to ensure that religious bodies or religious celebrants are not compelled to conduct civil partnerships against their deeply held beliefs. No protections will work, and there will inevitably be litigation and pressure applied to religious bodies and celebrants who do not want to participate in civil partnerships. Therefore these proposed reforms will have profound consequences for religious freedom.

We are therefore convinced that it will not be long before *permission* to register civil partnerships turns into *coercion*. It is expected that the Scottish Government will face immense pressure from homosexual activists to remove any provisions that may be put in place to protect conscience, in order to advance their political agenda.

Until date, the Government has responded positively to pressure imposed by homosexual activists for significant changes in law and policy, and has failed to address the widespread discrimination against Christians in a number of judicial decisions which have affirmed sexual orientation equality as a higher right than freedom of religion or belief. (Please see our answer to Question 1).

In accordance with the longstanding right to freedom of conscience and belief, the Scottish Government must endeavour to protect Christians in this instance by making an express commitment towards upholding the freedom of churches to decide whether or not to take advantage of the proposed reforms, regardless of whether or not homosexual marriages are introduced in the future.

Question 6

Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to register civil partnerships if their religious body has decided against registering civil partnerships?

Religious celebrants should not be allowed to register civil partnerships if their religious body has decided against registering civil partnerships. If religious celebrants are allowed to register civil partnerships against the decision of their particular religious body then this would directly undermine the authority of that religious body.

Religious bodies are best placed to decide whether or not to participate in the registration of civil partnerships in light of their values and ethos, and any decision which has been taken by a religious body regarding civil partnerships should not be undermined, in order to uphold the integrity and authority of that body.

Question 7: Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to register civil partnerships?

Individual religious celebrants should not be required to register civil partnerships under any circumstances. The recognition of homosexual relationships is completely contrary to the values and beliefs of all bible believing Christian denominations and churches. Individual ministers who are required to conduct civil partnerships would be presented with a severe moral conflict in light of their own Christian beliefs.

Freedom of conscience and belief need to be protected. To require religious celebrants to register civil partnerships would seriously restrict freedom of belief and those with a conscientious objection would have to choose between their faith or their continued employment. That would be totally unacceptable.

Question 8: Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to register civil partnerships against their will?

We do not agree that civil partnerships should be held on religious premises under any conditions. However, we answer the following question in case the proposed reforms are implemented.

We believe that Option 2 is preferable to Option 1 since a religious body which decides to conduct civil partnership registrations may not wish to also solemnise homosexual marriages. Option 1 would automatically register a religious body as willing to conduct homosexual marriages if they were already participating in civil partnerships. However, this may not be the case.

As demonstrated in our answer to Question 1, the protection of homosexual rights through the Equality Act, and in other ways, has led to a dramatic curtailment of freedom of belief in the UK which needs to be reversed. We would urge the Scottish Government to protect freedom of belief and explicitly ensure that faith groups are not forced to register civil partnerships against their will.

Question 9: Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to register civil partnerships. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?

We do not agree. In particular, if individual religious celebrants are allowed to conduct civil partnership registrations against the wishes of their own religious body (which should not be allowed to happen), then legislation will clearly be required to protect the premises from being used against the wishes of that religious body.

For this reason, and in order to avoid any future confusion, we would recommend an express provision prohibiting the use of religious premises for the registration of civil partnerships where the relevant religious body has rejected civil partnerships.

Question 10: Do you agree that the law in Scotland should be changed to allow same sex marriage?

We do not agree that the law in Scotland should be changed to allow for homosexual marriage. Throughout history, and in almost every human culture, marriage has always been recognised as a life-long union between one man and one woman. If the law allowed for homosexual marriage then it would alter this longstanding, universal definition of marriage as between a man and a woman, and undermine an institution that profoundly benefits society.

Introducing such proposals would suggest that homosexual marriages could be compared to or are equal with heterosexual marriages, and that homosexual marriages could be as beneficial to society as traditional marriages are. Such propositions are manifestly false, as demonstrated below.

Homosexual marriage is not good for children

When it comes to the interests of children, homosexual relationships cannot be compared to marriage between a man and a woman, and therefore should not be given the same name or legal rights and protections.

The UK Government affirmed, in guidance note 703 to Civil Partnership Act 2004, that: "*Marriage is the surest foundation for raising children*". They were referring to traditional marriage.

Marriage between a man and a woman provides the best environment for raising children because it provides children with the influence of both a father and a mother, acting in complementary roles. Children cannot be offered this favourable scenario in a homosexual partnership, however, since they will be missing either a mother or a father.

