

Dear Abby/Abigail Van Buren

DEAR ABBY: Thank you for your recent response to "Pleased in the Sunshine State," whose daughter and son-in-law were helped by Planned Parenthood. Years ago, that organization helped me, too.

In 1970, when I was 16 years old, I met a man who was 23. Two years later, we were still together and talking seriously about marriage. I knew we were young. My one request was that we wait to have children. My fiance agreed.

My parents had never spoken to me about sex, much less birth control, so I knew nothing about how to avoid becoming pregnant after we were married. I decided to do my senior term paper on methods of birth control. In my research, I discovered Planned Parenthood.

When I explained that I wanted the information for my term paper, Planned Parenthood offered to send a speaker to my class. On the day of the presentation, many students were late for their next class! The hunger for knowledge that those 17- and 18-year-olds possessed was astonishing. The presenter used visual aids and handouts, and the students' questions were answered honestly and fully. One classmate was seven months pregnant. I wonder if her pregnancy could have been avoided had such an

A salute to Planned Parenthood

open, frank lecture been given seven months earlier.

I followed Planned Parenthood's advice, and when my husband and I had been married for three years, we decided to start our family. We had two beautiful children when we knew we were financially stable and mature enough to care for them properly.

Planned Parenthood offers a safe, professional environment where people can take their questions and fears and be assured they will receive honest information and reliable care for their needs.

If your readers are interested in a presentation like the one given at my school so many years ago, they should contact Planned Parenthood. Education and prevention should be everyone's priority. — MARY CRUZ CAMPO

DEAR MARY: Although not every school district across the country will allow Planned Parenthood to send educators to its campuses, Planned Parenthood is vitally interested in providing education and information

wherever it is needed. Those who are interested in arranging for an educational presentation should contact their local Planned Parenthood offices.

DEAR ABBY: In response to "Anonymous, Naturally," who was frustrated with late customers, I must share this story about our visit to Ireland:

Unaware of the closing time, my husband and I began shopping in a haberdashery in Dublin. The lone clerk began covering the tabled merchandise with large sheets. (That should have been a clue.) We told the clerk we wanted to buy an Irish cap for my husband, and we had come all the way from California to purchase it.

The clerk's comment was, "Ye should ha'e left 15 minutes earlier!" — MARIE M. PEDERSON, SANTA MARIA, CALIF.

DEAR MARIE: Faith and begorra, the clerk ha'e a quick wit — not uncommon for the Irish. Thanks for sharing your story; it tickled my funny bone.

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