

Dear Secretary,

I am alarmed at the evident sexualisation I see in my community. I have several young friends, all of about 8 years of age, who like to call in and visit me. One little girl was showing me the bra straps on her 'pretend bra' just the other day. Two of the 8year old girls were given a makeup kit for Christmas, and sat on the floor here, applying eye makeup and blusher to each other! Another one was given plastic fancy high heels. All little girls have liked to dress up from time immemorial, but these matters are going far beyond anything that children of this age should be allowed to do.

These children told me of a girl at their school who has a 'partner', another girl, not a boyfriend! Certainly images and tv programmes are having an enormously detrimental effect on the ability of children to just be children. They have all the rest of their lives to experience the adult experiences they are engaging in at far too young an age.

I am also very concerned that schools teach eleven year olds about how to put on a condom, by using a carrot. This in my mind is child abuse. If these matters need to be taught at all, surely they could wait for 4-6 more years! If we teach a child to drive a car, will they not think that they are to drive a car?

Why have adults who should know better, given children knowledge which should be unneeded by them for many more years than their tender years of eleven?

Jenny McDonald