Multiple studies published in major academic journals around the world support the proposition that children who are raised under the influence of a mother and father do significantly better in every aspect of their lives compared to those raised in single parent or 'alternative' homes.¹²

Yet major studies have established a direct link between homosexual parenting and a number of negative consequences for children, including higher reports of gender confusion and homosexual behaviour.¹³

Sociologist Patricia Morgan has written the largest review of the research ever published in Europe. Her book, *'Children as trophies?'*, considers 144 academic papers including 50 on same-sex parenting.¹⁴ She found that:

- Evidence from around the world shows that the (heterosexual) married family is the most successful child rearing environment.
- Many studies indicate significant differences between homosexual and heterosexual parenting outcomes for children; in particular, children are more likely to become involved in homosexual behaviour themselves.
- Some researchers in favour of homosexual adoption admit that such children are more likely to be homosexual.
- Gender confusion seems to be rife with daughters of lesbian mothers in particular.

The introduction of homosexual marriages therefore would grant the same rights and privileges contained in heterosexual marriage to a homosexual partnership which, by its very nature, cannot provide the best environment for children, as it would deny them either a mother or a father. If public policy were to be driven by the welfare of children, and society as a whole, then the legalisation of homosexual marriages could not be justified.

Homosexual marriage is about politics, not families

If this is the case, then why is the Scottish Government interested in implementing homosexual marriage?

Since marriage provides the ideal condition for the nurturing of children, thereby advancing the common good of society, the State has a considerable interest in regulating and investing in this form of relationship. Yet, as noted above, homosexual parenting is potentially harmful to children, as it deprives them of either a father or a mother and also makes them more likely to practice homosexuality or become gender confused.

It would appear therefore that homosexual marriage is not being introduced for the benefit of children or families, but rather for political reasons, and in order to obtain social approval for homosexual partnerships.

¹² See Appendix 1

¹³ See: Morgan., Patricia, "Children as Trophies: Examining the Evidence on Same-Sex Parenting"., The Christian Institute., February 2002

¹⁴ Morgan., Patricia, "Children as Trophies: Examining the Evidence on Same-Sex Parenting"., The Christian Institute., February 2002

Introducing homosexual marriage will change the focus of marriage from an institution that exists to create and nurture families, to an institution that exists to fulfil the wishes and aspirations of adults who want to validate their lifestyle.

Homosexual marriage threatens freedom of belief

If homosexual marriage becomes legal, then there will be huge consequences in terms of freedom of belief and freedom of conscience. Please see Question 1 for a full analysis of the likely consequences.

Most Christian denominations are strongly opposed to the implementation of homosexual marriage and genuinely believe that marriage is a unique union between one man and one woman. Yet, due to equality legislation, many people could be open to litigation in a range of fields if they did not facilitate homosexual marriage. This would include pastors and priests, civil registrars and also much of the wedding service industry.

Furthermore, on implementation of the proposed reforms, schools will be required to promote homosexual marriage, and teach young pupils that homosexual marriages are equal to heterosexual marriages. This would violate freedom of belief for both teachers and parents, many of whom believe that homosexual marriage is a moral wrong. Their beliefs should be respected in a free society.

Homosexual behaviour is harmful to adults

Not all adult relationships are equally beneficial to those involved; this should be reflected in public policy. Evidence has clearly determined that the typical homosexual lifestyle carries significant dangers for the individuals involved, carrying the risk of serious physical and mental health problems.

In his paper "*The Family in the Third Millennium: A Compendium of Scholarship and Opinion Supporting Family as the Fundamental Unit of Society*," Dr. A. Dean Byrd reported on some of these consequences such as "reduced lifespan, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, depression, and domestic violence,"¹⁵ with sexually transmitted infections being rife among men who engage in homosexual sex.¹⁶

Question 11: Do you agree that religious bodies and celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes. Please see our answer to Question 7.

Question 12: Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex civil marriage only?

¹⁵ Dr A. Dean Byrd, "The Family in the Third Millennium: A Compendium of Scholarship and Opinion Supporting Family as the Fundamental Unit of Society,"¹⁵ 2005 <http://www.narth.com/docs/needboth.html> Dr Byrd emphasised that "lesbians are also at three times the risk for breast cancer than their heterosexual counterparts and face a whole range of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including bacterial vaginosis, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C. Homosexual males face anal cancer, syphilis, gonorrhoea, herpes simplex virus, and AIDS infection" as a result of homosexual sex.

¹⁶ See Appendix 2

We do not agree with the introduction of any form of homosexual marriage - please see our answer to Question 10.

However, if homosexual marriage is implemented, then it should remain non-religious in order to protect the unique identity of marriage and to protect freedom of belief. Please see our answer to Question 2 for further details.

Question 13: Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex marriage, both religious and civil?

No. Please see our answer to Question 10.

Question 14: Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes, otherwise religious freedom will immediately come to an end in Scotland. Please see our answers to Questions 1 and 5.

Question 15: Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to solemnise same sex marriage if their religious body has decided against solemnising same sex marriage?

Yes. Please see our answer to Question 6.

Question 16: Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes. Please see our answer to Question 7.

Question 17: Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to solemnise same-sex marriage against their will?

Option 2. Please see our answer to Question 8.

Question 18: Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to solemnise same-sex marriage. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be against the wishes of the relevant religious body?

We believe that legislative provision is required. Please see our answer to Question 9.

