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Issue 5  
78p

**SHE TRIED TO KILL OUR DAD**



## You can rot in hell, sister

**READERS' REALITY**

- Fake hero stole my story
- Helping others made me a better mum
- We got to church in nick of time

*Britain's Got* **I ♥ VE RATS**

ly Mike eyed up the girl next door

**OUR PETER PAN BOY WOULD NEVER GROW UP**



# Mum, I'm off to Never Never Land

**MRS HAM'S BAD HAIR DAY**

*Now Nicola faced chemo or death*



**TOP COP SAYS: LET'S LEGALISE HARD DRUGS**

# HEARTbeat

HEALTH AND VITALITY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Amy's pierced eyeball • Wipe Out Wife-Beating: Elsa's story • How to combat cold sores • Your medical questions answered

## NEWSbeat

**+** Taking a siesta may help to reduce your blood pressure. Researchers at Liverpool's John Moores University found that people



who napped for an hour or so had lower blood pressure and heart rates than those who stood quietly or simply lay down for the same length of time.

**+** Mums-to-be are keen to learn basic baby-care skills such as how to change nappies or cope with colic but are let down by the patchy provision of NHS antenatal classes. A survey by [www.babycentre.co.uk](http://www.babycentre.co.uk) discovered that while some pregnant women received six sessions, including a tour of the hospital's delivery suite, others got nothing at all.

**+** Men are better at remembering facts about sport, while women beat them hands down at recalling important dates such as birthdays and anniversaries. Psychologist Aric Sigman, who polled 100 men and women for the company Oxygen Games, says this is because the female brain is hard-wired for empathy while the male brain is hard-wired for ordering and categorising facts.

**+** Babies need to spend less time in their baby seats and strollers and more time on their stomachs when they are awake, according

to Sally Goddard Blythe, of the Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology. She says this encourages them to learn to crawl, which in turn helps develop balance, hand-eye co-ordination and motor skills.

**+** A study by researchers at the University of Alabama found that giving care home residents up-to-date prescriptions for their glasses reduced symptoms of depression. Being able to see properly made these older people feel more sociable.

REAL LIFE **Send us your**

# Snuggle up to Daddy

# HOW CAN WE STOP THIS?

Take a Break, 24 January

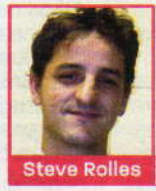
**T**here's a war being fought every day on the UK's streets. It's one that affects each of us and it has been going on for decades, with no end in sight. It's the war on drugs. And it's hard to come to any conclusion other than that we're losing it. According to the 2006-7 British Crime Survey, more than a third of those aged 16 to 59 have used one or more illicit drugs in their lifetime. Every day we hear of fresh horrors. Addicts die of overdoses or diseases. Decent youngsters have their lives ruined. Men and women commit robbery and murder on an unprecedented scale. Dealers recruit schoolkids and gun one another down in

broad daylight. Gang bosses — such as the recently jailed Terry Adams, in London — grow stupendously rich and criminalise whole streets and neighbourhoods, villages and towns. The Government and police fight back but in the end our prisons are bursting. Where will it end? It just gets worse as we head irrevocably towards more crime, destruction and death. Our whole society, the way we live now, is at risk and it's hard to see how things are ever going to get better. The unifying factor is despair. That's why some people say it

**Last week we showed how small children are the victims of their parents' addiction. Is it time to make a complete U-turn?**

violent street drug markets run by gangsters. We have in fact abdicated all responsibility for illegal drugs to street dealers. 'Our children are directly in the firing line. They're exposed to unregulated drug markets. They bear the brunt of the danger created by the so-called war on drugs. It's not just British children either. Children all over the world, from Afghanistan to Colombia, are having their lives ruined by illegal drugs.' Danny Kushlik, director of Transform, says drug legalisation would cut crime. He explains: 'Drug use is responsible for around 85 per cent of shoplifting, 70-80 per cent of burglaries, and 54 per cent of robberies. 'Legalisation would take away one of the largest opportunities for

is time to consider an alternative approach, not least on the grounds that it could hardly be worse and might just be a lot better.



Steve Rolles

**Legalisation.** It sounds crazy. Stop the menace of drug use by making drugs available legally? But the pressure group Transform Drug Policy Foundation believes it could work. 'Far from protecting children, the current policy actually endangers them,' says Steve Rolles, author of the Transform report *After the War on Drugs: Tools for the Debate*. 'It creates dangerous,



Terry Adams

organised crime. It would also reduce or stop altogether illegal drug-related turf wars between gangs. All street dealing would disappear. There would be no point in it — after all, you don't have alcohol or tobacco dealing on street corners.'

Kushlik thinks legalising drugs could also mean fewer addicts and says: 'Once you have legalisation and regulation, you take away the stigma. So people will be more likely to go to their doctors and get help. Drug users will no longer be demonised.'

He says politicians and police who believe the 'war on drugs' is helping communities are fighting the wrong battle.

'Prohibition makes a lot of social problems impossible to deal with,' he says.

'For example, an inner-city area ruined by drug dealing has lost the very fabric of its community. That's because if someone can make easy money by dealing drugs, why should they do anything else? Whole generations are then locked into making money illegally.'

'Attempts to regenerate those places by smartening them up and painting nice murals don't work. You need to create new opportunities. You do that by taking away the market for drugs.'

'People say drugs ruin communities. But those very communities are already ruined by lack of investment, unemployment and many other social problems. Prohibition is just adding another layer to the mess they're already in. Take it away and we can start dealing with the other issues.'

How on earth would drug legalisation work? Would dangerous drugs like crack, for example, be freely available from your local chemist? Transform admits it doesn't have all the answers.