Question 19: If Scotland should introduce same sex marriage, do you consider that civil partnerships should remain available?

Civil partnerships are a current legal reality. Homosexual couples can choose to enter into such a partnership but ought not to seek to redefine marriage for the rest of society.

Appendix 1

Many studies have linked the absence of a natural parent with severe social, physical and emotional problems including low academic achievement, poor health, drug, alcohol and cigarette abuse, poverty, crime and sexual abuse.

Statistics

- The Daily Mail recently reported findings from the [Centre for Social Justice](#), which concluded that: “A child growing up in a one parent family is 75% more likely to fail at school, 70% more likely to become a drug addict, 50% more likely to have an alcohol problem and 35% more likely to be unemployed as an adult”.¹⁷
- Numerous studies have shown a direct link between crime and an absence of traditional family arrangements. 70% of young offenders in Britain identified by Youth Offending Teams come from lone-parent families.¹⁸ Young men from lone-parent families have been shown to be 1.6 times as likely to be persistent offenders as those from two-natural-parent families.¹⁹ Robert Sampson, in his study on British households, found a direct connection between single parenthood and major crimes, involving mugging, violence, car theft and burglary.²⁰
- A study conducted by Catch22 and reported by the BBC found that children raised without a father were more likely to be involved in drugs and alcohol abuse. The research showed that 24% of children who said they felt close to their father admitted to having tried cannabis. In comparison, 39% of those who said they did not feel close to their father had tried the drug. The study showed a similar pattern with underage drinking and smoking.²¹ A study conducted in 1990 found that in homes led by strict fathers, only 18 per cent of children had used alcohol or drugs, compared to those led by single mother, where 35% of children had used drugs frequently.²²
- There is also much evidence demonstrating a direct link between emotional disorders and the absence of a father figure. Among children aged five to fifteen years in Great Britain, those from lone-parent families were found to be twice as likely to have a mental health problem as those from intact two-parent families (16% versus 8%).²³ An American study showed that 80% of children who were admitted to two New Orleans hospitals as psychiatric patients came from

¹⁷ “The Collapse of Family Life” James Chapman, The Daily Mail, Monday April 18 2011

¹⁸ *Review 2001/2002: Building on Success*, Youth Justice Board, London: The Stationery Office (July 2002).

¹⁹ Flood-Page, Campbell, Harrington and Miller (2000), *Youth Crime: Findings from the 1998/99 Youth Lifestyles Survey*

²⁰ 12. Sampson, Robert and Byron Groves, “Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social-Disorganization Theory” *American Journal of Sociology* 94, January 1989.

²¹ “Concern over absent fathers, BBC News, Tuesday 24 March 2009

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7959970.stm>

²² Davidson, Nicholas. “Life Without Father: America’s Greatest Social Catastrophe” *Policy Review*, Winter 1990

²³ Meltzer, H., et al. (2000), *Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Great Britain*, London: The Stationery Office.

fatherless homes.²⁴

- An absence of nuclear family arrangements also exposes children to a higher risk of sexual abuse. A study by Daly and Wilkinson found that “the risk of abuse and neglect is likely to be exacerbated where substitute individuals fill the roles of biological parents” and that “pre-schoolers in step-parent – natural parent homes . . . are estimated to be *40 times* as likely to become abuse statistics as like-aged children living with two natural parents”.²⁵
- An Australian study concluded that children from married heterosexual couples perform much better at school than those from families led by cohabiting heterosexual couples and homosexual couples. The study concluded that: “[Married] couples seem to offer the best environment for a child’s social and educational development”.²⁶

²⁴ Garnefski, Nadia and Diekstra, Rene, “Adolescents from one parent, stepparent and intact families; emotional problems and suicide attempts” *Journal of Adolescence* 20, 1997, pages 201-208.

²⁵ Daly, Martin and Wilson, Margo, “Discriminative Parental Solicitude: A Biological Perspective” *Journal of Marriage and Family*, vol. 46, May 1980.

²⁶ Sarantakos, Sotirios, “Children in Three Contexts” *Children Australia*, volume 21, 1996, pages 23-31.

Appendix 2

The Health Protection Agency published the following information on STDs and homosexual men:

- Men who have sex with men (MSM) remain the group most at risk of becoming infected with HIV in the UK and new diagnoses in this group alone have increased by 70 per cent in the past 10 years rising from 1,810 in 2001 to 3,080 in 2010.²⁷
- An estimated 32,000 of men who have sex with men were living with HIV, with at least one in four of those aged 15-59 unaware of their infection in 2007.²⁸
- Five hundred and twenty-nine deaths among people with HIV infection were reported for 2010, and this is likely to increase as further reports are received.²⁹
- The rates of gonorrhoea in MSM had also increased by 23% since 2000 – 2007.³⁰

²⁷ http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1296683749074?p=1287147958032

²⁸ Men who have sex with men: A report

http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1227515299279

²⁹ http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1296683688485

³⁰ Men who have sex with men: A report

http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1227515298225