'If we got rid of prohibition, communities could then decide for

● **Should drugs be legalised? Vote on our website — there's no cost. Visit [www.takeabreak.co.uk](http://www.takeabreak.co.uk)**

### 'MY MUM'S ON DRUGS'

Have you a parent — or other relative — who does drugs? Do you have a picture of them doing it? Send us your story and photos. Fee paid. E-mail [tab.rachel@bauer.co.uk](mailto:tab.rachel@bauer.co.uk) or post to Rachel Williams, *Take a Break*, FREEPOST LON12043, H Bauer Publishing, London NW1 1YU.

themselves how they wanted to make drugs available,' says Kushlik.

For example, low-risk drugs could be available like cigarettes, with an age limit for purchase, similar to the cannabis 'coffee shops' of Amsterdam. More risky ones might be available only from specially trained pharmacists or on prescription.

A system such as this would mean that all drugs on sale would have to be tightly regulated and quality tested, like current prescription drugs. This would bring about an end to deaths from drugs laced with poison by unscrupulous dealers.

Transform emphasises that it's not encouraging people to take drugs.

Steve Rolles adds: 'It's important to realise that you don't have to be a drug user to be in favour of legalising

drugs. You can be pro-reform and anti-drugs. We have bereaved parents and senior police officers as supporters. These are not people who are condoning drugs.'

Recently the reformers got a boost with backing from Richard Brunstrom, the Chief Constable of North Wales Police. He called for all drugs to be legalised and urged the Government to declare an end to the 'failed' war on illegal narcotics.

He pointed out that illegal drugs were now cheaper and more plentiful than ever before, and trading in them had become a worldwide business empire second in value only to oil.

Brunstrom said: 'If policy on drugs is in future to be pragmatic not moralistic, driven by ethics not by dogma, the current prohibitionist stance will have to be swept away as both unworkable and immoral, to be replaced with an evidence-based unified system, specifically including tobacco and alcohol, aimed at minimisation of harms to society.'



Richard Brunstrom

## The rod had pier

It was a busy day in the childrenswear shop where I worked at weekends. I was hanging packets of vests on a rail when a colleague came up behind me and shouted: 'Boo!'

I jumped and jerked forward, and something poked my eye. I put my hand over it and ran into the stockroom to look in the mirror. There was blood running down my face, soaking my T-shirt. I

realised the thin rail had gone through my eyelid.

The metal rods that the clothes hung from should have had metal stoppers on the ends, but they kept falling off. Head office had said they'd sort it out but nothing had been done.

I shouted out to my manager: 'I've hurt my eye!'

She saw me and said: 'Oh my God.' She then called for help.

Instead of reaching for the first-aid kit in the stockroom, she grabbed a dirty tea towel and held it over my eye. I went into shock.

The store's first-aider turned up and rang for an ambulance. A fast-response car arrived.

'It's just a little cut, you'll be

fine,' said the paramedic as he applied a bandage.

By now I was in a terrible state. My manager brought on a full-time nurse to help with my asthma attack.

When the ambulance arrived, the paramedic told me to put on a mask over my mouth.

Because the attack is so severe, I can't breathe without a mask.

It was safe for me to go to hospital. The paramedic's car was waiting for an ambulance.

The ambulance arrived and covered my good eye. I had to stop my bad eye from seeing.

Now I couldn't see. The hospital nurses took the mask off my good eye.

I was in a corridor with minor injuries all over there for an hour.

Someone from the hospital had rung my partner to tell them I'd been to hospital. But he hadn't heard of it.

When the doctor arrived, he didn't know what had happened. He said: 'You'll be fine.'

Blood was running down my face



My injured eye

### DOMESTIC ABUSE: PART 2

Chris was funny, witty and devoted. He'd drive an hour and a half every evening to see me. So when

he asked me and my son Steven to move in, I said yes.

Almost instantly his possessive side emerged. He called me constantly and didn't like me going out. One night we had dinner with neighbours. Tired, I came home early.

Around 1am my body thumped to the bedroom floor. It was Chris, and he was gripping my ankles. He dragged me down the stairs. I struggled free and ran outside to the car, but he jumped in too. He held me by my hair and started the engine.

We travelled a few miles. Then suddenly he let go. I flew out of the still-moving car. Thankfully someone saw and called the police. They collected Steven and after treatment in hospital, I joined him at a women's refuge. I'd lost teeth, fractured an eye

socket and had broken ribs. Then one day I saw Chris outside. He'd managed to track us down. 'I don't really remember what happened,' he said. 'I'm sorry and it won't happen again.'

Chris was sentenced to five months for grievous bodily harm. 'I've done something wrong and I have to pay,' he said matter of factly. However, within weeks of coming home he was assaulting me again. If something was in the wrong place, I'd get a black eye. He raped me too.

Just occasionally I'd see a flash of the man I'd fallen in love with. Then the monster would return. After three years I got

## Wipe Out V

'There was a size 10 boot print on my



socket and had broken ribs.

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Just occasionally I'd see a flash of the man I'd fallen in love with. Then the monster would return. After three years I got

court orders to keep away. But our house set on fire, with Chris and me inside. We escaped, but I realised I couldn't protect my own son. I sent Steven to refuge and I took Chris to refuge. He seemed the safest. At least I could get what he was liable for.

Then one week went to a friend's house. 'Come and dance of the guests said I shook my head. I was already agitated. 'Go and dance him,' he said. 'Do such a big thing. Afterwards we to our hotel room. Chris attacked me. 'You've made a me,' he said. I can't in hospital. 'We're removing your teeth. The doctor said: 'You've

A black eye

